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Youth and Politics in Turkey in the Context of Education and Cultural Policies

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Abstract:

The educational and cultural policies in Turkey are among the important issues impacting Turkish society and inherited from the Ottoman period. These issues show themselves in Turkey's conception of civilization and perception of the world. Therefore, Turkey's educational and cultural policies are the main factor in detecting and specifying this conception and perception. On the point where even the conceptual definition of education and culture is exceedingly difficult, these concepts turn into a policy at the practical level, which is a problem in itself. The Republic of Turkey has deeply experienced this problem, and the steps taken on this topic have brought together many new and different problems. This article will primarily address the relationship of education and culture with youth as well as examine the process of how they transform into a policy. Later the practical developments of these phenomena will be examined with a certain historical process. At that point, the educational and cultural policies dating from the foundation of the Republic to the present will be discussed both through the breaking points as well as through the governmental and political-party programs. Last but not least, the article will briefly examine the objectives of these policies and what effect it has had on the 21st century Turkish youth.

Key Words:

*Politics, Youth, Education Policy,
Cultural Policy, Turkey*

1. Introduction

The Republic of Turkey, established upon the ruins of the Ottoman Empire in 1923, quickly experienced a process of change and transformation that covered all areas of life following the day it was founded. Those who made these changes and transformations in the name of revolution claimed that they would carry Turkey to the level of contemporary civilization. (Lewis 2008:12-15; Zürcher 2005:23-36) These tough drastic changes, which were made in a short time, simultaneously played an important role in the Republic of Turkey and in shaping the future; in a sense, the future of Turkey was shaped by these changes and transformations. In this context, the process immediately after the Republic's establishment saw the mission of a kitchen and laboratory for the Republic of Turkey. In particular, all the political, legal, economic, and social changes and developments done in later years were a continuation of this period, or they felt the need to compare and justify themselves through this period. These changes and transformations showed themselves most clearly in Turkey's view toward culture and education. When looking at the changes and transformations, no doubt what had been done signified great meaning to the Republic of Turkey's youth regarding education and culture. Great benefit exists in examining what kind of youth the educational and cultural policies have brought us in the 21st century and in examining the educational and cultural policies done in the Republic of Turkey before moving on to what kind of interactions this generation has had with these things that were done. This is because we will catch the traces of what was intended within these policies, especially within government programs. When investigating this historical process, we will not examine the educational and cultural policies separately. As a matter of fact, the Ministry of Education had also included culture as a subject of interest in the Republic of Turkey until 1971 (Akyüz 1997). After this time, educational and cultural programs were handled separately at the ministry level.

2. Educational and Cultural Policies During the One-Party Period (1920–1950)

The educational and cultural policies applied in this period were generally determined by Atatürk and showed development in the framework of the principles and reforms that were made (Demirtaş 2008:160). Dr. Rıza Nur, the first Minister of Education, outlined the following principles in the executive committee program:

Our purpose in education is to place religiousness and nationalism in every sense into the education given to our children and to act in a way that will bring them success in the seriousness of life, where they can find their support within themselves, that will provide characteristics for mighty undertakings and self-reliance, and that will awaken an idea of preparedness and consciousness; to reorganize and improve the programs of

all our official trainings and schools in circle of nourishing matters of health with the most scientific and extreme principles; to create social studies and scientific textbooks suitable for the temperament and geography of our climate and the history of our motherland; to make a collection of our language by gathering dictionaries from the public masses; to write historical, literary, and practical works that will awaken in us the value of the spirit of the nation; to preserve and protect the national works and wit, to have the Western and Eastern works of science and technology translated into our language; in short, to work with attention and diligence in the educational hope that is most important for the existence and conservation of the life of a nation. Our first task today is to manage the beautiful knowledge present in our records (Ekinçi 1994:3).

In 1923, the following points were mentioned at the executive deputies' delegation program:

... The first quality of the Ministry of Education's training is the education and training of children, the second is the education and training of the people, and the third is the growing of national distinctions... As much importance will be given to women's education as to men's... Importance will be given to the national ethos-culture-organization.(Ekinçi 1994:4-5)

More technical issues would be mentioned in several government programs that later emerged. However, benefit exists in mentioning some remarkable issues in the First Women's Governmental Program in 1937. According to the program:

"... Primary education is the subject we will focus on the most in all aspects and give the most importance... After the family home, the first contact with national culture starts in school. The young citizenry can only be handed over to an institution that will teach the most proper and best and most beautiful with the fresh intelligence of those who adopt everything and have not yet established their ability to discern... A poor elementary education means a poor life. This will prevent and even spoil the formation of the young citizen's character. For this reason, we will give utmost importance to primary education. We will use our strongest, most precious, and best raised staff here to train men for this job (Ekinçi 1994:5)."

