

CHAPTER 5

ANTI-COMMUNISM IN TURKISH EDUCATION AND CHILDHOOD IN THE 1950S

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Abstract

The roots of anti-communism and conservative family ideology are well-founded aspects of national education in Turkey as a reflection of the country's joining the U.S.-led Western bloc during the Cold War and the ideological as well as educational policies of the bloc at the end of the 1940s. When the Democrat Party (DP) came to power in Turkey in 1950, it pursued a program that synthesizes capitalist development, liberal economic rights and conservative values. In a context where anti-Communism became the state's official policy, the increasing role of religion in education and the tightening control in schools appeased the political and ideological concerns of the DP government. Looking at these measures was crucial not only to understand the major changes that took place in the Turkish education system but also to analyze the social and political dynamics of the entire period. This article aims to find answers to the following questions: "How did Turkey's childhood policy evolve in the 1950s? Which ideological values and tools were used effectively in this process?" What were the differences and similarities between the U.S educational policies and the practices of the Turkish government with regards to education? In order to answer these questions, we will ponder the role of anti-Communism in education together with the role of experts from America in designing the education system in Turkey. Subjects such as religious education, schooling, educational institutions, and anti-Communism that played a role in the political construction of childhood will be analyzed. Debates in the Turkish parliament, comments in newspapers, and journals such as *Yeni Okul*, *Forum*, and *İlk Öğretim* (New School, Forum and Primary Education), published for educators, are the main sources used in this research.

Keywords: Education, Childhood, Anti-Communism, Turkey, Democrat Party.

1. Introduction

From the second constitutionalist period to the early years of the Turkish republic, all political debates, including the definition of what is *national* as well as the legal and the political framing of citizenship, shaped the political envision of childhood. In the first two decades of the republic, the solidarist and corporatist approach met with a secular and nationalist line, and together they established the keystones of political socialization. Despite childhood experiences and the variety of pedagogical approaches of the time, the policies of the new regime prioritized the regime's survival by putting secular *citizenship merits* before regional/traditional relations. Between the years 1946 and 1950, the direction of the Republican People's Party's (CHP) policies towards the United States of America (U.S) and the idea of liberalization did not change the *ethos of citizenship* or the basic dynamics of political socialization. After 1950, however, when the CHP rule came to an end, it became debatable whether one could talk about a major change on the scale of a revolution regarding state policies towards education and childhood.

The political atmosphere of the Cold War, which had started in the last years of the CHP rule came to the forefront during the rule of the Democrat Party (DP) as it affected not only economic but also socio-political aspects of life including issues of childhood and education. In this period, children received American aid (in the form of milk powder and biscuits) at school and as a part of this aid, American culture started to have a greater impact, especially in cities of Turkey. The spread of American comics, Hollywood movies, and the American cuisine were the first signs of the cultural influence. On the one hand, Turkish bureaucracy was content with the improving relations, both politically and economically, with the U.S, while, on the other hand, it was afraid of the possible harm of the cultural influence, which, they believed, might spoil the "*national ones*".¹ This dilemma was more tangible when education and other processes of childhood construction were concerned.

As the leading country of Western Bloc—of which Turkey has been a part—the U.S anti-Communism, which was based on conservative education and family ideology, also found a place in Turkey in the 1950s. During the period of DP governments, when anti-Communism was deemed crucial for national survival, the extension of religious education and implementing stricter inspection mechanisms in schools appear as important factors not only to understand the changes in education but also to analyze the political dynamics of the whole

1 In 1953, this dilemma was also reflected by H. Hüsnü Ciritli in journal named *Yeni Okul*, which published informative articles about the education system in the USA: "I fell disappointed seeing our children shouting and walking around like cowboys or native Americans in street of our big cities, and also I feel like there is a massive treat coming slowly from the unexpected one" (Ciritli, 1953).

period. In this study, we will briefly go over the effects of anti-Communism on education and childhood in the U.S given that American experts played a major part in re-organizing Turkey's system of education. We will also analyze the dynamics that affected the political construction of childhood, particularly in relation to religious education, schooling, and anti-Communism in educational institutions. Our study will draw on material from parliamentary debates, news items, and certain magazines (*Yeni Okul*, *Forum*, and *İlk Öğretim*) which were issued for educators of that period.

2. Anti-Communism and Education in the 1950s: The U.S and Turkey

During the Second World War and the post-war period, educational materials for children were mostly inspired by the anti-fascist approaches of the time. Among these, left wing and socialist writers took the lion's share. During this period, because anti-communism had not totally taken root in the U.S and Europe, a libertarian point of view continued to dominate the texts written for children. Children's literature of this period consisted of themes such as the struggle of ordinary people as well as the daily hardships of oppressed groups including peasants and the proletariat. However, this democratic environment started to change in the late 1940s as the Cold War took off and President Truman directly used children's education and literature as a tool to manufacture consent from the U.S public to accept his foreign policy preferences.² On the one hand, the curriculum was redesigned, while, on the other, the decision-makers extended their propagandist activities and aimed at parents and educators.

In Turkey, Nihal Atsız thought that the education system was dominated by socialist values and directly targeted the Minister of Education Hasan Ali Yücel and other left wing intellectuals as those who were responsible. Writing an open letter to the then prime minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu, Atsız claimed that communists in the Ministry of Education and the related institutions intoxicated children and he called for Yücel's resignation (Atabay, 2005). As one of his targets, the writer Sabahattin Ali sued Atsız for violating his right to live. Atsız received a sentence for six months but later it was reduced and eventually suspended on the account of provocation. Following the end of the Second World War, in the context of Truman doctrine and Marshall Aid, CHP considered education and anti-Communism together but it was the DP that took the real steps. In the struggle against the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), American leaders also focused on economic productivity, scientific and technological advances, for they believed that achievements in these fields would provide American people

2 Fearing that left-wing and socialist parties would gain power in post-war Europe as well as Greece and Turkey would be affected by Soviet, Truman had to convince Americans about the aid to be sent to Europe. Therefore, he exaggerated the treat of Communism by appointing a special duty to the schools (Hartman, 2008).

with supremacy and security during the Cold War. Against this background, investments in education increased significantly. An effective strategy to surpass Europe's success in education was attempted giving priority to natural sciences. Those tactics of the Cold War improved the quality of educational policy which had given priority to competitive individuality. However, anti-Communist propaganda surrounded children at home and in schools. The main claim was that communism wanted to corrupt the American family and children by infiltrating into education in the late 1940s. During the Korean War, militarist factors also added to the anti-Communist propaganda in the U.S.

