

**THE POLITICIZATION AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF  
CHILDREN'S PLAYS IN LATE OTTOMAN AND EARLY  
REPUBLICAN PERIOD**

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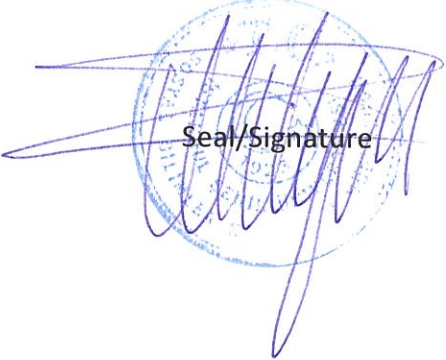
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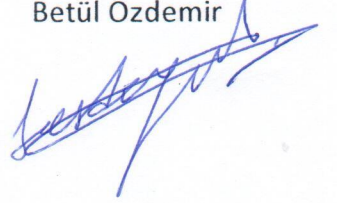
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Betül Özdemir



## ABSTRACT

### THE POLITICIZATION AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF CHILDREN'S PLAYS IN LATE OTTOMAN AND EARLY REPUBLICAN PERIOD

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This study examines the dominant childhood policies of the late Ottoman and early Republican Periods through state-controlled children's plays and the prominent early childhood education strategy of the western world in the nineteenth century. The main argument of this thesis is that the play, which is generally referred entertaining activity and considered to be not serious, was used by the Ottoman and early Republican policy makers in the past to discipline individuals and regulate the population on behalf of the state. In this way, this study focuses on the politicization and institutionalization of children's plays as a new pedagogical way by the state authority in the late Ottoman history and the Early Republican era. The methodological approach taken in this study is a mixed theoretical framework based on the theories of education, bio-politics and play. The research data in this thesis were taken from children periodicals, primary and secondary sources and official historical documents. This study revealed that children's plays, reinvented as an effective and scientific early childhood education method, were used by late Ottoman Policymakers to create a productive, talented and disciplined civil servant, by the Republican officials to regulate the population and to reach the ideal robust child figure in Western civilization. In a more general term, children's plays were modern response to the imperial-national crisis.

Keywords: Children's play, early childhood education, bio-politics, state ideology

ÖZ

OSMANLININ SON DÖNEMİNDE VE ERKEN CUMHURİYET DÖNEMİNDE ÇOCUK  
OYUNLARININ POLİTİZE OLMASI VE KURUMSALLAŞMASI

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Bu çalışma Osmanlı son döneminin ve erken Cumhuriyet döneminin egemen çocuk politikalarını devlet kontrollü çocuk oyunuyla ve batı dünyasının on dokuzuncu yüzyılda öne çıkan erken çocukluk eğitimi stratejisi ile incelemektedir. Bu tezin ana argümanı, genellikle eğlenceli etkinlik olarak adlandırılan ve ciddi olmadığı düşünülen oyunun, geçmişte Osmanlı ve erken Cumhuriyetçi politika oluşturucular tarafından bireyleri disipline etmek ve halkı devlet adına düzenlemek için kullanıldığıdır. Bu şekilde, bu çalışma Osmanlı ve erken Cumhuriyet döneminde devlet otoritesi tarafından çocuk oyunlarının siyasallaştırılması ve kurumsallaşmasına yeni bir pedagojik yaklaşımla odaklanmaktadır. Bu çalışmada ele alınan metodolojik yaklaşım eğitim, biyo-politika ve oyun teorilerine dayanan karma bir teorik çerçevedir. Bu tezdeki araştırma verileri çocuk dergilerinden, birincil ve ikincil kaynaklardan ve resmi tarihi belgelerinden alınmıştır. Bu çalışma, etkili ve bilimsel bir erken çocukluk eğitimi yöntemi olarak yeniden keşfedilen çocuk oyunlarının Osmanlı son dönemi politika oluşturucuları tarafından verimli, yetenekli ve disiplinli bir devlet memuru oluşturmak için, Cumhuriyet yetkilileri tarafından nüfusu düzenlemek ve Batı medeniyetindeki ideal çocuk figürüne ulaşmak için kullanıldığını ortaya koydu. Daha genel bir ifadeyle, çocuk oyunları emperyal-ulusal krize modern bir cevaptı.

Anahtar Kelimeler: çocuk oyunları, erken çocukluk eğitimi, biyo-politika, devlet ideolojisi

*I dedicate this study to my lovely boy Tark. Without him, I wouldn't be motivated to write this thesis.*



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	iv
Öz.....	v
Dedication.....	vi
Acknowledgments.....	vii
Table of Contents.....	viii
List of Tables.....	xi
List of Figures.....	xii
CHAPTERS	
1. Introduction.....	1
1.1. Literature Survey.....	4
1.2. Methodology.....	10
1.3. Theoretical Framework.....	12
1.4. This Study.....	20
2. The Child Sitting for the Power: The educational developments of the Tanzimat and the Second Constitutional Period.....	24
2.1. Political and social developments in the history of late Ottoman modernization.....	24
2.2. The developments of primary school in the Tanzimat period.....	30
2.3. The Second Constitutional period and primary education.....	35
3. The Children Playing for Being Tiny Citizens: The establishment of state kindergarten and the rise of children’s plays as a pedagogical method in the Second Constitutional period.....	39
3.1. The development of state kindergartens in the Second Constitutional period.....	39
3.1.1. The origins of kindergarten.....	39
3.1.2. The establishment of state kindergartens.....	41
3.1.3. Ottoman private Muslim kindergartens.....	42
3.2. Kindergarten curriculum.....	44
3.2.1. Moral education.....	45



3.2.2. Physical education.....	46
3.2.3. Children’s play as a new pedagogical way.....	47
3.2.4. The education methods of Froebel and Montessori and the kindergarten curriculum.....	48
3.3. An analysis of the concept of play and children’s games in child periodicals printed in the Second Constitutional period.....	53
3.4. The real motivation behind the use of children’s plays by the Young Turk regime.....	57
4. The Child Playing for the Future: The politics of child welfare and the Children Protection Society in the early republican period.....	61
4.1. The new republican regime.....	61
4.2. The rise of the child welfare issue.....	64
4.2.1. The birth of Children Protection Society.....	66
4.2.2. The child issue and the re-birth of orphanages for educating and discipline children.....	69
4.2.3. Replacement of the family by an idealized teacher figure.....	73
4.3. Development of kindergarten after World War I.....	75
4.3.1. John Dewey and the impacts of his play theory on the Children Protection Society.....	78
5. The Child Playing for Civilization and Bio-power: An analysis on children’ plays on printed media in republican period.....	81
5.1. Robust Turkish Child magazine as promoters of child welfare and health propaganda.....	81
5.2. Fashioning children’s plays in civilizing process.....	84
5.2.1. Re-reading republican children’s games in the light of Norbert Elias’ civilizing process and Foucault’s discipline.....	84
5.2.2. Children’s playground and civilization and discipline.....	92
5.3. A health game by Sadrettin Celal Antel and bio-power.....	98
5.3.1. Foucault and bio-power.....	98
5.3.2. An analysis on Sadrettin Celal’s health game with bio-power.....	99
5.4. Children’s happiness and civility.....	103

6. Conclusion.....	106
References.....	115



LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1. Schedule for three years old children in kindergartens.....52



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 5.1. American children showing Japanese culture through play.....	91
Figure 5.2. A group of children on a slide in the orphanage garden.....	94
Figure 5.3. Day Nursert: Children play in garden.....	95
Figure 5.4. Day Nursery: Children at play.....	95
Figure 5.5. Day Nursery: Children in sandpit.....	97
Figure 5.6. A health schedule.....	100



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

“Socrates states, all the preliminary education required for dialectic must be offered to the future rulers in childhood, and not in the shape of compulsory learning either’. Testing through labor, pains, and contests should not be allowed because ‘no free person should learn anything like a slave. Forced bodily labor does no harm to the body, but nothing taught by force stays in the soul. Forced bodily labor does no harm to the body, but nothing thought by force stays in the soul” (Lewis, 2013, p.202).