Hasan Ali Yücel, who had an important position in the Republic of Turkey's educational and cultural policies toward the end of the one-party period and who was a good practitioner of the Kemalist educational and cultural policies, addressed similar issues in the First Şükrü Saraçoğlu Government Program (Kantarcıoğlu 1987:45-46). In the government program under the prime ministrations of Recep Peker, one of the important political figures of the single party period, the matter that came to the fore from the issues being handled indicated the importance of addressing education over the generation:

"...Strengthening Turk youths' national sensitivity in all groups and levels of education, having our youths adopt the main ideas of the Turkish Revolution, and teaching them

Turk History, the source of our pride, will be the basis of our education and training activities”(Arayıcı 1998:86).

3. The Transition to Multi-Party Life and Later Education and Cultural Policies (Post-1950)

The history of the Republic experienced its most significant breaking point politically with the transition to multi-party life at the practical level. Accordingly, the authority of the Republican People’s Party (CHP) had been lifted in the country and the path was opened to being able to develop different policies. With the transition to the multi-party life, a number of different approaches began to be adopted in educational and cultural policies, and a number of applications that had been blocked in the Republican period were brought to life.(Alpay 2017:15-16) However, the basic premises of the Kemalist regime had certainly been untouched, and perhaps the same applications were able to be presented with different appearances (Dilipak 1990). In fact, this problem has been a significant problem in Turkey and is still unresolved.

The educational and cultural views in the government program of the Democratic Party, which had overwhelmingly seized power in 1950 and had ended the CHP government, carried substantially conservative traces. Accordingly, the government program contained the statements:

“...No matter how far one has progressed materially, a community not based on unshakeable national moral principles that allows no room for spiritual values in its soul will of course be dragged into a bad fate in the mixed conditions of today’s world. Spreading scientific and technical knowledge in a country that does not observe this purpose in its education and training system and that is unable to equip its youth with spiritual and humane values with respect to its national character and traditions cannot be counted as a guarantee of survival as a free and independent nation (Dilipak 1990:10).”

However, the policies made in the past in the government program were stated to have been inadequate in terms of education and culture. In Menderes’ government program, which established the third government in 1954, the same parallel things were again voiced:

“The guarantee of life as a free and independent nation is not only in the financial strength and stamina of the country; at the same time naturally it is in the field of our government’s power to be found equipping the people and youth with spiritual values, an omission of vital importance (Zürcher 2005:145).”

After the 1960 coup, İnönü established the ninth and tenth governments following Cemal Gürsel and was prime minister between 1961 and 1965. When we look at all three governments, we see we are left facing policies that are quite different from the Menderes governments. In place of the conservative approach toward education and culture in the Menderes governments, he left an approach that addressed education and culture more economically and looked at it as a means of development. Accordingly, education was seen as a means and steppingstone for financial development.(Balcı 2018:45) According to the Eighth İnönü Government Program: “Education is not just a means for raising the young generations; at the same time it is taken forth as an efficient investment that will speed up and realize national development in particular.”(Kaplan 1999:85) And again in the same way in the Ninth İnönü Program:

“...thus national education is not only a means for raising our youth and enlightening our people; at the same time and in particular, we should consider it as an efficient investment that will realize and accelerate the social and economic development of our country (Dilipak 1990:14).”

In the 1963–65 historical government program of İnönü’s last time as prime minister:

...The subjects of our national education, which has gained even more importance within the developmental understanding of our age, will be addressed in such a way that it has the power to raise personnel in the quantity and quality the Development Plan requires. In particular, our vocational and technical institutions will be developed greatly in terms of both student capacity and variety and quality (Ertunç 2003:245).

