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Nationalism And World Unity: How
To Educate for the 21st Century

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**NATIONALISM IN EDUCATION:
EDUCATIONAL POLICY OF TURKEY**

by

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NATIONALISM IN EDUCATION

Educational Policy of

TURKEY

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If we analyze the educational policy of Turkey according to Nationalism, we may differentiate two main tendencies:

- I- Islamic goals in education,
- II- Westernization, and western influence, against Islamic values in Education.

Western influence in the educational policy of Turkey improved ~~three~~ three different policies:

- 1- Nationalistic goals in education,
- 2- Secular targets in education,
- 3- Marxist and ideologic^{goals} in education.

These three policies represented the western viewpoints in educational policy of Turkey. Some times they ~~are~~ adopted as alternative policies to each other. But all of these three alternatives have been used against Islamic goals in education.

In historical evolution, the classical policy of education in Turkey based on Islamic concepts. This policy, officially continued until Republican Era, and all kinds of educational institutions^{were} shaped according to the Islamic principles. Western influence in education started since the beginning of 17th century. It is shaped in a clear cut policy during the Tanzimat era of 19 th century, and has been christallized during the constitutional era and especially after Abdulhamid and clearly became dominant during the first quarter of the Republican period.

Western influence in education since 17 th century, untill the end of 19 th century, brought some secular concepts in education. At the begining of 19 th century western influence brought the concept of Nationalism into the educational policy of Minorities, e.g. non- Muslim groups in the Ottoman State.

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After 20 th century, during Republican era, Nationalism and secularism have been mutual target of education on behalf of westernization. After second world war, western influence have been two fold. On one side western capitalism, had imported into educational policy, secular and humanist elements, on the other side, western marksizm imported into educational policy secular, humanist and atheist elements. Both influence had a mutual element as secularism and this element under marksist influence became antireligious and particularly anti-Islam.

After Islamic values almost completely taken out of educational policy, Nationalism had to be used as an element against marksist values, and policies. Therefore in the absence of classical Islamic values and principles, Nationalism is used in the educational policy of Turkey, as an element to defend the socio-cultural values of nation against the element of both international secularism and international atheist mark-sism.

In Turkey, anti-Islamic tendencies was symbolized in the famous article 163 of penalty-Code, which is abolished just recently in april 1991. Therefore in the ^{Republican} educational policy of Turkey, the element of Nationalism is not used as an aggressive element of a scholastic policy, but rather as a defensive element to provide ^{cultural and} religious-freedom for muslims in the educational policy. So the whole above-mentioned educational policies of the last two centuries can be charecherized mainly in two periods:

I- Ottoman Educational Policy :

- 1- Tanzimat Era,
- 2- Constitutional Period.

II- Republican Educational Policy :

- 1- Revolutionary Period of Republic,
 - 2- Pluralistic and Democratic Period of Republic
- Approach of Republic Era.

I- Ottoman Educational Policy In Turkish history; After Turks adopted Islam as religion, it means since 7 th century, until to the first quarter of the twentieth century, educational policy based on the Islamic principles. Islam is a universal religion, and sends a message for the

whole human beings. In Islam, there is no any favour over any nation, race or ethnic groups. All human beings who are faithful to God (Allah) are considered as brethren. All Muslims are considered as one nation (Ummah).

Ottoman empire was a multi national, multi-color and multi religious state.

According to ^{the} Islamic religion there is no compulsion in religion. Therefore all religious groups were free in their religious-faith, pray and education.

Muslims' education was based on Islamic principles without any ethnic and nationalist orientation; Even the language of Ottoman state, Turkish language, so called (Ottoman language) were composed of Turkish, Arabic and Persian combination. By the institutional structure there was no any central organization in education. The elementary schools and high-schools, maktab, and higher-educational institutions, madrasas were provided by charitable persons and were attached to masjids or mosques, which were supported by Wakf donations made by the Board of Pious Foundations.