In the 1950s, during the height of McCarthyism, fear, anxiety, and doubt became inseparable aspects of the hegemonic discourse at the center of which were children. Policies associated with Senator Joseph McCarthy showed that anti-Communism was not only influential in the U.S foreign politics but also in intellectual and cultural life. We can talk about a comprehensive process of inspection and control ranging from Hollywood to radio programs, from newspapers to publishers and libraries. This process, which was nothing but a "witch-hunt," also infiltrated children's publishing as well as school curriculums. The content and distribution of children's books as well as the terms of admission to public libraries were shaped in accordance with the tenets of McCarthyism. On the one hand, the author's of children's books, who were known or thought to be leftist, were banned; editors and publishers were stigmatized; and so-called "inconvenient" books were removed from school libraries (Mickenberg, 2006). On the other hand, new propagandist arguments were added to course books that were intended to influence readers against Communism. The Federal Civil Defense Administration³ and related departments of the U.S army sponsored and prepared these course books. Movies ranging from documentary to sci-fi became a part of the propaganda regime, which targeted both adults and children.

The political wave dominating the New World puts compulsory education and family at the center of anti-Communist propaganda regarding children and childhood. The white, Protestant, middle class American family in the post-war era was conceived of as the "first front line of the war" against Communism. The unprecedentedly high birth rates, the change in traditional gender roles, the diminishing control of parents on their children made anti-Communist politicians uncomfortable. It was claimed that Communism is the primary enemy of family and that any alienation among family members would be exploited by Communism. This is why McCarthyism advocated raising children strictly in line with family and national

3 Federal Defense Administration was formed in 1950 by order from Truman and became an official governmental body in 1951. It was publishing posters and papers emphasizing "treat of communism" under propaganda and being an important institution in American domestic affairs.

values with the object of preventing Communism and juvenile crime, which were the two main sources of anxiety for conservative groups at that time (Mickenberg, 2006).

School education, which was intended to be in coordination with the prioritization of family, was also regarded as *front line*. Bureaucrats and politicians, who worried about Communist infiltration, wanted to control all school activities. Accordingly, not only Communism but all collectivist views such as socialism and New Deal were also condemned and excluded from school curriculums. Therefore, uncritical patriotism and economic liberalism became the backbone of the education system, which was deprived of philosophical debates and critical thinking, with the help of civil society.

Another pillar of anti-Communist policies in education concerned educators. According to Mickenberg, in the first half of 1950s, the oath of allegiance was compulsory for teachers in several states in the U.S. Teachers were required to explicitly state that they were anti-Communists in order to prove their patriotism in front of directors, colleagues, and parents. Hartman points out that there were uncertain number of teachers who changed their pedagogical approach as a result of anti-Communist oppression. In addition, self-censoring was common among teachers due to the fear of losing their jobs (Hartman, 2008). In the 1950s, teachers were supervised by “informer” parents and students, who were “authorized” to monitor and inspect teachers and course books. Moreover, the “unwelcomed institutions” were listed in many states, and teachers who were members of them were ostracized from the profession on a legal basis.⁴ Starting from the first days of the 1950s, guiding materials were created for teachers on the duty to fight against collectivist messages and arguments. Those materials would later be distributed to countries engaged with anti-Communism such as Turkey.

2.1. From Single Party Regime to DP: Discussions on Education

In the 1950s, Turkey’s economic relations with capitalist countries intensified and comprador bourgeoisie flourished. Becoming a NATO member by sending its own troops to the Korean War, Turkey wanted to have the communism threat alive with the aim of maximizing the economic, technical, and military support it received from U.S. During its ten years of rule, the DP turned anti-Communism into a government policy and part of a strategy to oppress the opposition parties.⁵ The DP governments repeatedly resorted to anti-Communism discourse whenever there was a deadlock in domestic and foreign policy.

4 As a result, many teachers were ostracized from profession while others were forced to leave union activism (Mickenberg, 2006).

5 The arrests targeted Turkish Communist Party and were made mostly in the heyday of Korean War. Increasing the 141st and 142nd articles of Turkish Penal Code was in the agenda. In the second half of the 1950s, the CHP took a tougher stance and in response the DP accused it of being Communist.

Turkey's attempts to be a part of the Western culture reached its peak when the country's membership process of NATO came to the table because NATO was not only important for political and military purposes but also for the sense of belonging to the liberal democratic culture of the West. This way, it became easier for Turkey to draw the ideological line between the liberal democratic world and Communism as the "other." The peril of Communism overlapped with USSR that targeted Turkey's territorial unity (Yılmaz&Bilgin, 2005-2006).⁶

During this period, Turkey's desire to be a part of the West's fight against Communism was visible on every level, that is, not limited to politics but also extended to the realm of economy. For instance, it is not surprising that in the Izmir Fair (Between 1950s-1960s) Eastern Bloc countries were blamed for communism propaganda but the U.S received favorable attention to its popular culture products such as coke and television (Durgun, 2013). The process of engaging in the capitalist system was reinforced by mechanization in agriculture, urbanization, and extending highways as the DP's "Little America" dream started to penetrate into daily life in the form of movies, advertisements, and consumer products (Örnek&Güngör, 2013). Meanwhile, education took its share of these changes and it became the domain in which anti-Communist propaganda was felt the most, perhaps with the exception of the Turkish army.⁷

The DP was prone to follow Western experts' suggestions and reports, particularly those from the U.S, in the realms of economy and military as well as education. Its close ties with the U.S made the DP shape its education strategies in line with the views of American experts. Especially in the first four years, U.S experts on education poured into Turkey together with American aid fund. Those experts prepared reports about primary school, secondary school, technical education, and teacher training. During this process, the experts committee collaborated with the National Education Directorate and the League of Teachers.⁸ Education, like the army, was also under the influence of American culture as Turkish children started to be indoctrinated with national ethos and "Love for America" integrated with anti-communism.⁹

6 When Marshall Aid from USA decreased and economic imbalances appeared at the end of the 1950s, Turkey started to build close relations with Soviets, especially in the field of economy.

7 In this matter, we can say that the activities in Teachers College of Columbia University were important. Updated texts "against collectivism" were prepared for teachers under Citizenship Education Project.

8 Within this respect, American experts coming to Turkey were welcomed by provincial directors of national education. In the spring of 1951, American Culture Council and Council of Teachers together hosted an expedition about American technical books. It was decided that 6000 informative films would be shown at schools with partnership of Directorate of National Education and American News Bureau.