Later on, in this period, a period in the country where Demirel served as prime minister, the liabilities that the mission of being a continuation of the Democratic Party had brought showed themselves in the educational and cultural policies (Sakaoğlu 2003:122). The emphasis on Imam Hatip in education and religious education became more prominent through parallel perceptions. Immediately after this, a clear break is noticed in the educational and cultural policies of Nihat Erim, who replaced Demirel after his removal from power through the memorandum of 1971. The educational and cultural policies in two government programs Nihat Erim established were based on Kemalism and Atatürk principles and reforms (Kantarcıoğlu 1987:63-64). After these approaches that took the Kemalist regime as a base reference, determining policies that both adopted these approaches and also carried more conservative elements was attempted. In this context, the Fourth Demirel Government Program supplied complete compliance to this approach:

“Our goal in national education: To raise youths who adopt and protect all the members of our nation and the national, moral, humane, spiritual, and cultural values of the Turk

Nation; who love and always work to glorify the family, homeland, and nation; and who know their duties and responsibilities toward the Atatürk reforms, toward human rights in connection to Turkish nationalism, and toward the Republic of Turkey, which is a national, democratic, secular, and social state of law (Kantarcioglu 1987:70)."

After this program, cultural works for the first time were separated from the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Culture was established. If looked at, the matter of the Ministry of Culture in Turkey is in fact a complete mystery. The function that had been placed in 1971 was again abolished after the Ministry of Culture; later, it was reestablished and merger with the Ministry of Tourism. This also shows us that the function of this ministry had still not been able to emerge (Karakoç 2005:48). The education and cultural policies particularly at the end of the 1970s set up their own areas of self-interest in the student conflicts within the country for overcoming the ideologies behind them. "...In education our Government will primarily ensure life safety and freedom to learn."(Kantarcioglu 1987:194) "Our schools will surely become nests of knowledge and lore, and the activities of the hubs of unrest will be terminated... our education will be saved from the internationalist and Marxist influences..."(Kantarcioglu 1987:196). With the 1980 coup, the Republic of Turkey experienced another blow and the country had to practically restart everything anew. The governments', both through the influence of student events pre-1980 and the ones that came after 1980, being predominantly right-wing parties gave rise to their referencing spirituality and morality in educational and cultural policies, albeit it in theory. Alongside this, a special interest toward the youth began to be shown (Topçu 1997:44). In particular, the experiences on what the youth had done before 1980 and what states they had fallen into had put youth more in the center, and these were clearly stated in the educational and cultural policies.(Süslü 1995:30) The educational policies between the two coups in the Republic of Turkey had developed on the axis that we presented in some of the above quotations. Immediately after the 1980s, the topic of culture was included more intensely in the government programs through the impact of the Turk-Islam Synthesis. When we look at the Özal and Akbulut Governments' government programs, seeing the many issues related to this is possible(Süslü 1995:32).

4. The Corner Stones and Important Breaks in the Educational and Cultural Policies in Turkey

Together with establishing the Republic, the Republic of Turkey had quickly broken the ties it had had of old and entered the struggle of seating itself on a new axis. On this point, the sudden and fast change or revising of the old in the first years the Republic was founded was a process

much less realized and more experienced at first. A significant portion of this was realized in the fields of education and culture (Balçı 2018:33). In this way, Turkish society tried to make the situation it had put itself into fit through a group of educational and culture reforms implemented from the top down. These changes and transformations showed themselves intensely between the 1920s and 1930s; the changes and transformations done after this up to today are in large part reconstructions of the period in the 1920s and 1930s or are improvements done by referring to this period. In this context, certain issues that caused significant breaks in our educational and cultural policies and that majorly contribute to the formation of current youth after almost a hundred years need to be mentioned.(Özodaşık 2000:80)