In these schools, Muslim children were taught about the basic principles of Islam, language, mathematics, geography, history etc. The principal course of study in the madrasas included Arabic, grammar and syntax, rhetoric and style, logic, theology, metaphysics, subjects relating to Koran and Hadiths, Islamic jurisprudence, science, mathematics and medicine etc.

The lower classes trained teachers for elementary schools and priests or Khatibs, Kadis, muftis, or imams. The higher classes prepared judges, jurists, and teachers and other specialists for the seminaries. The largest seminaries were located in the capital city of Istanbul. Madrasas which were the true source of culture and science of the Islamic civilization, were established in all parts of the empire. The most famous among them were those founded in great centers such as Istanbul, Bagdad, Damascus and Cairo. In the beginning of the thirteenth century, when Osman Gazi founded his autonomous government, so called Ottoman, one of their first tasks was to build madrasas which would train muftis and Kadis to represent the law and the shariat of the

Ottoman government. High standards of scholarship were the marked characteristics of these modrassehs. Methods of thinking, learning, and teaching were based almost entirely on the principles of Islam. Turkish as an administrative language, Arabic as a Qoranic language and Persian as a literary language were taught. Like the three main languages of western culture of today, English French and German, at that time, Turkish, Arabic and Persian were the main intellectual languages of the Islamic world which was organized ^{mainly} under Ottoman empire.

These madrassehs had nothing in common with the national sentiment. The daily rituals in madrassehs (medrese) or at home indoctrinated all the people to be UMMET (Ummah) or true believers. There was no bond of nationality. Regardless of their country of origin, all the believers of Ummet were part of the whole group of Moslems.

During the Ottoman Empire, there was another kind of institution which in a way supplemented the madrassehs. This was known as TEKKE. The tekkes were schools of religious mysticism. They were established by people of various sects and were regarded as a sort of cultural institution.

All the madrassehs and the small district schools, as educational policy connected to the Islamic principles which religiously connected with the muftis and consequently with the Şeyh-ül-Islam (Shaikhul-Islam) who was the religious representative in Padişah's or the King's cabinet and was next in power after the grand vezir who was called Sadrazam. The madrassehs prospered and flourished soon after Sultan Muhammed captured Istanbul and the city transformed into a center of knowledge and science not for Turkey alone but for the whole Moslem World. Several medrassehs built around large masques offered different branches of study.

These scholls improved immensely during the reign of Suleyman the Magnificent. Lawyers who practised in cities extending from Basra to Budapest were graduates of madrassehs. Instruction was based entirely on Islamic principles.

The aim of Muslim education was the creation of the "good and righteous man" who worships Allah in the true sense of the term, builds up the structure of this earthly life according to the Islamic principles

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and employs it to subserve his faith.

The meaning of worship in Islam is both extensive and comprehensive; it is not restricted to the physical performance of religious rituals/only but embrace all aspects of activity: faith, thought, feeling and work, and in conformity with what Allah (praise be to Him) says the Holy Quran, "I have created the Jinn and man only to worship Me"and "say, O My Lord; my prayers, my sacrifice, my life and my death are for Allah, the Lord of the Worlds Who hath no peer."

Therefore, the foundation of civilization on this earth, the exploitation of the wealth, resources and energies that Allah has hidden in its bowels, the search for sustenance, the measures by which man can rise to full recognition of the ways of Allah in the Universe, knowledge of the properties of matter, and the ways in which they can be utilized in the service of faith and in the dissemination of the essence of Islam and in helping man to attain to a righteous and prosperous life-all these are considered forms of worship by which scholars and God-seekers come into closer contact with Allah. If such is the Islamic concept of worship and from the Islamic point of view the object of education in the most/comprehensive sense of worship is the upbringing of the true believer, it follows that education must achieve two things. First, it must enable man to understand his Lord so that he worships Him in full conviction of his Oneness, observes the rituals, and abides by the Divine inj^unctions. Secondly, it must enable him to understand the ways of Allah in the universe, explore the earth, and use all that Allah has created to protect faith and reinforce His religion in the light of what Allah has said in the Quran.

"It is He who hath brought you from the earth and made you inhabit and inherit it."