9 American effect combined with liberalism was occasionally seen in child raising. This dates back to pre-DP period during and after the Second World War but reached its height at the end of the 1940s, especially with the introduction of multi-party system and elections in 1946..

The U.S experts' reports were widely consulted in the process of forming and revising school curriculums and teachers' training,¹⁰ and especially in areas like public training and improvements in rural schools, which were issues of top priority for American experts. For instance, in his trip to countryside, Dickerman emphasized the role of teachers in public education and the importance of women's education. He also emphasized how proliferation of technological devices like radio channels affected daily life and underlined the importance of the leading role of village institutes in agricultural activities (Özgür, 1952). Kate Wofford, who was considered "a friend of Turkish nation" due to her contributions to post-WWII Turkish education, also underscored the significance of rural schools and exalted Turkish people with respect to their "modernity" in her home country (Karagöz, 1954a). During her period of duty in Turkey, she specialized in topics such as experience and leadership in education, the democratic view, development of necessary teaching and pedagogical skills, construction of an inclusive and comprehensive education system, ways to bring in girls to school, relation between girls' education and economic development, merging rural schools, accommodation for students, teachers self-questioning and self-improvement, educational infrastructure and staff (Durmaz, 1954). These examples show the critical role played by American experts in the establishment of the Turkish educational system in the 1950s.

It would not be wrong to argue that the main aim was to introduce radical changes in teacher training, public education, rural education, and village institutes, which were shaped in the single party period (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Faaliyet Raporu, 1951). Education was considered essential for welfare, citizenship, public health awareness, which improved productivity and labor force in various vocations. As a result, public education was one of the leading topics on the agenda of the National Education Council Meeting VI [VI. Milli Eğitim Şurası] (Tuncor, 1957).¹¹

Other topics discussed before the council included teacher training, determining the reasons teachers quit, holiday schools and the activities for students to spend their free time, creating new schools for special children called "problem child", the inequality between the public and private schools, problems in public education, and the need to handle these problems as soon as possible (Tütengil, 1957a). The agenda of council was based on the relationship between vocational/technical education and economy/industry as well as ways

10 These reports include the primary objectives, stages, and outcomes of education. It was Kate Wofford, who suggested to combine teachers training schools with village institutes.

11 In the same article, aims of public education is described as follows: eliminating illiteracy, enforcing national unity, social development, improving ideal of service, ethics training, giving love nature and history, giving domestic and foreign tourism knowledge.

to spread public education. The agenda had other topics including the orientation of general education to specific professions, the revision of content and hours of vocational classes and workshops, determination of school curriculum in line with the necessities of national economy, and training of staff (Forum Dergisi, 1957).

However, as one might expect, the process did not always go as smoothly as expected. American experts reported the difficulty of applying different education methods in rural and urban areas and that the teacher training system was not well-organized. Having similar ideas, some politicians from the DP changed the content of teaching certification [*Pedagogik Formasyon*] programs for teachers¹² and merged the programs of rural and urban schools (village institutes and teacher's training schools) teachers. Opposition parties, on the other hand, criticized the closing of village institutes and their transformation into primary schools by referring to these institutions' modernizing effects on village life. Apart from closing these progressive institutes, the new educational system did not meet the expectations of schooling, staff training, and increasing girls' school attendance. According to the opposition, girls' education and encouraging woman to be teachers were linked to motherhood and civic duty (Forum Dergisi, 1956a). Institutes were meeting the needs in accordance with the ideology of national education, raising healthcare, education, and administrative staff who were loyal to their village as well as spreading craft skills in public, and contributing to the economy of the country. Those were their unique assets (Tütengil, 1956).

The DP also revised teachers' training programs. Proposals included readings about children's individual improvement, activities that would promote their independence, prioritization of applied courses along with theories, standardization of teachers' training and curriculums with focus on vocational and artistic topics (Arslan, 1952). Education provided in rural schools had always been a matter of debate.¹³ Therefore, teachers were informed about the realities of village life and habits, and applied courses were seen as a way to increase student attendance in villages (Anıl, 1952). Additionally, it was also pointed out that teachers should take further responsibilities in village life, such as giving guidance for new schools in their areas (Binbaşıoğlu, 1952), and ensuring collective awareness through literacy projects (Çelik, 1952). The ideal teacher in the DP period was described as someone who would take on the mission of raising the country to the level of modern civilization not only by staying

12 Some courses including Sociology and History of Pedagogy in Teaching Certification Program were replaced with courses such as Psychology of Education and Sociology of Education, which was originated from the USA educational system. The contents of occupational publications for teachers were also radically changed.

13 Equivalent of village schools in USA were studied meticulously and final suggestions were shaped accordingly (Ülkümen, 1953a).

up to date on world and country affairs, but also by being constantly ready to shape his/her surroundings. For a village teacher, these requirements took a more concrete form that can be listed as knowing about the geographical cultural features of the village, raising public awareness about health, teaching new methods that would facilitate economic and household activities, and teaching reforms. On the other hand, urban teachers prioritized the knowledge of environment, the collaboration with student foundations, the improvement of cooperation with students, and the promotion of solidarity among teachers (Tütengil, 1957b).

There were recommendations to open gardens to enable students to apply what they had been taught in theoretical classes and promote their agricultural skills (Binbaşıoğlu, 1956). Educational practices were thought to provide local solutions for the public in line with the principles of a social state. A striking example was the planning of pavements between the village center and the school building by students as a part of their applied course (Binbaşıoğlu, 1954).¹⁴ Productivity and organization were the essential tenets of this process. To make such a reform possible, a pedagogical transformation was necessary, which would incorporate the principles of communal life into the system of education as well as the integration of the scientific, economic, technical, spiritual, and emotional capacities. Along with the encouragement of students to get familiar with manufacturing and other aspects of economic and technical life, it was also desirable to combine the pedagogy of democracy with the pedagogy of work (Öztürk, 1952). Within this framework, school was the place in which life itself was supposed to be experienced (Binbaşıoğlu, 1953). Accordingly, the government gave priority to create technical workers with vocational education while, at the same time, transforming the existing educational system in line with conservative values and anti-Communism.¹⁵

It should also be noted that the relationship between the U.S and Turkey was reciprocal. Teachers from Turkey were also sent to the U.S with the aim of employing those teachers, who familiarized themselves with the U.S educational system, at vocational schools that were to be opened in major cities like Izmir and Istanbul (Tompkins, 1955).