In the last decade, in Turkey children’s play as an effective pedagogical method has become very popular among educators and parents focused on the cognitive and mental development of children. Particularly, private kindergarten sector dominated and manipulated this tendency of parents. They invented a new life zone called “play age” for children aged 2-4 years. Institutions calling themselves play academies offer parents special play and activity programs that change weekly. Children go to these centers once a week before kindergarten to play and socialize with their peers for an hour, accompanied by their parents. Thus, play age children gain new skills and knowledge about life and their environment by playing under the supervision of “specialist educators”. Moreover, parents pay prices ranging from 85 to 115 Turkish lira for their children to play for one hour, even though there are many empty and free areas and playgrounds outside. For kindergarten cases, the Montessorian educational method, which is based on self-directed play and activities, is also very popular in pre-school institutions today. Under the Montessorian system, children engage in literacy, everyday life practices, and their culture and belief through playing. This tendency to use children’s play as an educational method traces back to the late Ottoman period in the Turkish case. However, late Ottoman and early republican governors used children’s play with completely different content. With the modernization effort in the Tanzimat period, late Ottoman policy-makers and educators used children’s play as an effective educational method in order to imbue imperial ideology and loyalty into its tiny citizens in an unforced and entertaining way.

Later, early republican governors regarded children's play as an effective instrument to instill in children the republican ideology such as national ideas and duties. In one sense, the Turkish Republic, as a nation born of war, attempted to solve serious problems in a manner considered as unserious and childish called "play". The use of Children' play for the serious goals of legislators and states is directly related to the context of modernization. The aim of this study is to evaluate this claim in the context of the modernization history of Turkey.

Certainly, the invention of children's play as an effective educational tool in 19th-century Ottoman history is directly related to the changing patterns of how the European intelligentsia addressed the notion of childhood starting from the seventeenth century. This re-invention of childhood as a stage of life distinct from adulthood materialized in the work of the prominent intellectual Philippe Aries in his well-known book *Centuries of Childhood* (1965). Aries claimed that childhood has a history that evolves over time. He postulated that there was no childhood concept in medieval society (Cunningham, 1998, p.1197). Reformers became interested in children in terms of psychological and moral concerns at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Therefore, the idea of the original sin attributed to the child changed, and the child figure became innocent and weak. This innocent child figure was to be managed through education and schooling. For Aries, the rising interest in education led to a change in the whole society in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Heywood,2001 p.19). Indeed, Aries regarded the discovery of childhood as a socially constructed phenomenon created by the early modern period (Heywood, 2001, p.20). Locke and Rousseau were two outstanding intellectuals that published on childhood and education in the eighteenth century. According to Locke, children were born neutral, neither bad nor good, and he believed in the transformative capacity of education over society (Heywood, 2001, p.20). The other prominent figure of the eighteenth century in terms of the re-building of childhood was Rousseau with his popular book *Emile* (1817). Similar to Locke, Rousseau opposed the traditional belief in Christianity that children were born with original sin. Rousseau believed that children have their own way to recognize the world. He also classified childhood stages and appropriate education methods. Indeed, the enlightenment

period defines the child as an innocent being that needs to be educated (Heywood, 2001, p.20). The German educators, Froebel and his pedagogy revealed the popular tendency among the European intelligentsia of the nineteenth century in education and schooling. “The Froebel kindergarten based its pedagogical approach on a theory of childish innocence rather than original sin and promoted rationality rather than religious obedience. It was designed for all classes, not simply for the poor” (Allen, 2000, p.20). Froebel established the institution of kindergarten where little children were educated and socialized with peers under the guidance of teachers. His pedagogy featured play as an effective learning method of children. According to him, kindergarten also was a place where children learn to play. Innocent children had their own way to perceive the world and that way was play, a childish learning activity. As Bauman quoted, the well-known thought of Helvetius, “l'education peut tout” (education can do anything), dominated discourse among modern intellectuals and policy-makers. Thus, modern rulers began to consider education as a solution to the crisis nations faced as well as an agent for cultural transformation in the nineteenth century. Child-related interest and educational reforms entered the agenda of Ottoman governors and intellectuals with the Ottoman modernization effort in that period. As Duben and Behar have claimed, Ottoman elites interested in children from different perspective until the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century (Duben, Behar 1991, p.228 in Libal, 2002, p.112). Children became objects of future prosperity and valuable as future citizens that provide military strength and ensure imperial power. Since the children were a symbol of imperial salvation, providing proper education to these children became more important for Ottoman elites. As a part of late Ottoman educational reform, the first state kindergartens were established with regulations in 1912. In the 1913 kindergarten regulations, “the kindergarten was described along with the old style primaries as institutions that served the children’s spiritual and physical growth through the use of games, handcrafts and lessons appropriate to their ages” (Fortna, 2000, p.262). Children games, especially healthy and moral ones, stood out most in educating young children as a new pedagogical way in the curriculum of state kindergartens. After World War I and the War of Independence, children’s play as a new pedagogical way were used effectively by republican policy-makers and educators to create

healthy and intelligent citizens who were extremely loyal to the Turkish national identity and homeland. This strategy was also used to teach collective national duties and manners under the supervision of the new modern educational institutions and their educators.

Froebel's kindergarten institutions and his mentality spread around both developed and non-developed countries in the 19th century while adapting to the indigenous political needs of each country. Similar to the Turkish case, kindergarten and children's play were used as a serious agent in several political settings in the construction of national identity. Like, the Turkish Republican era, for Australian case, kindergarten and children's play were used to ameliorate the urban poor as a child-saving attempt. Under Dewey's influence, bathing parties were organized for the health and wellbeing of children (Clyde, 2000, p.102). In another case, Chinese kindergarten was imported from Japan instead of the West for cultural and linguistic reasons. Chinese educators believed in the importance of traditional play and singing for children's moral, intellectual and physical development. Wang Yangming, an education theorist, asserted that singing exposed children's energy and protected them from depression. For him, teaching children etiquette through play and singing was good for their health (Bai,2000, p.145). As for Vietnam, after the colonial rule ended in 1945, the kindergarten model was borrowed from Russia in order to nationalize children as socialist people. To this end, physical activities, playing and singing were promoted by rulers (Vasavaul,2000, p.125). And finally, in America, kindergarten was used for adapting immigrant children to American culture. In summary, "Whether in missionary and colonial setting or as a welcomed acquisition, clearly, the sub-text of kindergarten curriculum was not only to nurture..., but also to influence core national values and family practices" (Wollon,2000, p.5).