The sources of knowledge according to the Islamic concept, fall into two categories:

(1) Divine revelation where Allah teaches that man cannot, by himself be rightly guided to the Divine truth and that life cannot be regulated in the proper manner in the absence of stable and unchangeable injunctions inspired by Allah, the Wise and the All-knowing/whose knowledge encompasses all.

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(2) The human intellect and its tools which are in constant interaction with the physical universe on the levels of observation, contemplation, experimentation and application. Man is free to do as he pleases subject to the condition that he remains fully committed to the Quran and Sunnah.

AND CONSTITUTIONAL ERA: During

1- Tanzimat/the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the repeated defeats of Ottoman armies on the one hand, and the progress achieved in Europe in war tactics on the other hand had forced some Turkish statesmen to think about reforming the army through adopting European war techniques. So the westernization movement started mostly in military, political and administrative areas, by the top level statesmen. Deterioration of educational institutions started at the end of 18th century as well. But the people was not ready for such western-based modernization. Therefore the janissaries, the Ajaans and the Ulema jointly invoked the highest spiritual authority in the caliphate, the Şeyhul Islam, and obtained a fetwa, against the hated Nizam-u jedid (modern Army) and for the deposition of the adventurous sultan. In Egypt, twice did the Egyptian people revolt violently against the Napoleonic innovations during the three year period of the French occupation.

Therefore governments, without touching the medrasseh system started to open new schools called mekteb. In 1773 a new engineering school started for navy as Mühendishane-i Bahri-i Hümayun and in 1796 Mühendishane-i Berr-i Hümayun for army.

These new schools were out of control of şeyh-ul Islam. So as the first time some educational institutions, called Mekteb, was taken out of control of religious organisation. This was the starting point of secularization. Statesmen of Tanzimat era, like Ali and Fuat Pashas were educated in school. In the period of Tanzimat and Constitutional era, such a duality in education continued.

In 1839 Ferman-ı Tanzimat, declared by Abdülmecit, expressed a new thought which brought a duality between Islamic principles and western culture. Program of Tanzimat was the turning point for secularization of the bureaucratic and social life. Up to Ferman-ı Tanzimat, state and religion was unanimous. The origin of the human rights was the canonical

law. Tanzimat didn't abolish that, but introduced some new principles adopted from secular western culture, and created duality in social and cultural values. After six months of Ferman, penalty code and later in 1846 regulations for civil servant were introduced, adopted from the French legislation.

The structure and aim of the educational policy of this Tanzimat era, was to introduce some liberal and secular ideas and institutions to provide a modern education as a tool of westernization. But they failed to define a method to achieve that goal.

What would be the position of old medrassah and non-muslim minority schools and foreign schools? Because, after 1856 Ferman-ı Islahat, non-muslim minorities and foreigners were permitted to establish their own schools. Bulgarians, Rum, Armenian, Jewish, Surbian etc. different non-muslim ethnic groups opened their own schools and they adopted different educational policies, methods and philosophies according to their politico-religious ^{claims and} faiths. As foreign schools, three American, one Bulgarian, eight French, two English, one Iranian, seven Italian, one German, two Austrian schools; All of these foreign schools were operated by different religious missioneries. For example French schools were operated by the French Catholic orders, such as the christian Brothers, the Lazarist Brothers, the Sisters of Charity, and the Sisters of Zion. Schools operated by these religious orders received subsidies from the French Government.

The first American College to be established outside the United States was found at Istanbul in 1863, by christopher Rhineland Robert, under the laws of the State of New York.

We should note that in Islam, ~~there~~ was no any concept of minority according to the ethnic differences. Because all Muslims were considered as brothers and treated equally. Therefore in Ottoman empire minority concept covered only the non-muslim groups, who were treated according to their own religious and socio-cultural principles.

When we look at the educational structure of 19 th century Turkey, we observe that ~~there~~ was no any unity in educational methods, curriruld, system, philoöophy and aims among medrassahs, mektebs, non-muslim minority schools and western-foreign schools.