14 With this view, an ideal village is pictures as a place where all the young people support each other, no smoking and drinking, having cafes where only business is talked, safe and with children and youngsters attending school, symbolizing loyalty to Ataturk with bust, different views surviving together (Kurtuluş, 1952). Steps for develop the village are criticized as being too romantic, fanciful by the opposition politicians. According to them, development issue should be handled with a holistic view and realism. With this respect, productivity, production, and effective demand increase are suggested as solutions. Main elements of development were listed as increasing mobilization from country to city, establishing the proper infrastructure in urban areas, realizing individualist citizens out of patriarchal families, providing people with the opportunities to live by in cities, ensuring people to have a realist/secular vision based on winning and success (Yalçın, 1956).

15 Not only primary and high schools, but also universities were revised with some models. The most typical example of this were ODTU (Middle East Technical University) and Ankara University. Located close to Soviet Republic, the university built in Erzurum was especially significant in raising technical labor and mechanization as well as regional development and public health. It also focused on practice as well as theory (Garlitz,2013)

Pre-school education was another area that needed to be revised by U.S. expertise. Accordingly, Turkish teachers observed pre-school classes and wrote reports. Consequently, it was emphasized that it was important to open pre-school institutions with the aim of preventing a dangerous and harmful community profile pointing out how important pre-schools are for the children's social development, personal ideas and independence, solidarity, development of emotional, artistic, intelligence, and also physical development (Karagöz, 1954b).

These were steps that were taken away from the solidarist-corporatist approach of the early republic and were requirements of capitalist production relations, which are to be discussed under the title of democracy. In this respect, reports, journal letters, and articles by bureaucrats and teachers¹⁶ that were sent to the U.S from the Ministry of National Education in the 1950s were particularly interesting. In 1953, when the work of the education council and new draft laws were ongoing processes, "the features of an ideal teacher" took inspiration from the U.S, reflecting the wish to implement the same regulations in Turkey. Therefore, the above-mentioned features of an ideal teacher included a good education and vocational training, efficiency in interpersonal relations, physical and mental health, familiarity with democratic group techniques, creativity, a critical view, and the ability to transmit knowledge (Arslan, 1953). It cannot be ignored that the program had a specific emphasis on democracy. Along with the reflections on visits to schools, libraries, and teacher training institutions, it was not a coincidence that observers devoted significant place to reflections on raising "a democratic citizen" in the U.S journal articles. These articles underlined the relationship between the democracy, education, and individuality while they concluded that absolute equality in economic and social terms was not possible (Ülkümen, 1953b). Additionally, the U.S "constituted" luxury consumer products in every aspect of daily life in Turkey showing that it was the peak of the development of a country (Kolçak, 1953). In the outline of the U.S pedagogy system, priority was given to science, history, profession, and philosophy at schools as well as to the balance between home and school (Alpan, 1952). Moreover, examples were not limited to the U.S, and the educational system of other Western countries was also referred to from time to time (Godwin and Akman, 1952).

A local version of McCarthyism shaped the approach to childhood and education in Turkey in the 1950s. A pillar of this approach consisted of spreading religious and conservative values starting from primary school, while the other pillar was inspecting educators and

16 For example, in 1952 bureaucrats and teachers who went to Florida University Teaching College analyzed the U.S education system under the "Turkish Project" and attended foreign language courses. Many of them, including Osman Ülkümen, published their reflections in a journal named *Yeni Okul*.

children’s publishing in line with anti-Communist concerns. We can easily see these tendencies in the statements of Ministers of National Education during the DP years, especially Tevfik İleri, who assumed a tough stance against communism.¹⁷

2.2. Religious Education to be used as an Antidote of Communism During DP

The DP was founded on a balance between Celal Bayar’s secular views and the conservative arguments of religious freedom and freedom of thought. This balance not only rendered the discourse range and applications rich in variety but also served a political purpose. On the one hand, the DP tried to prove to republicans that they did not give up on secularity, and, on the other hand, they aimed to meet the demands of conservative actors.¹⁸ With that in mind, it is possible to argue that during the DP governments, religion was promoted in the public sphere and used as a medium in the fight for political hegemony while following modernist arguments. As pointed out by Ali Gevgilili, Islam for the DP was the auxiliary power of “the action program in favor of westernization and capitalist” priorities, which took the form of a “white revolution” (Gevgilili, 1987). Moreover, the ruling party wished to have this power under its absolute control. Known as conservative reform arguments, conservative groups preferred negotiation and combined religious discussions with the capitalist developmentalist approach.¹⁹ Islamist groups, which had to carry out underground activities during the single party period, started to be visible with the encouragement of DP policies. In the post-1950 period, Islamist groups had some conservative members of the DP MPs blame previous CHP governments for raising “children who were unaware of their own religion” (TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, 1950a) and threatened to take action about it. Emboldened by several regulations²⁰ such as the recitation of azan back in Arabic, the increase in the number of Qur’an courses and religious vocational schools, Islamic actors forced the government to “go further.” In this context, the DP was also exposed

17 The main actors of National Education during the DP years were as follows: Hüseyin Avni Başman, Nuri Özsan (parliament member), Tevfik İleri, R. Salim Burçak, Hüseyin Celal Yardımcı, Ahmet Özel, Tevfik İleri (second time as minister), Hüseyin Celal Yardımcı (second time as minister), Tevfik İleri (parliament member), Mehmet Atif Benderlioğlu. Among these ministers, the most effective one was Tevfik İleri, who served as different cabinet ministers approximately 4 years in total. As the chairman of Turkish Students’ Association (MTTB), İleri joined the the DP thanks to his nationalist-conservative ideology and made critical decisions while he was the Minister of National Education.

18 Demirel argues that Tanel Demirel Bayar objected the recitation of azan in Arabic and Qur’an recitations on radio. Menderes was the most suitable person to be affected by religious groups. Demirel also added that Menderes’s relationship with conservative groups was contingent on changes in balances of power (Demirel, 2011).

19 In his analysis published in *Türk Düşüncesi*, Sinan Yıldırım stated that during the DP rule, conservative groups had the chance to express themselves directly. Mentioning the ideas of Baltacıoğlu, Yıldırım also examined the relation between development and religion (Yıldırım, 2011).

20 There were different dimensions of “politics of religion” in the early years of the DP (Nal, 2005).

to bigotry and fanaticism blamings on a frequent basis,²¹ and the topics of childhood and education were among the main topics of discussion. As the ideological perspective of the second constitutionalism and the early republican cadres employed secular/national merits instead of religious divineness, their ideological and political framing of childhood faced not only liberal and conservative but also Islamist objections. Combining the ideas of economic liberalism and conservatism, the DP tried to incorporate these objections into government programs, political speeches, and the new educational system.