### **1.1. Literature survey**

"Play is older than culture", said Huizinga at the very start of his well know book *Homo Ludens* (Huizinga,1955, p.3). Indeed, he made a huge impact in the field of play theory with his idealized play definition. Scholars from different disciplines necessarily referred to Huizinga's play analysis in their work, whether by criticizing



his theory or improving his theory. The nature and importance of play as an inseparable part of human life has been described by various scholars. Many academic disciplines have been interested in play in different ways and tried to define play and conduct research into the concept of play in various manners and from various perspectives. For psychologists, play is a way of making diagnosis and it is a therapy method. Sociologists examine play from broader perspectives, such as the relationship to political environments. At this point, play can be defined as a grand social system used by those holding power for the sake of their own advantage. Anthropologists attend to the link between play and rituals within festivals and traditions (Sutton Smith, 1997, p.7). The diverse perspectives of many other disciplines on play analysis can be listed. However, the important point in here is that play, which was once seen as childish and insignificant, has gained importance as an effective research interest and method among different disciplines. Considering that child studies have only recently gained importance among researchers, it is not surprising that studies on children's play are still very limited in social science. In conclusion of a brief literature survey, it could be said that most of play studies remain limited to psychological analysis. They mostly focused on the cognitive and social development of children. In other studies, play is used only as one of the supporting components to describe some tendency of certain historical periods or situations.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the books and articles on children's play are generally based on American and European culture. A number of significant analyses and discussions on the potential of children's play in ensuring democracy were presented by John Dewey, the American philosopher and foremost educational theorist. In his major book *Democracy and Education* (1923), Dewey included a section on "Play and Work in Curriculum" in order to debate the natural link between the play and work that eventually led to uniting the needs of children and society. In other words, Dewey attempted to explain the functional effect of children's play in creating a democratic society (Beatty, 2017, p.424). Dewey paved the way for many academic debates on this issue. Besides this, Howard Chudacoff's book, *Children at Play: An American History* (2007) offers a chronological history of play from children's own perspective

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<sup>1</sup> Such as Cüneyd Okay, 2000, "Meşrutiyet Çocukları"

in the American case. Howards tried to display the transformation of play over two centuries by using a various instrument such as diaries and autobiographies of people from all strata of American society. The book is one of the most extensive works written on the history of play. The other work is *Children Play's in Diverse Cultures*, edited by Frank Hooper (1994). This work concentrated on diverse aspects of children's play in eight different cultural settings, such as Japan, Taiwan, Africa and Italy, observed from an American perspective. Each setting offers different empirical contribution and unique cases. Roberta Wollons' collective work, *Kindergartens and Cultures* (2000), also referred to children's play indirectly over different kindergarten cases in various cultural settings. The book, which made an important contribution to the history of kindergartens, chronologically started with the birth of kindergartens as a German institution founded by Froebel, the German pioneer educator, explored how the kindergarten model modified itself in each setting. Therefore, since Froebel established the first kindergarten to exercise his own play-based pedagogical methods, the book adverted children's play over eleven case studies. Wollons' works was very significant for this thesis in that he presented how kindergarten and children's play were used as a serious instrument in various political settings, in particularly for construction of national identity. Fortna's study on *The Kindergarten in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic* (2000) provides a very useful analysis of the historical background of early childhood education and its relation with state power and social and political crisis in both the Ottoman and Turkish republican cases. The importance of Fortna's study is that he explores the reasons behind the establishment of the first Ottoman kindergarten by the state and displays the continuity and disengagement between Ottoman and early republican eras on the development of kindergarten. Much of the previous research on the history of kindergarten in the Turkish case focused on only the historical developments of these institutions chronologically.

Sutton Smith is another significant scholar who has focused on the concept of play and its relation to political settings and aims; in particular, he worked on the social and political construction of play. In his book *Ambiguity of play* (1997), Smith explained seven type of rhetoric of play. He used the concept of rhetoric as a modern

discourse in order to explain the relationship between play and its ideological values and beliefs within society and cultures. In the rhetoric of play as a power and identity, Smith shows how play is used for political aims in order to control and regulate society through festivals and sports. The rhetoric of play as progress was about the usage of children's play for the moral, social and cognitive development of children instead of enjoyment. Smith's theory on rhetoric is a seminal work for scholars working on the concept of play and its ideological and political use. One of them, Jo Ailwood, in his article *governing early childhood education through play* (2003) debated how the concept of play has been constructed as a technology of governmentality in early childhood through Foucault's governmentality and Smith's rhetoric concepts. Another striking work is "Outdoor play in wartime Japan" (2017) by L. Holliday Piel. Her case study is based on oral history concerning Second World War years in Japan. She focused on adult recollection of their own childhood in order to explain war time developments and how state propaganda affected the everyday life of children through children's play. He used interviews and magazines of the period to better understand the wartime cultures and mood. According to Piel, children's play was produced by wartime leaders as a form of educational tool, physical activity so as to instill Japanese identity with children.

Although numerous studies have investigated children's play and its political and ideological use, only a few examine the concept of play within the literatures of bio-politics. Indeed, Foucault's term bio-politics provides a substantial and functional research context for analyzing the production of social and political forms of body and life over children's play. Tyson Lewis, in his work *bio-power, play and experience in education* (2009) carried out a successful discussion on "how forms of educational bio-power regulate and control the educational body" in schools in the United States. (Pierce,2013, p.32) Lewis based his account on Agamben's concepts of bare life and political life and its pedagogically produced process in schooling in United States. In doing so, Lewis also attempted to explain how new democratic subjectivities are constructed pedagogically within bio-political practices by using Dewey's theory of experimental learning. From a different angle, another scholar, Hemming, in his paper *renegotiating the primary school: Children's emotional geographies of sports,*

*exercise and active play* (2007) focused on how United Kingdom state policy used school practices of sport and children's play in order to construct healthy individual bodies against the danger of child obesity. He examined the practices of the political construction of the body in a UK educational setting through Foucault's bio-power theory. According to him, schools provide children active play and exercise so that they can play outside school with enjoyment. Thus, the state regards children's play and physical activities as serious tools through which children actively and voluntarily participate in every part of life in order to reduce child obesity rates.

Studies that examine modernist bodily politics through Foucault's bio-power have been generally limited to gymnastics and sports literatures. Harvey and Sparks made a successful contribution to this debate with their works *the politics of the body in the context of modernity* (1991) which examines gymnastics in 19<sup>th</sup> century France and its political usage by modern states through Foucault's bio-politics and Bourdieu's habitus concepts. Apart from Harvey and Sparks, another important work to analyze bio-power and its effects on sports and gymnastics is Guilianotti's *sport and modern social theorist* (2004). In that book, Guilianotti focused on fourteen different theorists including Foucault and his term bio-power, and their view on sports and its relation to the political construction of the body. Recently, there has been renewed interest in bio-political examination of Turkish sport and physical education in the field of Modern Turkish History. Yiğit Akin is one of the scholars who work on sports and physical education in early republican Turkey (1923-1951). In his book *robust and vigorous children* (2004), Akin examined state policies on sports and physical education in the early republican era within Foucault's bio-politics theory. According to Akin, the Kemalist governors used sports and physical education to improve the physical, mental and moral health of both children and adult people. By regulating and controlling individual bodies and lives through sport and systematic physical activities, the state aimed at creating ideal citizenship for the sake of military service and industrial development. Two recent PhD theses have also analyzed physical education and its political usage by the state in the late Ottoman and early republican periods through Foucault's theory of bio-politics. Firstly, Sabri Çakır, in his thesis "Contemporary transformation of physical education in the second

Constitutional period” (2013), examined modern transformations in the field of physical education in the late Ottoman schooling setting. Focusing on the curriculum and the speeches of prominent educators of the period, he debates the political status of the body through physical education in the context of bio-politics practices. Similarly, Sevcan Başboğa, in her thesis “Childhood Constructed by Its Physical, Moral and Disciplinary Characteristic in Children’s Magazines of the Early Republican Period” (2018), focused on the idealized child figure of the Kemalist regime in the process of nation-state building. Başboğa examined popular children’s magazines to investigate the dominant discourse and practices of the period to show the physical, moral and disciplinary construction of ideal Turkish childhood. These two studies analyzed modernist bodily politics in a specific period of Turkish history, but only mentioned very briefly children’s play and its political use.