5. The Unification of Education Act and the Alphabet Reformation

Nationalism was the most significant binding force for the newly established Turkey. A portion of the performed changes and transformations were done with these motives. The distinctions between madrasa and school pupils that had thoroughly emerged in the final Ottoman period and the content from these were neither adopted nor accepted by the arm of the Republic. Aside from this, foreign schools and the trainings given at these schools were also seen as a problem.(Ergün 1982:36) In order to prevent all of these, the Unification of Education Act was enacted on March 3, 1924. All madrasas and schools were tied to the Ministry of Education with respect to this act. In this way, thousands of madrasas remained empty with their closing, and institutions that would have given religious education were prevented. In order to avoid a negative atmosphere on the topic, the decision was made to establish Imam Hatip schools and faculties of theology. The Unification of Education Act seemed to be a very significant step in terms of Turkey's formation and was highly appreciated by the supporters of the Kemalist regime. However, this act monopolized everything in the new Republic, and viewing it as an attempt to immerse itself in its own ideology would not be misleading. In fact, the former Minister of Education, Hamdullah Suphi said, *"I know of only one education; that is also public education. The direction, the command, that target, the supply, and the development all must be one..."* (Ergün 1982:80). At one of the meetings about the unification of education in those years; this specified the raising of the generation to be the duty of the state and clearly revealed what kind of ideology it possessed (Kocahanoğlu 2006:438). The Turkification of everything, the efforts to achieve Western civilization, and attempts to completely cut off all ties from the past presented themselves most clearly in the Alphabet Reformation. The written culture, which had had a deep-rooted past, was destroyed in a snap in 1928 with the Alphabet Reformation. The Alphabet Reformation was not just limited to written culture; it gave birth to a tremendous

cultural alienation that is even today seen in every segment of society (Kara 2019:214). Almost all the reasons put forth as an excuse for the Alphabet Reformation were just as controversial as in many revolutions and innovations, and the purpose of the justifications had not been fully clarified. If attempts had been made related to increasing the literacy rate within the current conditions without tying the literacy issue to the alphabet issue, would the result have been more negative or more positive? Those who set off without looking for answers to these questions while looking from their own perspective are hardly able to predict the cost.

6. Establishing the Turkish Historical Society and the Turkish Language Association

Another one of the Republican elites' attempts to deny ancient civilization and culture and create a new culture manifested in the field of history. Accordingly, the Turkish Historical Society, established by order from Atatürk, began efforts to create a special history in the newly established Republic of Turkey. According to this, Turks were argued to have a history and civilization thousands of years old; periods before the transition to Islam in particular began to be much more focused on this (Behar Ersanlı 1996). In fact, in the 1,000-page 3-volume Book of Turkish History, which had come out from behind this political attitude at that time, by leaving only 200 pages to the Ottoman Empire despite its great historical process, giving this period much consideration was not desired (Ertunç 2003:328). Among the reasons for all these attitudes existed the truth that the effort lay in building a more secular and nationalist culture in place of the Islamic culture. The work on the Turkish History Thesis had reached such an exaggerated point that the criteria for whether or not a person was Turk had been determined and skull measurements started. The opening of Mimar Sinan and Yunus Emres' tombs and measuring their skulls is one instance of this (Doğan 1986:178). One of the obvious indicators that the Republic of Turkey wanted to see itself in a new cultural area are the studies on language that were done for the same purposes. The efforts to Turkify history had this time turned to efforts to Turkify the language. The Turkish Language Institute, established in 1932 in this context, had devoted all these efforts on a number of new studies related to Turkish and forming a new language. As a result of all these, theories that were considered funny even by those who discovered it were introduced and called the Sun-Language Theory. Removing foreign words from the language opened the way again to an alienation of culture (Bulaç 2015:36). This squall made after foreign words that only covered Arabic and Persian, being Islamic eastern languages, is noteworthy. Words with European sources, which are even more foreign than Arabic and Persian, were exempted from the extraction process; in fact, the equivalents in European languages were found for some of the Arabic- and Persian-rooted

words that wanted to be removed from the language but for which no Turkish equivalent could be found (Lewis 2008:586).