According to Ismail Kaplan, the DP programs were “totally a result of Cold War mindset” (Kaplan, 2005). The DP cadres were afraid and suspicious of left-wing movements while they also criticizing the single party period regarding the regulations about the economy and secularism. The two tendencies cross path at the freedoms of thought and religion. The DP government’s general attitude was to bridge economic liberalism with nationalist-conservatism, and that also shaped its attitude towards education and childhood. The education policy of the DP, which can be summarized as the promotion of “moral/religious values” over the reign of rationalism and empiricism (Kaplan, 2005), was actually a search of balance between “humanitarian values” and “moral values” based on “national ethics”, in Füsün Üstel’s words (Üstel, 2005).²² Even though the DP’s education policy did not foresee a decisive break from that of the early republican era, it was a part of the strategy to consolidate its popular support. This approach, which was later described as “moral development” by right-wing politicians, suggested that science and technical progress are not enough on their own to depict a “divineness” powered by faith and grandmothers as the backbone of the society. In this respect, children were expected to carry out their duty and professions under the motivation of serving the country with strong bonds with Turkish morals and traditions (*İlk Öğretim Dergisi*, 1955). Therefore, secular resources of the republic, except for nationalism, were subordinated under the reason of reconciling religious groups with the “regime”, engaging them within the system and hindering communism.

It is possible to talk about both continuities and shifts in opinion between the CHP and the DP in terms of their approach to education and childhood. An example of the former is the continuation of the national ethos and obedience-oriented indoctrination from a single party to a multi-party system. In both cases, we see that ethno-cultural and political forms of national

21 Islamist groups took the DP’s coming to office as an opportunity to criticize the republican project. Reactions took the form of the increase in vandalism against Atatürk busts. In cities, where busts were attacked such as Kırşehir, protests against reactionism appeared as well (Öymen,2009). The DP government then had no choice but to pass the law that is known as “Conservation of Atatürk’s legacy.”

22 The government programs that were concerned with education the most corresponded to the second Menderes government between March 9th 1951 and May 17th 1954.

identity were imposed on children and through them nationalist indoctrination was carried to parents. In that regard, the persistence of primary school curriculum, which was launched in 1948 with the purpose of nationalization, continued to be in effect for another twenty years despite all reform attempts (Üstel, 2005). Nonetheless, the DP policies differed from previous ones in defining the place of religion in education. In addition, they extended the ethno-cultural framework towards Sunni Islam. While the CHP made religious courses optional and opened institutions that provided “modern religious education”²³ prior to the 1950 elections, religious education became an integral part of public education in the DP years. The CHP’s above-mentioned step was not only about building closer ties with the Western Bloc, but it also aimed to respond to the opposition parties’ objections. Moreover, the overall attitude of civic and military bureaucracy, as the backbone of CHP cadres, continued its insistence on secular education along with a solidarist-corporatist worldview. The DP, on the other hand, linked education directly with anti-Communism, economic liberalism, and its project to establish close relations with the U.S. Within this framework, religious and moral education was regarded as the guarantee of national unity, and managers as well as school teachers had to assume additional responsibilities compared to the 1930s and 40s.²⁴

Another education reform made during the CHP period was initiated under the leadership of the prime minister Şemsettin Günaltay, who was known for his conservative views. A memorandum, published in February 1, 1949, laid the ground for students to be able to take religious courses two hours a week as an extracurricular activity for fourth and fifth grade students with their parents’ approval. The courses were scheduled on every Saturday afternoon and they were not related to children’s academic success. Parents, who wished their children to attend religious course, were to inform related authorities of their consent at the beginning of the semester while no procedure was necessary for other parents; in other words, all students were exempt from the course as long as their parents stated otherwise. As soon as the DP came to power, this arrangement was changed and religious courses were included directly into the curriculum with a memorandum on November 7, 1950 (Öğretmen Rehberi, 1958; Şahin, 2012). This was in accordance with the objections coming from conservative and Islamic groups, who advocated that “the ones who do not want the course should inform,

23 CHP brought about the question of secularism regarding the DP policies in the seventh general assembly. After the general assembly, strict executions of secularity were relaxed and, in the same vein, the first theology faculty was opened in Ankara University in which religious officials were trained. Some tombs were re-opened for public visits with legal changes on the law that mandated the closure of Islamic monasteries and tombs. In 1949, religion classes entered primary school curriculums as elective courses (Nal, 2005).

24 Tevfik İleri, the then Minister of National Education, gave a speech in Teachers Association National Unity Moral Education Congress and gave some hints about his views on the relation between anti-Communism and religion/morals. (Milliyet, 1951, April 24).

not the ones who want them.” The aim was not to facilitate the process but rather to meet conservative groups’ demands and appease micro pressure groups.

Some DP MPs also stated that religious courses for fourth and fifth grade students were not enough. For instance, Mehmet Özbey, a DP MP of Burdur, advocated that religious courses should be compulsory rather than optional. Özbey also suggested that religious courses should start from the third grade since most village schools tended to give education only until the third grade. He called those religious courses an “antidote” of Communism and received a lot of support from his fellow DP MPs.²⁵ During budget discussions in parliament in 1955, Abdullah Aytemiz claimed that religious courses should be compulsory at all levels of education. Alluding to educational practices for non-Muslim groups, parents should be deprived of the right to choose on behalf of their children.²⁶ His speech on Islam and secularism caused harsh debates in parliament and the opposition party interpreted it as the government’s stance. But they insisted on making religious courses compulsory (Milliyet, 1955, February 20). In the reflections of National Education Council Meeting V, we can see that there were attempts to render religious courses attractive for students, which would have them understand and respect ethical norms such as death and destiny as metaphysical fields. The council also decided to abstain from dogmatism and prioritize love and affection. As a result, religious courses became compulsory with credits (Seyhan, 1953).

In the coming years, DP politicians attempted to include Islam into the educational system as a precaution against the Communist threat and “radical activities.” Some groups, who thought that CHP’s understanding of secularity should be reformed in line with liberal values, also brought about similar arguments in the second half of the 1940s. However, unlike the CHP, the DP relied on “conservative” groups and the idea of “Turkish Muslim child” for justification.²⁷ In the National Education Council Meeting V (5-14 February, 1953) members declared their “loyalty to republican reforms” while they also discussed religious education. Despite objections against religious courses on the basis of maintaining secularism and

25 Özbey said that religious courses should not be optional but compulsory because anyone without the fear of God might do all sorts of evil deeds and be a communist. He added that a community without morals would eventually collapse. For him, religious courses should start at third grade instead of fourth or fifth grade. (TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, 1950b).