This literature review reveals that there is a gap in the field of study of bio-politics in analyzing the political construction of individual bodies and lives through children’s play. However, there is a strong relationship between children’s play and the formation of modernist bodily politics in Turkish history. The main significance and uniqueness of this thesis is that it analyzes the process of political and modernist construction of the body through children’s play and kindergartens in the late Ottoman and early republican periods in accordance with the dominant Western political and social discourses of the nineteenth century in a theoretical frame. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first study to examine body politics extensively in early Turkish history through children’s play. Besides, children’s play is generally used as a supporting component to describe certain periods and situations in historical research. This study aims also to interpret late Ottoman and early republican political and social developments from the viewpoint of children’s play. In this manner, this study examines the process of the politicization and institutionalization of children’s play in the context of Turkish modernization through Foucault’s bio-politics term, Bauman’s educational theory, and Elias’s civilization process.

## 1.2. Methodology

This study has two research pillars. The first one is the late Ottoman and early republican childhood and education history studies with special focus on early childhood education and children's play. Apart from the secondary sources mentioned above, this study primarily is based on the archival documents in the Ataturk library archives and the prime ministry Ottoman archives. Documents classified in children's periodicals in the late Ottoman and early republican periods, the booklet of the Children Protection Society, school books, school regulation reports and the books of prominent intellectuals that support state policy provide the necessary data for this thesis. The primary sources will be used to reevaluate the data received from secondary sources within the theoretical framework. Since this study investigates the process of politicization and institutionalization of children's play by late Ottoman and early republican states, official reports and documents are the primary sources for this study in that they are state-centric. Apart from official documents, this study employs qualitative methods and is primarily based on critical discourse analysis on both late Ottoman and early republican children's periodicals which had an organic link with the state educational policies or the state itself. In this sense, I use these state-centric periodicals as a barometer for the cultural climate and social and political context of the periods. In other words, I use them better understand the background of the dominant state discourse and propaganda on children's play. Fairclough explained critical discourse analysis as

To systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power. (Fairclough, 1995, p.132)

At this point, critical discourse analysis focuses on how texts and practices are ideologically formed by power relations, and it also explores how text and speech frame the representation of the social relationship and social identities. As Fairclough claims, apart from Foucauldian historical and social-context analysis, CDA concerns with semiotic and linguistic analysis by theorizing and analyzing social process and

social transformation. Thus, CDA allows for a wider and deep research possibility. This study is based on what Fairclough refers to as textually oriented discourse analysis. To better understand the ideological subtext of children's plays in power relations of the period I use articles and their titles, pictures and illustrations in periodicals and booklets of the Children Protection Society, intellectuals 'books, prominent policy makers and educator's speeches and texts, political documents. As Taylor claimed that:

"CDA is the combination of linguistic analysis with social analysis which makes CDA a particularly useful tool for policy analysis in comparison with other approaches. It is also valuable because it is explicitly critical: first, in relation to its concern to reveal the discursive construction of power relations; and secondly, in its commitment to progressive social change" (Taylor, 2004, p.436).

This study concerns children's play and kindergarten toward the end of the Ottoman Empire and early republican period. This is because early-childhood education and children's play entered the agenda of Ottoman state policy for the first time in 1913. The study will then go on to the republican period as a turning point of the trajectory of early childhood education and children's play in 1923. Fortna has stated that due to the continuity between the education strategies of the late Ottoman and early republican eras, an alternate periodization is essential (Fortna, 2000, p.254). Another importance of analyzing educational strategies in the early republican period is that they form the basis of the current educational policies of Turkey. In that way, this study focuses on the gradual politicization and institutionalization of children's play as an effective educational method by the state and certain other actors along a nationalist line between the late Ottoman and early Republican periods. Since early childhood education is an integral part of schooling in modernity, the birth of kindergarten and its development in the Western world is deeply analyzed. Such analysis is also important to better understand the subtext of the Ottoman and Republican kindergarten. Besides, the institutionalization of play is directly related to the establishment of the kindergarten. The political use of Children's play as an educational tool in the late Ottoman and early republican eras is analyzed with five well-known theorists: Bauman, Elias, Huizinga, Smith, and, in particular, Foucault.

These five theoretical frameworks help to explore the subtext of educational development, changing patterns of childhood perception and the political usage of children play. The main reason of analyzing development of silyan schools and primary schools in Tanzimat period is to show changing trend and perception toward early childhood education as well as the developments and different political debates on the way to the establishment of kindergarten in Late Ottoman period.

### **1.3. Theoretical framework**

Bauman's educational theory provides the possibility of deep analysis on educational reforms and their real intention in the late Ottoman and early republican eras. Bauman is an important scholar who provides a deep analysis of modernization and its possible effects on the self in political setting. In his well-known book *Legislators and Interpreters* (1989), Bauman states that the history of the modernity started with the Enlightenment and carried with itself a new type of state power that controls and manages all resources so as to organize and discipline society with a certain model. Modern intellectuals are the mediators who guide society in accordance with these certain rules of the state authority as well as justifying state authorities and activities as true and real. In other words, intellectuals play a key role in legitimating the authority of the ruling classes that produce universal information based on scientific rules and reason by disseminating the fictional reality of the state among its citizens. For Bauman, in times of crisis, such as the French Revolution, the role of intellectuals was to replace the previous cultural power of the church with rational designing powers of the enlightened state.

Bauman's work on education offers a conceptual framework to have a better understanding of the relationship between education as a social and political agency and its function and impact on society. He claims that education emerged as a response to the "*crisis-management*", and a desperate endeavor to organize the unorganized, to bring order to social reality "which had been first dispossessed of its own self-ordering devices" (Bauman, 1989, p.69). For the ruling class, education was essential for eliminating popular culture and its harmful dominance over the society. Indeed, according to Bauman, the history of education is intertwined with the history



of schooling starting from the age of reason. Therefore, it is difficult to recognize the goal that the original symbolizes. School became a place and effective political agency where individuals learn, internalize and exercise social rules and necessities as the whole society. The functional nature of the education and the school is linked to the tasks of designing society in accordance with the mentality of reason in all social institutions and in everyday life. Thus, as a part of a broader strategy of public education, professional educators and schools were crucial agencies that aimed creating a specific generation who was exposed to illogical and wrong laws in the past, and who was capable to obtain the virtue of the reason. Education offered the opportunity of creating a new kind of people who were free from prejudices and ready to be shaped in the ingenious hands of the legislators. Instead of the presence or absence of education, there was another dichotomy called bad or good education which decided what was wrong or right.