7. Opening Community Centers and the Village Institutes

Community centers were opened in 14 regions for the first time in 1932. Community centers are a broad and detailed subject upon which dozens of studies had been done. How community centers were a cultural formation tool will briefly be emphasized here. Community centers, as also explained by their founders, had been established for popularizing and providing roots to the CHP mentality of the period before the public. In other words what was purposed was the processing and spreading of the conducted socio-cultural policies in society. In fact, examples from studies that other nations had performed on culture were given in the declaration for establishing community centers, and the goal was specified with the works, “...*thus we will work more than any nation in this field because we lack more in every way than they do.*”(Ergün 1982:46). In the same way, Atatürk also revealed the purpose of community centers saying, “*Community centers have been established in order for Turkish people to reach a high level of life and culture in all respects as soon as possible.*”(Ergün 1982:50). Although anyone was able to participate in the community centers, only CHP members could be on the Board of Directors. In addition, each branch had to send reports to the CHP secretary general every three months. Community center presidents were chosen by the CHP Provincial Boards.(Çeçen 1990; Şimşek 2002) From this, one can easily say that the country was experiencing a culture imposed by the hand of the CHP. Indeed, this situation is one that manifested itself in many other policies. The village institutes were established in 1940 as a result of the superior efforts of Hasan Ali Yücel, the Minister of National Education at the time following Atatürk’s death. The village institutes were educational establishments founded for training technical staff particularly in a village-centered way that would be able to work. The village institutes, which had aroused serious impact shortly after being established, could not cope with the claims that appeared about them after a while and were closed at the time of the Democratic Party with the claim that they had been spreading communist thought (Dündar 2000:66).

8. Religious Education and the Opening of Imam Hatip High Schools

With the Unification in Education Act, madrasas had been closed and the problem of which institutions would give religious education emerged. The decision was made upon this same law to establish Imam Hatip High Schools and the Faculty of Theology, and religious education was envisaged to be given through these channels (Dinçer ve Düzdağ 1998:14-15). After a short

while, however, the Imam Hatip High Schools were abolished in 1930-31 as well as the Faculty of Theology in 1934. After the removal of religious education in schools and with the closure of the Imam Hatip High Schools, the youth in Turkish society were simply left faced with the application and enforcement of “You have no right to learn your religion.” The great importance this period supplied should not be forgotten in terms of understanding society and especially youth in the Republic of Turkey. By the end of the 1940s, this multitude of restrictions and inhibitions against religious education had started to cause serious problems in society. So much so that finding people who could wash and bury the bodies of the dead according to Islamic methods had become impossible. In 1948, Imam Hatip Schools were reopened as a matter of policy for the period both through their influence and through their convenience; afterward the number of schools increased rapidly in the process (Reed 1955:155). Since the second half of the 20th century, Imam Hatip Schools have possessed a very important place in terms of Turkish youth. It is because of this that Imam Hatip Schools have acted as a litmus test in terms of showing the role of youth in our educational and cultural lives as well as the impact of education and culture on youth.

9. The Turkish-Islamic Synthesis and Nationalist Culture

The idea of Turkish-Islamic Synthesis, which had been developed in the framework of the Aydınlar Ocağı [The Intellectuals Seedbed], which was established in 1970, has special importance in the history of Turkish political thought, especially in the field of culture (Copeaux 2006; Kafesoğlu 1983, 1996). The ideas from the cultural field of the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis have been the official discourse of Turkish culture since the 1980s. According to this, combining the Asian cultural elements with Muslims values has been the intention, underlining that the best way to be a Muslim will be able to occur by being a Turk (Copeaux 2006:84). The legitimization of nationalism has been attempted by placing severe emphasis on Islamic values. The Turkish-Islamic synthesis, which carried an aim akin to blending together ethnic and religious elements, also heavily emphasized Turkish culture and education in particular. In this context, the Turkish cultural research institutes established at that time also served this purpose.

10. EU Reforms and EU Youth Programs

One of the important turning points applied to youth in the 21st century and having a big impact on youths’ orientations has been the Republic of Turkey’s accession process to the EU. For over 40 years, relations with the EU have brought together many policies in the field of education and culture, and the main area of impact in these policies, as we mention from the

start, is youths and adolescents. Many laws have been passed on education and culture, particularly through the compliance packages that have recently been applied. In addition, EU Education and Youth Programs have been maintained by increasing the number of activities and initiatives. Turkey is, however, a full member of EU cultural policy and has the right to be able to fully participate in all the projects. In this way, the relationships entered with the EU have created a counterfeit youth in the 21st century who do not think with their own values and who long for direction and hope on one side.

11. Youth in the 21st Century Turkey in the Context of Education and Cultural Policies

Up to the present we have stated the educational and cultural policies' main area of impact to firstly be the youth, and even if such an intention was not carried out, the main effects naturally are seen again upon the youth. After this and in order to be able to better understand these youths who had emerged as a result of the policies also applied in the 21st century, we conveyed a number of the basic significant events and breaking points, each one of whose effects appeared at different rates both in the educational-cultural policies as well as in the 21st-century youth in terms of the historical process. In this section we will attempt to address what purposes these educational and cultural policies carry, what kind of youth has emerged in the 21st century, and the problems these youths have.