26 Aytemiz stated that religious courses were only given at primary schools and merely optional. He also said that if parents didn’t allow their children to attend the course, they would deprive their children of this honor for which they had no such right. For him, this was completely against Civil Code, which ordered parents to transfer their religion to children (TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, 1955).

27 A speech given by the Minister of National Education demonstrates the DP’s attitude: “For us constructing bridges, highways and schools are the ways to serve the nation. Giving religious education is no different than a service for the nation, it is not about politics” (Milliyet, 1952, May 25).

Article 4 of the law that abolished the Department of Foundations and Religion [Evkaf ve Şer'iyeye Vekaleti], the then minister of education, Tevfik İleri, defended religious courses for not being constitutional and but also useful for consolidating “national unity”.²⁸ As a result, the council decided the inclusion of religious courses in student credits. A similar formula was pursued by the DP concerning secondary schools in 1956. The first indication was given by Adnan Menderes in Konya in January 7, 1956. In his speech, he said:

“Now I want to tell you about our concept of secularity. Secularity means the state of being separate from religion while it also means freedom of conscience. We do not have any hesitation separating state and religious affairs. However, when it comes to freedom of conscience, Turkish nation is Muslim and it will always be so. Indoctrinating its religion to new generations and transmitting the principles of Islam is the unquestionable requirement of staying Muslim. If there are no religious courses in schools, parents who want their children to be indoctrinated will be deprived of this opportunity. It is not nice to deprive Muslim children of the natural right to learn their religion. That kind of deprivation and impossibility is against freedom of conscience. As a result, it is a right decision to include religious courses into secondary school level. We believe that any nation without its religion cannot be everlasting” (Milliyet, 1956).

The location of Menderes' speech and his audience was particularly symbolic.²⁹ Against the background of ongoing discussions of fanaticism, his speech addressed an enthusiastic crowd, which received strong criticisms from the opposition party. However, Prime Minister Menderes continued to lay emphasis on Islam as a constituent of national identity and advocated the extension of religious courses. In an article, the prominent conservative author, Peyami Safa, supported Menderes's promise about religious courses for being consistent with the DP's rhetoric from the beginning. It can be clearly seen that Safa's point was not incorrect given that Menderes' first government program brought the issue to the parliament (TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, 1950a). Safa, on the other hand, was in favor of religious courses as a government controlled “precaution” against reactionary activities. According to Safa, ninety percent of the nation demanded religious courses for their children and the ones who did not were only marginal groups.³⁰ What we see in Safa's views is the emphasise on Islam-based majoritarianism, which we will hear about more. Eventually, in September 1956, a

28 The constitutional law professor Bulent Nuri Esen responded the critics of religious courses (Milliyet, 1953).

29 In the first years of the DP, reactionary demands were on the agenda such as forbidding women to be outside without headscarves and allowing men to marry more than one woman in the party congress in Konya. It was also suggested that religious courses should be extended to secondary and high schools (Öymen, 2009).

30 Safa wrote the following in a newspaper article: “Atheist and snob may not give their children consent to attend religious courses. They all have the right. But rejecting the demand of 90% is no business of a Prime Minister in a democratic country” (Safa, 1956).

cabinet decision replaced a free-time course in secondary school level with a religion class.³¹ Attendance at this course, like its counterpart in primary school, was optional, but students, who took the course, had to pass the course to get through their education (Şahin, 2012). Similarly, in Autumn of 1956, the Ministry of National Education put another item on the agenda: giving “moral courses” along with religious courses in primary and secondary schools but the final decision was postponed.

The opposition disputed view evaluated the new arrangement of religious education with respect to the principle of objectivity. For them, adding Islamic religion to the national system of education was at odds with modern and contemporary values. Some authors criticized the content of religious education by pointing out problematic ideas in course books, some of which suggested that students along with their families should be and live like Muslims. According to the critics, such expressions set the stage for the revival of the old sultanate regime. They also compared current books with previous ones in order to emphasize the relative “objectivity” of the latter.³²

In addition to permanent religious courses in formal education, the DP also opened several religious and vocational schools.³³ Conservative organizations played a significant role in the opening of such schools and they provided solutions for the accommodation problem of their students.³⁴ In this way, religious communities, which were previously excluded from the public sphere, continued their influence through their support for religious and vocational schools. There were many issues to be discussed including which courses were to be given to teachers’ qualifications in religious vocational schools. At this point, an important disagreement arose within the Ministry of National Education and Directorate of Religious Affairs regarding the curriculum in the above-mentioned schools.³⁵ As some critics claimed,

31 The Minister of Education, Ahmet Ozel announced the decision as follows: “It was decided that along with primary schools, there will be also religious courses at secondary schools. Having a meeting with the representatives from Faculty of Theology, Faculty of Language, History and Geograpy, as well as Religious Affairs directorate, we already prepared the curriculum for 1st and 2nd grades of secondary school” (Milliyet, 09 September 1956).

32 In this context, A. Halis’s texts were alluded as an example of choosing Islam after studying each religion due to its suitability and simplicity (Mardin, 1956).

33 In an activity report dated 1951 by the Ministry of National Education, it was reported that the goal of turning religious vocational schools into schools was increasing employment (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Faaliyet Raporu, 1951). First opened in 1951-52 in seven cities, religious vocational schools increased to seventeen cities between 1957-58 and served about 3000 students (*İlk Öğretim*, 1957).

34 The leading example is the İlim Yayma Cemiyeti (Science Dissemination Association).

35 It has been decided that in vocational schools along with religious courses, literature, maths, and foreign language would also be given by in-field-teachers. Teachers assigned by the Directorate of Religious Affairs Religious taught courses while other courses were taught by teachers assigned by the Ministry of National Education. Every few years, the curriculum was revised.

the Ministry of National Education had no choice but to report that all the precautions were taken so that there would be “no activity against reforms” (Milliyet, 1952, October 20). Moreover, the Religious Vocational School of Vefa initiated a gesture and prepared a commemoration for a symbolic figure and hero of the secular republics, namely the sub-lieutenant Kubilay, who was killed in the city of Menemen (near Izmir) but the controversies over religious fanaticism carried on. Additionally, the rapidly rising number of religious vocational schools triggered the questions (Şahin, 2012).