According to Bauman; ruling class regarded school as a temporal precaution to control society, which would become a school itself (Bauman,1989, p.72). Therefore, when planning the school, the idea that transforming it into a miniature version of the future society was practical. The origin of the enlightenment mechanism was not disseminating knowledge but to control and manage it. What Bauman attempts is to display the substance of the enlightenment project which was contradictory. For Bauman, the project of the enlightenment was “by necessity, a two-edged one: aimed at the 'enlightening' of the state, its policies and its methods of action on the one hand, and at the containing, taming or otherwise regulating of their subjects on the other” (Bauman,1989, p.75). With this explanation, he claims that another contradiction regarding the management of the ruling class of the society disappeared. That is to say, people were regarded as citizens of the future, a periphery, which would be placed in the orbit of the “center” and equipped with its values and norms. At the same time, with or without the people’s consent, and their forced supervision, if necessary, the people were perceived as a “multitude” that had to be kept under the control of the “center” and made harmless. On the other hand, legislators both saw this “mobile vulgus” as unpredictable, ignorant and variable with a sense of ridicule and horror and also became kind to these people who were

guarantees of their future pastoral guards and patronage. The people were important and visible for the ruling class, policy-makers and intellectuals as long as they functioned and were useful for the mission of the center. Otherwise they were only idle and dangerous crowds that had to be guarded by specialists; in short, they were only “*the others*”.

Alongside Bauman’s disciplinary and regulatory education theory, Foucault introduces a new kind of power technique called bio-power. Foucault’s biopolitics concept fits exactly the popular state tendency in the transformation of the educational policy in the early republican era. It also provides an insight in analyzing the relationship between Turkish state nationalism and its policies on the bodily construction of the population in the 1920s and 1930s through children’s play. Starting from the late eighteenth century and focusing on the bodily construction of the subjects in terms of discipline and regulation of the population as a whole, Foucault defined bio-power as power that penetrated human life. With his own words, it is “power’s hold over life”.<sup>2</sup> For him, towards the end of the eighteenth century, the old classical and sovereign power gave place to two kinds of modern power, bio power and discipline. Actually, Foucault took a step further than Bauman’s theory. According to Foucault, in addition to the old sovereign power, also mentioned by Bauman, a new kind of power emerged, containing the old classical power but working in a completely different way, with different devices and for different purposes. Thus, the man as a living-being became the main object and target of the modern power. The biological power centered on the control of the state. In one sense, Foucault says, “...the right of sovereignty was the right to take life or let live. And then this new right is established: the right to make live and to let die” (Foucault, 2003, p.239). Foucault expresses that the aim here was to hunt for the conversion in the direction of techniques and mechanisms of power. According to him, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, different techniques of power appeared that were mainly interested in human bodies. He elaborates this development as follows: “They included all devices that were used to ensure the spatial distribution of

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<sup>2</sup> Foucault’s definition

individual bodies (their separation, their alignment, their serialization, and their surveillance) and the organization, around those individuals, of a whole field of visibility” (Foucault, 2003, p.242). These disciplinary techniques also control of bodies for economic productivity. However, in the second half of the eighteenth century, a new technic of power emerged. Foucault identified this new power as a non-disciplinary. This new technology of power was incorporated into the old disciplinary technology but also used it for its own purposes in order to penetrate substantial disciplinary practices. According to Foucault, unlike disciplinary power, this new power did not focus on man through his body, but man as living-being. The old disciplinary power attempted to govern the multiplicity of men by reducing this multiplicity to individual bodies which could be trained, guarded and used. Although the new power was also interested in the multiplicity of men, it did not see them as only individual bodies but as a global population which is impressed by biological processes such as birth, illness, death and production and so on. Knowledge was part of its strategy to apply power. Measuring and calculating each individual of the population mathematically and reaching a general conclusion from its result about population to control and regulate them for the sake of mostly state power were all functions of the techniques of the bio-power. This new power monitored biological processes and system of life through the data and statistic of the birth rate, health checks, mortality, morbidity and longevity. Moreover, a whole range of economic and political difficulties connected with these biological processes were also the main objects of bio-politics’ wish to control and regulate.

The other important point of bio-politics is to generalize knowledge at the mass level of the population, or in other words, to produce general consent. In a sense, The mortality rate has to be modified or lowered; life expectancy has to be increased; the birth rate has to be stimulated. And most important of all, regulatory mechanisms must be established to establish an equilibrium, maintain an average, establish a sort of homeostasis, and compensate for variations within this general population and its aleatory field. (Foucault, 2003, p.246)

Bio-power gazed upon the regularization of life itself. On the other hand, it strove to calculate the possibility of mass events and eliminate their impacts. Foucault claims that bio-politics emerged as a necessity to take care of details that escaped the old system of sovereign power for better administration and regulation. He summarized the situation overall as follows: "So we have two series: the body-organism-discipline-institutions series, and the population-biological processes-regulatory Mechanisms-State" (Foucault, 2003, p.250).

Medicine and hygiene were popular phenomena in the nineteenth century that provided the connection between scientific knowledge of organic and biological processes. That means, "medicine is a power-knowledge that can be applied to both the body and the population, both the organism and biological processes, and it will therefore have both disciplinary effects and regulatory effects" (Foucault, 2003, p.252). Indeed, Foucault presents a theory of bio-politics to better understand the background of the relations between prominent social, political and economic trends and their discourses in the nineteenth century. According to Foucault, bio-power was the relation between biological possession and the discourse of power. His theory provides an understanding of why pedagogical knowledge gained importance for elites and policy-makers as a tool of regenerating its own citizens starting from late Ottoman period, and it especially reached its peak in the early Turkish Republican era.

Norbert Elias, a German sociologist, is the writer of a well-known book called civilizing process. In his book, Elias attempts to explain the connection between state power and changing attitudes in society toward behaviors and etiquette in Western Europe. Elias tries to depict various forms of state control on people's bodily functions through changing etiquette for the sake of the civilizing process in Western societies. Elias tried to show that all patterns of behavior and habitus that people regard as proper and normal are socially constructed. Elias's theory fits exactly the social and cultural transformation process in early republican Turkey. Indeed, republican policy-makers attempted to create ideal and civilized citizenship in a national-building process with new etiquette and bodily formation.

The main argument of this study is actually based on Huizinga's play theory, in his landmark book *Homo-Ludens: A study of the play-element in culture*. Dutch historian Huizinga considers play as an essential wellspring of culture and adds that culture is playful from the beginning. According to him, true play has to occur outside of practical life as a free and meaningful activity. In other words, Huizinga regards play as an activity which is separate from ordinary life and done for its own sake. Thus, for him, people do not play to carry out a practical task, they play for the benefit of the living quality which is a part of the act of playing. He explains play as:

A free activity standing quite consciously outside ordinary life as being not serious but at the same time absorbing the player intensely and utterly. It is an activity connected with no material interest, and no profit can be gained by it. It proceeds within its own proper boundaries of time and space according to fixed rules and in an orderly manner. It promotes the formation of social groupings that tend to surround themselves with secrecy and to stress the difference from the common world by disguise or other means. (Huizinga, 1949, p.13)

It could be said that Huizinga regards play as solely a subjective phenomenon. Another important point is that Huizinga's definition of play rejects function-centered theories which explain play as a medium for the fulfilment of social and biological need. According to him, this need is extrinsic to the obvious goals and rules of playing. Such a claim implies that "playing could in theory have been replaced by some other behavioral technique capable of fulfilling the same function" (Hector, 2006, p.3). Presenting *ludic* experience as contingent is in contradiction with his core argument that human culture originated in play. Hence, any function-centered theory eventually fails to clarify why people play. Huizinga also rejected this functional explanation for the same reason as anthropology.