So the reforms of Tanzimat era, had an idea to reach a unity in education through western, modern, (liberal and secular) education. But they failed. They could not provide a unification ^{in education} among Muslims and Christians. On the contrary they left aside the non-Muslim Minorities and their educational institutions and tried to adopt the secular-educational system only for Muslims. Therefore the unity of the Muslims were jeopardized and educational system of Muslims were divided between Medrese and mekteb. The competition of ~~two~~ ^{two groups and systems influenced the} whole socio-cultural structure of the Muslim Societies. Intellectuals and statesmen, were divided between two groups and fought with each other. Gradually this tendency turned into political division, and did lot harms to the empire. Because both sides had no scientific and cultural background to modernize the educational system. Medrese isolated itself, and mekteb stayed at the stage of imitation. Both sides couldn't improve a new educational policy.

Government protected mektebs, but only Turkish students studied there. Under the liberal-secular education Turkish or Muslim students were westernized and secularized. On the other side other non-muslim minority groups established their own National schools and educated them in a Nationalistic system.

By this way the first nationalistic movements and Nationalism in education started in the Ottoman empire among the non-muslim minorities, particularly in Balcan countries. Western powers supported this trend for their own political aspirations.

It is interesting to note that while the liberal-secular ideas, against Islamic principles, were improving among the Muslim students, nationalistic ideas were strengthened among the non-muslim students, under a religious umbrella ~~and supported~~ and supported by the western powers.

During Abdulhamid he tried to improve a balanced educational policy according to the needs of country.

During the reign of political party of İttihad-ı Terakki, Ottoman empire lost most of his lands, particularly Balcanian countries which were under a strong nationalistic movements. As a reaction and defensive policy, this party, also started a nationalistic policy,

among the Turkish groups, which was supported by Ziya Gökalp and his followers. The founders and the followers of Ittihad-ı Terakki Party, were mostly Nationalist and liberal-secular, against İtilâf ve Hurriyet Party which was more conservative and pro-Islam.

Republican ERA and Republican Educational Policy

The founders of the Republic were coming mostly among the followers of Ittihad-ı Terakki Party. They adopted a more clear-cut nationalist and secular policy. The first educational congress of this period was held in Ankara in July 16, 1921, inaugurated by Mustafa Kemal Paşa. In his speech, he mentioned: "A national education (millî terbiye) and establishment of principles to improve the efficiency or organisation of education." This is a turn point of program since Selim III, starting a new era of nationalism together with western secularism. He continued saying that "the principles of education and learning, followed up to now, was one of the cause of historical declination. National educative program means, to stay far away from the foreign ideas and influences coming from east or west, which is not related to national qualities. I mean a culture compatible with historical national character".

In republican era, there were mainly 7 conferences and 9 councils of education which adopted above mentioned principles. The first program of Republican government, read in parliament in August 14, 1923, were taken out of these principles mentioned above. According to this program, founders of republican era, "intended to adopt western civilisation as a whole, including western secular culture, to improve the nation to the contemporary western level, and avoid the superstition, mystical feelings, scholastic ideas, and out-of-date principles of life, adopting positivism." They started to realize a very drastic and ambitious program which was called Atatürk Revolutions, and put them in practice by law,

In March 3, 1924, three very important revolutionary legislation were accepted by Parliament in six hours. They were :

1- Act of No.429, which abolished Ministry of DIVINITY and FOUNDATION (Şer'iyye ve Evkaf Vekâleti),

2- Act of No. 430, (TEVHİD-I TEDRİSAT KANUNU) Act of Unification in Education which abolished MEDRESSE and whole traditional

Islamic schools and put the whole educational institutions under control of Ministry of Education, which meant official acceptance of SECULARISM IN EDUCATION,

3-Act of No. 431, which abolished CALIPHATE (HAKAFT) system and expelled the Ottoman Dynasty from Turkey.

The most important one for our subject is no. 2 Act of Unification of education. According to this legislation :

- a) The whole educational and teaching institutions were put under control of Ministry of Education,
- b) The whole Medresses which were run by Ministry of Divinity and Foundation, were transferred to the Ministry of Education.