Two technical problems emerged with the inclusion of religious courses into the curriculum and the extension of their scope as well as the opening of religious vocational schools. One was preparing new course books, and the other was teacher training for religious courses. In response, the government included religious courses into the curriculum of teacher training schools (Milliyet, 1951, September 1). In those schools, religious courses started to be compulsory in the ninth and tenth grades. By the end of the 1950s, everything was ready - including the laws - for High Islamic Institute. Opened in Istanbul, this institute took on the responsibility of training teachers for religious vocational schools as well as muftis and preachers who would later serve in the Directorate of Religious Affairs (Şahin, 2012).³⁶ The most important outcome of this process was the growing impact of conservative actors in education.

2.2.1. The Cold War in Schools in the 1950s: Control over Students and Lecturers

Aside from religious education, we should also focus on narratives of religious and national heroism, which became popular at the height of anti-Communism in the 1950s. In this period, there was an abundance of national ethos being transmitted (narrated) through sagas (legends) that were not much different from the examples of the early republican period. However, this time, anti-Communism and Islam came to prominence that went hand in hand with the Korean War and the 500th anniversary of Istanbul’s conquest. With the Korean War, for instance, schools turned into an extension of the battlefield and politically affected students and educators. Students were encouraged to send gifts and letters to the soldiers fighting in Korea as a way of expressing solidarity and remembrance. During this period, schools organized Korean day celebrations and designed “Korean corners” in schools (Özcan, 2013). Since its establishment in the 1920s, the Turkish republic had been trying to give students a collective sense of collective space in history, geography and citizenship classes. Even though the Korean War took place far away from Turkey, the war geography was presented as Turks’ former land in order to provide justification for sending Turkish

³⁶ During the opening of the institute, Tevfik İleri said that the purpose of this establishment was to train qualified teachers who would give religious courses at secondary and teacher training schools (Milliyet 1959).

troops to such a distant location. In letters where the Turkish commander Tahsin Yazıcı was addressed as “father” and soldiers as “brothers,” we observe that children identified with the army as a part of their family (Özcan, 2013). While synthesizing nationalism with the anti-Communist views, it is also possible to detect religious elements in the ideas of “Turkish forces fighting the communists” and the emphasis on “Turkish and Muslim ancestry.” While adorning heroic elements with militaristic themes, students offer their loyalty by sending letters with their bloods spilled on them to the battlefield as a way to show their readiness to a part of the war but their age would not allow it (Özcan, 2013). By taking these examples into consideration, one can claim that the first years of the 1950s were critical in shaping the minds of children and adolescents in harmony with the ideological necessities of the Cold War (Özcan, 2013; Öztan 2014). Stories of bravery in the Korean War were not only limited to Turkish soldiers as they extend to the allies’ similar deeds. In one story, the courageous acts of an American nurse are glorified (*İlk Öğretim Dergisi*, 1952). While Korea started to have a place among historical victories, in formal history writings the conquest of Istanbul and the Greco-Turkish War (also known as the Independence War in Turkey) were considered as examples of national power and awakening. Within this framework, concepts of border and distance lose their sense and consistency (Orhan, 1954 & Orhan, 1955).

Meanwhile, the rapprochement between the Turkish Armed Forces and civil schools was conspicuous. In the second half of the 1950s, the Ministry of National Education cooperated with military officers and organized events at schools, under the name of “National Defense Conferences.” The aim of these events were to boost “heroic feelings” among Turkish adolescents (Milliyet, 1957). At the same time, revolution history classes were again on the agenda. In 1951, İleri, the Minister of National Education, stated that the curriculum of Revolution History classes was revised and the principles of the Revolution were to be taught “impersonally” and “objectively” after listening to Enver Ziya Karal at the Turkish Revolution History Studies.³⁷

The “Ottoman heritage” was another occasional source of reference in the construction of Turkish national identity. The “conquest” [*fetih*] of Istanbul was among the elements of national pride, and it was without doubt that the annual victory celebrations that were held during the Korean War featured a high level of militarism and national pride. Historical narratives weaved around this event, together with Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror’s personality, and pre-Ottoman Istanbul was depicted as a miserable city in ruins and its

37 Another decision was to underscore the significance and mission of UNESCO in curriculum (*Milliyet*, February 08, 1951).

commerce in the hands of foreigners. The Ottoman “conquest,” in this context, brought about “salvation and reconstruction” by wiping out the exhausted empire of middle ages and starting a “new” order and reconstruction (Sürer, 1953). This was how the Ottoman image was portrayed in a positive light (Boran, 1953). In accordance with this narrative, Istanbul was handed to the Ottomans, who then turned it into the most glorious and important city of the world in the middle ages (Belen, 1953).³⁸ What we see in these texts is the self-confidence that derives from Muslim-Turkish ancestry (Öztan, 2012). This kind of worldview, that is, the capacity to make the world a better place due to one’s ancestry, even bloodline, would also be functional in making sense of the Turkish presence in the Korean War. Not limited to this, it was seen that the official narrative also gave place to Kemalist interpretations. According to this, the regime continued to embrace Atatürk as the founding figure, military leader, and champion of Turkish nationalism (*İlk Öğretim Dergisi*, 1953).

As stated earlier, protecting children from Communism was the primary goal in the new curriculum during the DP years. However, the Ministry of National Education was not content merely with curriculum arrangements. Akin to CHP’s last years in government, the DP made some efforts such as intervening schools’ internal dynamics, controlling curricular and extra-curricular materials, and disciplining students in line with anti-Communist goals. The prior fields of focus were books and magazines within educational institutions. Libraries were re-modeled after their counterparts in the USA, as places of social control and political surveillance of library checkouts with the help of managers and teachers. In the issue 403.321/35 of a circular published by the Ministry of National Education on February 20, 1954, the following statements can be seen about school libraries: “politically harmful books and magazines which preach against our national and social values must be sent to the publishing Management of Ministry of National Education with a brief report explaining the sufficient reasons.” (Kıralı, 1995). A committee was assembled in the Ministry of National Education approximately five months after the circular, and one of its first decisions was to brand fifteen-something books as “mischievous” and “wrong directions” to be confiscated from the market (Milliyet, 1954, July 05). In 1955, an astronomy book that was taught in high schools was also banned on the pretense that two editions of the book had photos of Stalin and Lenin in them. An interrogation was launched about the book author and the publisher (Milliyet, 1955, March 09).