Certainly, adult play is generally associated with the sphere of leisure and considered as unserious. Most communities view play "as an interruption or a break from the ordinary world of seriously daily obligations" (Hector, 2006, p.6). However, Huizinga claims that there is no sharp distinction between playful and serious in children's

play, or even in adult's play. For instance, most people view festivals as very significant and treasured moment of their communal life. Thus, as Hector states, "anything unserious may become serious and conversely, serious matters are sometimes also approached in a playful spirit." (Hector, 2006, p.6). This argument is the basis of Huizinga's thesis. Since the separation of the playful from the serious remains vague within culture from the start, it could be said that politics, religion and art all display an extremely playful side. However, there are some criticism about Huizinga's play theory for not explaining political and social function of play. Thus, these criticisms concentrate on the cultural function of play and explain the role of play as "...to mediate social conflict; that major social forms of play are introduced and manipulated for their own benefit by the rulers of society; and that social play can be used even as a text to *interpret* the power relationships within the culture" (Smith, 1997, p.74). This is another way of saying that children's play is a social context for cultural learning and ideologies. This perspective of play -as ideological system- provides a basis of the schema as cultural rhetoric (Salen, Tekinbaş, Zimmerman, 2004, p.517). The term rhetoric is actually used by contemporary play theorist Brian Sutton Smith in his seminal work *The Ambiguity of Play*, which is a comprehensive and interdisciplinary study of cultural ideologies surrounding play. Sutton Smith states that "The word rhetoric is used here in its modern sense, as being a persuasive discourse, or an implicit narrative, wittingly or unwittingly adopted by members of a particular affiliation to persuade others of the veracity or worthwhileness of their beliefs" (Smith, 1997, p.8). In a more general sense, rhetoric is a method of expression or discussion that comprises underlying beliefs and values or a method that seeks to persuade others that it is correct (Salen et al., 2004, p.517). It is similar to the element of norm claimed by Foucault. Rhetoric manifests itself in discourse of philosophy and many other forms. In conclusion, cultural rhetoric is a means of expression representing and propagating specific values and beliefs. At this point, Sutton Smith's rhetoric of play specifies how play represents the ideological values of a specific time and place and how particular forms and uses of play perpetuate and justify these values. Thus, creating play and games also means creating culture and society; thus the values, ideologies, beliefs, processes and situations existing within culture are reflected through the materials, environment

and rules of the play (Salen et al., 2004, p.517). In the chapter on the rhetoric of play as power and identity, Sutton Smith states that play was idealized as a way to overcome the problems of politics, administration and education. In other words, as Bauman says, as a disciplinary and regulatory agency, play was a response to all these crises. Sutton Smith claims that in our modern society, adults attempt to domesticate children by introducing playgrounds, organizing sports, especially gymnastics and dancing, and determining particular equipment for these activities. Thus, play becomes an effective medium of confirming and perpetuating the power and identity of the community and the state. This kind of formal organization of play was indeed used by late Ottoman rulers and the republican state as a new pedagogical way for social mobility and for fusing a nationalist identity. Collective physical activities in the kindergarten curriculums, Boy Scout movement and mass gymnastic festivals under the Young Turks and Turkish Republic were all a form of bonding and cooperation to promote national consciousness and uniformity within society. As Smith says, "These performances were not just frivolous entertainments for the courtly class; they were serious activities meant to serve the nation's controlling institution, the absolute monarchy, and to enhance that identity" (Smith, 1997, p.94). Thus, play integrates people into broader social and cultural wholes naturally and by common consent. This way of looking at the function of the play was stated by Socrates about the issue of early childhood education. Socrates suggests to educators "...don't use force to train the children in these subjects; use play instead. That way you'll also see better what each of them is naturally fitted for..." (Lewis, 2013, p.202).

Indeed, Huizinga addressed this issue asking these questions: "What actually is the fun of playing? Why does the baby crawl with pleasure? Why does the gambler lose himself in his passion? Why is a huge crowd roused to frenzy by a football match?" (Huizinga, 1949, p.2). For him, the answer of these questions was related to the primitive character of playing. The nature of play offered people to play with its fun and its tension and its hilarity. Huizinga highlights that all play is voluntary action. Play is an arbitrary and leisure time activity. It is not a task by its nature. However, Huizinga says that when play is used as a cultural function, it is subject to the concepts of duty and responsibility. At this point, the fact that the play has an order within itself, a

certain ethical scope, a structure that increases physical power because of its inherent tension and provides inner strength, and above all it is being a voluntary activity made play attractive in the eyes of modern rulers. Particularly, in the nineteenth century, Friedrich Froebel and Maria Montessori were modern pioneers highlighting the significance of play and the institution of kindergarten in early childhood education. These two educators considered that play, at least a certain type of play, contributes to the emotional, moral and intellectual growth of children. Play, which is often associated with leisure time and is regarded as an unserious activity, becomes intertwined with seriousness in the field of educational policy. Even if play seems as straightforward and simple as a naturally entertaining activity, actually it was used for discipline and regulation of human conduct by a serious agenda such as school and state policy. This is where the playful embraced the serious. Modern rulers of the nineteenth century used children's play for disciplinary and regulatory purposes. In other words, as Foucault claimed, play began to be ruled by the norm that flowed into both disciplinary and regulatory power.

#### **1.4. This study**

Because the emergence of childhood as a distinct category in the early modern period was extremely politicized, the notions of power, conflict and ideology became crucial in studying children's play and kindergarten as a leading agency. The dominant and global discourse of the nineteenth century that believed children are innocent human beings led to an increase in the importance of education as an effective control mechanism over these innocent tiny being. Indeed, on verge of a major political crisis, late Ottoman intellectuals were affected by educational developments in Western countries. Fortna stated that they "...placed a premium value of education as an ameliorative agent that could be used to help redress the unequal relationship with Western power" (Fortna,2000, p.252). Within the context of modernization of education efforts, pedagogy emerged as a crucial and modern educational instrument both to remedy the unequal relationship with Western power and to imbue citizens with imperial ideology. In that way, children's play as a new pedagogical way gained importance for Ottoman elites and policy-makers in order to manage and guide these little tiny citizens in an unforced and entertaining way.



In the light of all this, the main argument of this study is to show that play, which is often associated with leisure activity and regarded as not serious, was treated by late Ottoman and early republican educators and policy-makers as a mechanism of social engineering. More specifically, it was used to provide socialization, civilization and discipline of the child through controlling their bodily function as a symbol of national renewal as a part of state-supplied education. As Foucault stated in his book *archaeology of knowledge*, this study is a search for the origin of dominant discourses of the late Ottoman and early republican state on children's play as a part of early childhood education policy and its transformations and contradictions. Since Ottoman and republican modernization was not independent of the dominant Western politics of that time, the approaches to and state practices of early childhood education, and especially children's play will be discussed in the theoretical framework. The objectives of this thesis are twofold: firstly, to provide a theoretical base for finding out the role of children's play in the politics of Turkish modernity; and secondly, to contribute constructively to the growing debate on the politics of the body, from a new perspective, namely children's play. At this point, this study searches for these following questions: How did children's play and its management become a concern for the modern state? What was the role of children's play as a political agency in the social transformation of the late Ottoman and early republican periods? And finally, how was children's play used as part of a modernist politics of the body?