12. The Research and Evaluation on Turkish Youths in the 21st Century

The educational and cultural policies applied in the Republic of Turkey through some basic points have revealed a troubled youth in the 21st century. Revealing the profile of youths through two surveys on the dilemmas of 21st-century youth will be useful in revealing the profile of youth. The first of these is the broad study presented as "*Eğitimin Değeri ve Gençlik*" [*The Value of Education and Youths*] and later turned into a book (Zeylan 2007). This study was performed in 2006 using interviews with 1,014 youths between the ages of 15-24. Of the youths, 60% are male and 40% are female. In addition, 84% of the youths are students maintaining their education; 16% finished the education that had been prepared for the University Entrance Exam and are candidates for another stage of education. The birthplace for most of the interviewed youths is Istanbul. In addition, the native language of 98% of the interviewed students is Turkish. In this respect, in the questions the youths were asked under the heading "education and work," youths saw lack of communication among generations as a family as the biggest problem, domestic violence as the second, and drugs as the third. In addition, the youths connected the most basic problem in relation to the Turkish educational

system to insufficient technical opportunities, stated the secondary problem in favor of education not being interactive, and specified the third issue on the point of the methods being wrong for measuring knowledge. The last question posed under this heading was to have youths identify the three most important conditions for finding work. Accordingly, youths stated the three most important conditions for finding work to be foreign language, quality of the school graduated from, and work experience. With respect to the first question we will address on the questions asked under the heading “Politics and Religion,” youths’ levels of interest in politics were determined, and in this respect, 35% of youths stated not being at all interested in politics, 25% to not be very interested, and 20% to be neither interested nor uninterested. Only 2.7% stated being completely interested. In another question, when the youths were asked what keeps people together the most in Turkey, 40.7% specified the option “Being Muslim;” 29.7%, the option “Being Turk;” and 26.3%, the option “Being a citizen of the Republic of Turkey.” In this respect, the ethnic element outweighed religion. When the youths were asked if they identified as being religious, 43.9% identified themselves as having faith but not quite fulfilling the requirements of religion. Right after this, 42.5% identified themselves as being religious and trying to fulfill the requirements of religion; 9.4% see themselves as very religious and fulfilling all the requirements of religion, while only 3.1% do not quite believe in religious requirements. In connection with this, with respect to the questions asked about frequency of doing religious activities, youths were determined to fulfill the worship of fasting and non-obligatory prayer; followed by praying Salah. With respect to the first question we address here under the heading “Values,” youths were asked about their satisfaction with life, and the youths predominantly stated being satisfied with their life. In another important question under this heading, youths were asked which values were important; The values that youths gave the most importance with respect to the results that emerged are, in order, family, health, and career. Religion-Faith was fourth in order of importance given by youths. For the question asked about determining social, cultural, and sports activities, the free-time activities for youths in school were determined as listening to music in first, followed by watching TV, and reading the newspaper/magazines in third. One interesting anecdote from the answer’s youths gave related to this same question finds following the horoscope in 17th place and being involved with poetry/essays/novels in 23rd place. When youths were asked their relations with NGOs, 75% were determined to have no relationship with any NGO, but almost half stated wanting to be a member of an NGO. In a question for NGO members about determining what kind of NGO they are members of, 47.2% of the youths answered this question saying sports clubs/association, followed by 22% being in student clubs, and 15.2% following

institutions/associations related to private locales. While membership in a religious community/foundation came in 5th place, political parties were in 6th at 4.8% and culture/arts in 7th at 4.4% (Zeylan 2007).