By this legislation, in Turkey, one thousand year old traditional Schools were completely abolished and the whole educational system became secular. After abolishment of all religious-school, to educate the people, to run mosques, and administer religious ceremonies, they established a kind of new school of Imam-Hatib. But due to their artificial structure, they were closed down later in 1930.

So the duality of education, or deviation from traditional education into secularism, started in 1839, were concluded by this law in 1924. These legislation were followed by other revolutionary legislations to transfer the whole social structure and cultural pattern of society into a secular one.

Second Educational Conference (2.Heyeti İlmiyye)

Was held in 1924:

They did some changes in the structure of the educational institutions and the curriculums. This were followed by two more conferences and nine council of education up to 1930.

First Minister of Education İsmail Safa declared the aims of education as follows :

- 1- Turkish youth will be educated as to be nationalist, populist, revolutionist, and secularist;
- 2- Elementary education will be spreaded to all over country and illiteracy will be eliminated; increasing the educated quantity will be the first aim;

3- Turkish nation will be raised to the level of contemporary civilisation."

First program was done only for elementary education. Later in 1948 the aim of whole education is explained. In 1962, 7 th council the aims of education was explained as follows : "The aim of Turkish national education is to educate whole members of Turkish nation, as to be joint and together in sorrow, happiness, destiny, as a unseparable unity, around national consciousness to improve their national, moral and human values, and to develop the nation as a harmonious society of free opinion, social mentality, democratic system, open to free-enterprise and giving credit to social responsibility and making her a distinguished member, in technics, knowledge, arts, and economy of contemporary civilisation."

After Atatürk, who was nationalist, secular and liberal the second president İnönü was secular and pro socialist. His minister of education Hasan Ali Yücel, adopted a marksist socialist educational policy and put into implication a new Village Institutes Policy. During this period between 1940-1946 instead of Nationalism, socialist and marksist policies were adopted in education. In educational and social policy, religion was completely disregarded and attitudes and philosophies were anti-Islam.

PLURALISTIC AND DEMOCRATIC APPROACH OF REPUBLICAN ERA

After 1950 ,in the election of multipolitical party system, Democratic Party got the rule.

After 1950'es during the last four decades, a pluralistic and democratic policy has been adopted and this policy has influenced the educational policy as well.

In the Basical Act of National Education of 1973 ,the aim of education was declared as follows:

"To educate full members of nation as a citizen, who is bound with Atatürk revolution which is declared at the beginning of Constitution, identify himself with moral, human, spiritual and cultural values of Turkish nation ,defend and improve them, love his family, country and nation, try to improve her, realize his duties and responsibility for his national secular, social Republican State of law, and practising them in his attitude."

Again in 12 th article of Basic Law of Education the phrase of Secularism is essential IN Turkish education " was clearly mentioned.

Three main targets are the dominant elements of the ruling Motherland party which is in the government since a decade:

- a- Freedom of faith and religion,
- b- Freedom of idea and opinion,
- c- Freedom of free-entreprise in the economy.

Under this policy the aim of education can be explained as to keep a balance between the following targets:

- a- National culture and independent personality,
- b- Secularism and cultural values,
- c- National and international tendencies,
- d- Freedom of education and responsibility of Sdcial-state,
- f- Pure knowledge and economic development.

During the last four decade of the Republican time the competition

between secular-western and national-conservative groups had taken place in a pluralistic democratic forum. The aim was and still is to reach a balance between these two groups of ideas.

Finally we can conclude saying that, in republican period a lot have been done and enormous strides have been made in the development of Turkish education, but much work remains to be done. Standards are not as high as they should be and the omission of moral and cultural values in the education system has led some spiritual vacuum in the youth which opportunities and possibilities provided for the improvement of cosmopolitan and opportunistic tendencies on the one hand, and was benefited some times by some extreme ideologies like communism and national socialism on the other hand.

We hope that democratic freedom will provide the opportunities and possibilities to reach the solutions.

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