38 Back-to-the-Ottomans and Ottomanism discourses drew critiques from various groups. It was debated especially because it was necessary to teach Ottoman Turkish at schools, and teaching cadres saw Ottoman literature as obsolete. Therefore, it is possible to talk about selectivity regarding the Ottoman history. The solution was turning towards the history Anatolia (*Forum Dergisi*, 1956b).

As a part of Turkey's integration with the West, students were encouraged to have pen-friends in other countries, which would enable them to learn foreign languages and more about the world. At the same time, the Cold War atmosphere made such correspondences suspicious. Given the possibility that "harmful ideologies" would spill from letters into children's mind, the school administration opened all letters beforehand to control their suitability. After the Constitutional Court did not allow such exercise without authorized court decision, the total responsibility was given to students and teachers. In a circular the Ministry published the following statement:

"As our schools are institutions of teaching and education and their aim is to protect students from various unfavorable effects and tendencies, our children, who already have high national duty consciousness, should be warned on a constant basis that harmful writings that come through in writing, should be submitted directly to the school administration." (Milliyet, 1952, April 22)

In the early 1950s, the media and parliament members repeatedly expressed uneasiness about students that were sent abroad for education showing tendency towards Communism. The person who started the discussion was the chairman of the Turkish National Student Union, which was an instrument of anti-Communism during the Cold War. Chairman Tasçioğlu, who came back from Paris, claimed that sixty percent of the students were under Communist influence. Upon this, Turkish National Student Union asked the Ministry of National Education to call back the students studying in France with government scholarship and to cut the foreign exchange supply to those who studied with their own financial means (Milliyet, 1950). In the following days, the issue came to The Grand National Assembly of Turkey, and students' financial hardships abroad were associated with their tendency towards "abominable ideologies". Some members offered the enhancing of policing measures and keeping detailed track of students that had gone abroad.³⁹ We should also note that suspicions were raised also towards foreign students that came to Turkey. After two Iraqi students were deported for being members of the Communist Party, the police started to keep close track of Middle Eastern students in Turkey. Another measure was investigating the students who were to come at Turkish universities beforehand (Milliyet, 1954, May 28).

As the Ministry of National Education thought that Communism originated from external sources, the ministry sent a circular to city governors in 1958. In the circular, it was stated

39 Tevfik İleri confessed that they sent inspectors to observe the students abroad but could not get effective results (TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, 1950b)

that students, teachers and youth branches were prohibited from inviting foreign students to Turkey (Milliyet, 1958).

To keep teachers away from socialist ideologies, two measures were put in place. One focused on anti-Communist propaganda and the other was inspections. In the magazines intended for teachers it was claimed that communism was an enemy to democracy. As mentioned previously, there were arguments in educational texts that contravene the demand for absolute equality, and those efforts can be read as efforts to refute Socialism and Communism. For example, in a speech on the meaning of democracy and education, Necip Alpan told teachers the following:

“The psychology of individual differences shows us that there is no equality, no fabrication. There cannot be equality in society in the way that Communists acknowledge. To accept this equality means to act against nature. According to current realistic comprehension instead of family, school is a government institution that educates children according to society’s ideals. Its aim is not to raise children to the same level but to improve their abilities according to their strong competences (Alpan, 1953).”

As was the case in the USA, McCarthy-like anti-Communism significantly affected the process of teacher training. After a long smear campaign and the closing down of Village Institutes for being centers of Communism,⁴⁰ nationalist/conservative circles constantly repeated their claim of leftist teachers that “poison” students. The DP rule took an instant action and justified the decision of closing Village Institutes (Göktaş, 1954).

From the first days of the Democrat Party rule, the ministry brought denouncements about teachers’ political activities to the agenda. For example, Tevfik İleri, Minister of National Education, during the budget committee, announced that teachers who perform leftist activities were identified and would be sent to court after interrogation (Milliyet, 1951, January 18). On this subject, we see that the opposition, CHP, went along with the ruling party. Just like in the USA, high numbers of teachers were interrogated upon suspicion of spreading communism propaganda, and some of them were given discipline punishments and even imprisoned while others were discharged.⁴¹

40 Revision about schools training teachers were the top topic in the agenda of the National Education Council V. One suggestion about combining teachers’ training schools and village institutions was the closing of village institutions as a result of severe anti-Communist propaganda of this period.

41 Newspapers were full of news about arrested teachers as a result of denouncements (Milliyet, 1951, 12 February) (Milliyet, 1952, June, 08).

3. Conclusion

During the peak of the Cold War in the 1950s, the DP government built their policies upon the CHP's liberalization attempts, which were forced from outside, and took them to another level by adopting the USA education model. On the other hand, the DP increased religious references within national identity and belonging. There were some similarities between the early republican and DP policies in assigning education a crucial role in nationalist indoctrination. However, during the DP era, the solidarist corporatist approach of the early republican era was replaced by the image of the "Turkish Muslim child" and conservative populism.

Combining democracy discourse with anti-Communism, DP governments defined a relationship among development, individualism, and notions of freedom, which were limited by the ideals of economic liberalism and conservatism. This tendency was also visible in government policies of childhood and education. The change in the status of religion courses, the increasing number of religious vocational schools, allowing religious communities to accommodate students at those schools became the reality of the 1950s. Promotion of religious merits under the control of DP governments was framed and presented as a necessity in the fight against both bigotry and communism. Nevertheless, it can also be easily argued that anti-Communist practices stood in the way of new educational advancements and oppressed educators.

The U.S made significant progress in natural sciences in the 1950s. Unfortunately, it is not possible to say the same thing for DP's education policies which were based on the U.S model. Although the number of children attending school increased, there was no significant improvement of quality. Technical education, which was a popular concept during the rule of the DP, could not go further than developing the capacity to maintain and repair imported agricultural machinery. After the 1956-1957 academic year, vocational schools turned into mainstream secondary schools with more practical courses as institutions that guided students to professions because raising workers at vocational schools was considered to be directly related to national development. In the meantime, raising qualified students became a secondary concern. Among the factors that undermined the success of secondary school education were the relatively low number of qualified teachers as teaching became less appealing as a profession, the burden of preparing employment-oriented curriculum, unproductive free-time activities, and inefficient testing and grading systems (Cizrel, 1957).

To sum up, Turkey attempted to revise its education system by applying the U.S model with which it aimed to have close relationship. As a result, the new education system combined the basic principles and aspects of the U.S educational system with conservative elements and orientation towards national “development,” especially in economic terms. In this context, religion was thought to serve as an ideological glue to hold Turkish national identity together and particularly an effective precaution against the threat of Communism.

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