This study includes an introduction, four chapters, and a brief conclusion. The first chapter outlines the institutional and ideological conditions shaping the development of public primary school in the Tanzimat and Second Constitutional periods within the context of the political, social and economic history of the late Ottoman Empire. The first chapter started with a brief summary of political and social developments in the Ottoman Empire which led them to give importance to public primary education. In parallel with this, the chapter continues to explore counter opinions of the period about the modernization of primary school through prominent educators and policy-makers with different views on educational modernization. In the third part of the chapter, I explain institutional and political goals of the Ottoman state in promoting

public primary education. The transformation of the expected social and political functions of primary education will be analyzed in two stages: Quran schools until 1908 and new primary schools in the Second Constitutional era. These schools are important because they both gave education to children of the same age group (5-6), which is also the target group of this thesis. The aim of second chapter is twofold: firstly, to explore process of the establishment of state kindergarten for the first time in the late Ottoman period after the attempt to modernize primary education system, and with this, the rise of children's plays as a pedagogical method in the Young Turk era; secondly, to analyze children's play with state-centric children's periodicals which were published in Young Turk era within my theoretical framework. The second chapter begins by exploring the origin of kindergarten in order to better understand the subtext of Ottoman state kindergarten. It then concentrates on the aim behind the establishment of state kindergarten, its curriculum and the rise of children's play in this curriculum as effective educational tools in accordance with Froebel's and Montessori's educational theory. In the second part of this chapter, I analyze the concept of play and children's games using child periodicals printed in the Second Constitutional Period through theoretical debate in order to understand the real motivation behind the usage of children's play by Young Turk Regime.

The third chapter begins by revealing the political and social conditions after the post-war period of the newly established republican Turkey. The chapter continues by analyzing the rising child welfare issue and the transformation of approaches and policies on child issues which led to the establishment of the Children Protection Society (CPS) as an outstanding welfare institution and its development. The main reason of placing the CPS in the core of this chapter is that it operated much like state-supplied institutions which put in the practice of Republican state educational policy and social reforms through orphanages, day nursery's, dispensaries and many other institutions and printed media. In other words, this institution as a modernist project dominated public discourse on child-centered policies and society during the early republican period. The second part of the chapter focuses on examining the relationship between the association and national public concern over the child issue. In the third section, Dewey's model kindergarten and his play theory and its effects

on Republican early childhood education, particularly on the early childhood institutions of CPS, were investigated. Finally, in the fourth chapter, the articles from *Robust Children Magazines*, the opinions of prominent educators and the pictures in the booklet of CPS on children's play and sports will be examined to have a better understanding of the dominant public discourse about children's plays within Elias's civilization process and Foucault's bio-politics concept. The reason of focusing only on *Robust Children Magazine* is that it was the only magazine connected directly with state policy and most of the writers in this magazine were also the governors of the republican state.



## CHAPTER II

### The Child Sitting for the Power

#### The educational developments of the Tanzimat and the Second Constitutional Period

##### 2.1. Political and social developments in the history of late Ottoman modernization

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman Empire was confronted with two vital problems: i) Ottoman statesmen were faced with the necessity of modernization in the face of the technical development of the West, and the jurisdiction of the Ottoman government was invaded by separatist nationalism in the different regions of the empire, especially in the Balkan provinces. The Ottoman Empire in that period contained several provinces stretched from North Africa and the Arab states to the Balkans (Weiker, 1968, p.453). The many nationalities were linked together only administratively; economically and culturally, they had been left mostly autonomous. However, towards the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottomans faced both internal challenges and external threats that threatened their existence. The empire faced with rising nationalism movement especially in the Balkans as well as with European military, political, and economic imperialism. The new ideology of nationalism penetrating Europe inevitably started to extend to the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire. "The transitions from communal to territorial autonomy and then to political independence gained momentum in the Ottoman Empire through this new ideology of nationalism" (Gocek, 1993, p.531). The nationalist uprisings of the Balkan provinces started with the Serbian revolt of 1804 and reached their peak subsequently in the Bulgarian revolt of 1875. After the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878 ended in defeat for the Ottomans, Bulgaria appeared as an independent state. After this defeat, together with capitulations which made non-Muslims almost independent, Muslims began to question significantly the authority of the central state and its military power. Seen in this light, the Ottoman's hold on the Balkans was very fragile by the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

As a consequence of these crises, the efforts of reformation emerged with a sense of urgency to save the empire from collapse by adopting some political, social and technological institutions from the West (Weiker, 1968, p.451). Before the *Tanzimât* period, the first attempt of reformation began with the military reforms of Selim III - against rising nationalism in the regions of the Empire- as a result of the ideas of French Revolution between the years 1792 and 1807. The main motivation behind this reformation was that in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Ottoman statesmen considered that Western military superiority was connected to Western training and technology; thus, they started to import foreign military equipment, instructors and techniques. Indeed, in the Ottoman history, the process of modernization was considerably connected with the needs of military innovations to strengthen the state's highest authority and its army units. Ottomans considered military reform as their primary need. Moreover, the Ottoman state prioritized the establishment of educational institutions solely with a fundamentally military characteristic for the rapid modernization of the armed force. It became crucial for the Ottomans to reform the army and the navy, for which was essential to acquire the principles of Western scientific knowledge.

The *Tanzimât*, meaning restructuring, of the Ottoman Empire, was a period of reformation that began with the proclamation of the Imperial Rescript of the Rose Chamber in 1838 and concluded with the first constitutional era in 1876. By the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, in the period of the *Tanzimât*, the Ottoman Empire attempted to carry out various reforms to modernize the Ottoman state, army, and society to secure its territorial integrity against independence movements by the non-Muslim communities of the empire as well as to reinforce the state's power and authority both at home and abroad. The overarching goal of the reform package produced by the edict was to centralize and improved the efficiency of the imperial state. As a matter of fact, the proclamation of the Imperial Rescript of the Rose Chamber/ (*Hat-i Serif-i Gülhane*) was accepted as one of the major efforts of reformation during the period of the *Tanzimât* in that it proposed the policy of Ottoman unity which was the most important political concern of the *Tanzimât* era (İnalçık,1964, p.603). As Heper stated, "The aim of *Tanzimât* reforms was to establish

a uniformed and centralized administration linked directly with each citizen, and working with its own rational principles of justice, applied equally to all.” (Heper, 1980, p. 92). Indeed, statesmen’s desire for reform during the *Tanzimât* period was directly related to the pluralistic structure of the Empire. At this time, the Ottoman Empire consisted of multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-national components. This multi-ethnic, multi-religious state was governed according to the orders of the Sharia. In this respect, the Muslims, the Jews, the Orthodox Christians and the Armenians each were regarded as *millet*s. In accordance with the *millet* system, each *millet* was allowed to rule themselves under their own religious laws and all that was required was loyalty to the Empire. However, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this great vision of a multi-ethnic, multi-religious empire encountered the competing European idea of nation states. The perception of the *millet* concept was changed by the rise of nationalism within the Ottoman Empire. The multi-ethnic components of the Empire and antagonist nationalism became the most serious threat to the Ottoman order. Under these circumstances, the *millet* system was no longer an effective instrument to provide unity among different ethnic groups in the Empire. Thus, in the period of reformation which followed the declaration of the Imperial Rescript of Gülhane (*Hatt-ı Humayun*), Ottoman statesmen tried to create the consciousness of being Ottoman by combining a wide variety of cultural unity in the empire with nationwide judicial, administrative and economic measures. The main goal behind the declaration of the policy of *Ottomanism*, which guaranteed equality for all citizens regardless of their religion, language and ethnicity before the law was chiefly to prevent the collapse of the Empire and to regain control of its peripheral regions by redefining and reconfiguring the relationship between state and other ethnic groups within the Empire.

However, the goal for “equality” was not attained in practice due to a lack of a legal framework and institutions which could provide a tangible meaning for this concept. The situation turned out that the Muslims did not want to lose their privileged position provided by “the millet system” against other ethnic groups and also that non-Muslims were not content with equal rights but demanded independence as a result of their ongoing limited access to social resources and the structural

imbalances in their connections with the Ottoman society in general. Even more clearly, although Ottoman minorities ruled Ottoman finance, trade and industry, their representation in government service was highly restricted.