Another research we will address here was performed by the TNS PIAR Research Company (Yentürk, Kurtaran, ve Nemitli 2008). The research was conducted in 17 provinces with 2,406 youths (1,214 women and 1,192 men) representing the urban population between the ages of 15-22. Of the research participants, 50.5% are female and 49.5% are male; 32.7% were in the 15-17 age group, 39.9% in the 18-20 age group, and 27.4% in the 21-22 age group. Here we will only convey the part addressing youths' approaches to bad habits and attitudes causing bad habits. In this respect, we have drug, alcohol, and tobacco use. These substances threaten today's youth. Youths who have no difficulty finding drugs and who stated even consuming alcohol at school were determined to have friends who had been most influential on the topic of using these. The first time they tried was with a friend. Youths were identified to have not been sufficiently warned about this topic at school and to have received the main warning from their family. In second place, the media was determined to have warned youths about the dangers of drugs. The study asked youths about drug usage for both their circle of friends and for themselves; in this respect, the research officials stated that the answers youths would give about their friends would be more correct than the ones they would give for themselves and emphasized that, according to the answers, they determined 19.3% of youths had at least one friend in their circle who had tried a substance and 13.5% had at least one friends who uses. In other words, two out of 10 youths have used at least one of these substances, and approximately one out of 10 continues to use. The percentage of youths who use the various substances from among those that have tried in a youth's circle of friends has been determined to be extremely high. At the same time, these rates also show the extent to which youths are at risk; 6% of youths stated that these substances were found in the school environment, and 35% stated their friends had no trouble supplying these substances. Males, in particularly those in the 18-20 age group, were determined to be the target of drug dealers. In men over 18 years of age, 9% were identified as having been offered to buy and 13% as having been offered to try. According to the performed research, 11% of youths have been determined to have used anti-depressants, or sedatives, that are occasionally sold by prescription for nervousness or relaxation. 58% of families were determined to constantly warn their children about the harmfulness of these drugs. Of the youths, 24% said the media had warned them, while school administrators took up the rear on this topic with 10% of the share. Compared to another research again performed by TNS PIAR on the adult population, despite 27% of the 25 and older adult population having

consumed alcohol, this percentage was determined as 45% for the 18-22-year-old males. One out of four girls and one out of three boys in the 15-22-year-old group were determined to have consumed alcohol; the average age for first drinking was determined as 16 for girls and 15 for boys. When asked to describe their relationship with alcohol, approximately one out 10 males in the 18-22-year-old group said they consumed alcohol “regularly” and 14.2% stated having an “alcohol problem.” Half specified rarely drinking enough to be drunk, and youths stated they had drunk alcohol comfortably in school. The rate of youths who stated consuming alcohol in school was roughly one in five, or 21%; this rate is 28% for those of university age. Of those who use alcohol, 37% were determined to have fathers who consume alcohol, and approximately 10% of the youths also have an alcohol problem. According to the research, 63% of youths have at least one friend around them that consumes alcohol. This percentage was determined as 70% for boys and 65% for girls. 71% of youths were determined to have met a friend in their surroundings who uses alcohol. According to the research, the age youths first encounter tobacco was determined to be around 15, and 38% of the 15- to 22-year-old youths were reported to smoke. Just as in alcohol and drugs, one’s circle of friends has a significant role in the smoking habit. 86% were determined to have a friend who smokes in their circle, and half of youths who smoke do not see tobacco as a serious danger in terms of health. 68% of youths evaluated cigarette smoking in school to be tolerated by the school administrators. The two studies we cited above are important in terms of showing the general profile of 21st-century youth. The first research was performed on educated youths, and this shows us what results have come out on youths from education. The second research also addressed some of youths’ greatest problems, and this investigated youths’ relationships with educational processes through certain points.(Yentürk vd. 2008:16)

13. Conclusion

Various changes and transformations were experienced in many areas in Turkey immediately following the founding of the Republic. One of the areas in which these changes and transformations were most intensely applied has been over education and culture. The shaping of education and culture by the government of the time in line with its own ideological views politicized these concepts and led to them being used as an important tool in raising new generations. In this context, youths have been the main addressee in the areas of educational and political practices. Studying the objectives of these policies done in this context and the profile of youths only over these policies will remain quite insufficient. Beyond this, determining a number of breaking points during the 20th century and examining the processes

that led to these breaking points will be more beneficial. Additionally, knowing what lies in the background of these breaking points and what they serve will also be very useful. Alongside this, the policies that were made in the areas of education and culture during the 20th century have had a significant place in forming the profile of the 21st-century youth. When looking at the general state of our 21st-century youth, the educational and political policies applied in the Republic of Turkey are seen to have led to insufficient as well as improper practices. Because these improper and deflective policies have caused great harm to the youth in the Republic of Turkey, they should be laid out on the table again and discussed at length.

14. References

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