However, the policy of Ottomanism that began with the Imperial Rescript of the Rose Chamber of 1839 (*Hat-i Serif-i Gülhane*) took on a much more Islamic character in the reign of Abdulhamid II (r. 1876-1909) although it did not invert many of the administrative trends of the Tanzimat reform. After the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877, the Ottoman Empire lost most of its possessions in the Balkans. With the loss of an important part of the non-Muslim groups in the Empire, the political concept of Ottomanism lost its basis and significance as a unifying instrument; thus, the state began to stress Islamic and authoritarian values as a source of ideological unity. In that way, the official nationalism of the Porte became more Islamic (Karpas, 2002, p.248). Even more clearly, in contrast with the Tanzimat policy which emphasized the equality of all subjects, Hamidian Ottomanism was certainly an integrationist policy centered on Islam, but an Islam which was becoming less and less ecumenical. Besides, the pressure on the Ottoman Empire was not only military and strategic but also moral. "The Ottomans attempted to counter this moral pressure by ideological retrenchment through the inculcation of obedience to a narrowly defined official faith. This faith, a new interpretation of the *Hanefi mezheb*, was supposed to instill normative obedience in a population which was to be educated along the path to becoming an Ottoman citizenry" (Deringil, 1993, p.27). In light of this, the Hamidian regime considered education as a means of indoctrinating religious and morals values to pupils with the ultimate goal to guarantee feelings of obedience and loyalty toward the central authority (Somel, 2001). As a matter of fact, since the beginning of 18<sup>th</sup> century, especially during the Tanzimat period, education was perceived as a defensive weapon against what was emerging as an insidious threat to the integrity of the Empire. The Ottoman state attempted, from the 1830s onwards, to use public education as an institutional vehicle for social discipline and modernization this reached its peak point and achieved great effectiveness during the Hamidian period and constitutional monarchy. In this respect, the late Tanzimat reformist in accordance with the policy of Ottomanism used mixed education in order to provide

unity among non- Muslim and Muslim communities. Later, beginning with the consolidation of the Hamidian regime in 1880, the state tried to combat nationalist secessionism by emphasizing religious and authoritarian values in education. “However, although the motifs and the style of state ideology were Islamic, much of his policy stemmed from secular considerations aimed at the secular ends of retrenchment and last-ditch defense” (Deringil, 1993, p.12).

In fact, as Bauman has stated, in direct proportion to the dominant belief of enlightenment ideology that education was the solution to every crisis, the history of Ottoman reforms and modernization beginning from the 18<sup>th</sup> century illustrates the Ottoman tendency to use state-sponsored education with the ultimate goal to enforce uniformity and social disciplining and to ensure a sense of total loyalty and obedience toward the central authority. Previous to the adoption of Western models, the Ottoman educational system consisted of Islamic education for society in general, along with specialized administrative training for Ottoman officials in particular. The Ottoman sultan used this training for the transformation of social identities by indoctrinating a sense of full loyalty and obedience to him.

However, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman sultans began to introduce Western-scientific knowledge with the idea of reforming the army and navy. Especially after the Ottoman defeat in the Russia-Ottoman war (1786-1774), the rising ineffectiveness of the Ottoman army units forced Ottoman state to give priority to military innovations adapted from the West. Thus, the first modern schools -such as the school of medicine- established at the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century had a purely military characteristic (Karpat, 2002, p.277). Besides military strategy training, these modern schools involved mathematics, geometry, and French language and literature classes. Later, towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the entire Ottoman education system was affected by this Western educational content. But the Tanzimat era school program that was about imitating Western education methods, particularly French, was altered during the Hamidian period. One of the main purposes of the Hamidian educational project was not only to attempt to import modern practices and Western methods into the Empire, but also to adapt them for its own aim (Fortna, 2002,



p.378). But the Hamidian educational project which put emphasis on loyalty, moral character and using a modern educational system, led to different political outcomes (Karpas, 2002, p.270). Students who were trained in those modern military schools started to emerge as secret organizations, such as the Young Ottomans and the Young Turks aiming to reconstruct Ottoman policy around the new conception of the society and the state. They emphasized the necessity to restore the constitutional monarchy and believed the Hamidian regime could no longer produce effective administration to prevent the Empire from collapsing. Thus, the Young Turks attempted to establish parliamentary democracy directed by responsible government and they subverted the Hamidian Regime with the concepts of “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity and Justice” (Hanioglu, 2008, p.65 edited by Kasaba, R.). Broadly speaking; the Young Ottomans and Young Turks played an important role in the transformation of the Ottoman state in 1889-1908 by introducing another way of conceptualizing political culture and the new dynamic between the state and its citizenship. These military cadets initiated a new political movement based on creating of a new form of identity for Ottoman subjects and promoting devotion to their government. Pan Islamism and *Ottomanism* lost its strength and the ideology of Turkish nationalism gradually became the new unifying ideology for both creating and then shaping national identity and political loyalty. In that way, these intellectuals, notably Namık Kemal began to promote patriotic notions of *Vatan* (fatherland), *Millet* (nation) and *Hürriyet* (liberty) through their illegal publication. Later, under the Young Turk regime, they intended to expand a national consciousness among the Turks of the empire. Ottoman nationalism was eventually replaced by Turkish nationalism.

The Young Turk period (1908-1918) which inaugurated the Second Constitutional Period was the last stage of the Ottoman state. In that period, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, after the 1912-1913 Balkan wars, the Ottoman Empire lost virtually all of its possessions in the Balkans. With its defeat in the Balkan wars of 1912, the old policy that was based on holding different ethnic groups together was gradually superseded by a new state policy of supporting the idea of a single nation (Deringil, 1993, p.5). Especially after 1913, Turkish nationalism became the most important aim

of the political and social policy of the Ottoman government. From 1908, education was also seen as an important instrument for both orienting people to social change and promoting transformation in society.

## **2.2. The developments of primary school in the Tanzimat period**

The first Ottoman public school was established in Istanbul in 1839 as an advanced primary school but actually had the quality of a professional institutional. The aim of the establishment of these schools was to raise civil servant for the new administrative in order to provide continuance of the political legitimation of the state central power. But according to Somel, “When the first civil institutions were established in 1839, there emerged consideration of an educational system also for political (to promote patriotic feelings, to strengthen the idea of abstract state), cultural (material progress of humanity) and economic (to promote industrial production as well as individual profits) ends” (Somel, 2001, p.16). Besides, another motivation behind the late Ottoman educational reform was directly linked to the correction of human beings and disciplining of students within the promotion of religious and moral values. It is important to note that the need for the reformation of primary education was considered by *Tanzimât* bureaucrats for the first time. Before the *Tanzimât* era, the traditional Quran School was considered as the primary education level and provided religious knowledge under the control of *ulema*.

According to Benjamin Fortna, in the late Ottoman case, the educational project undertook several burdens of negotiation and serious obligations. He describes the most outstanding ones as follows:

- (i) redefining the empire’s historical trajectory, seen from one perspective as plotting a course between traditional and modernity;
- (ii) redrawing the boundary between western and indigenous, most notably Ottoman and Islamic influence
- (iii) rearticulating the role of the state in society, and thereby initiating a new relationship between the authorities and their subjects. (Fortna, 2002, p.16)

In the period between 1839 and 1868, the development of the matter of primary school was a good example of these contradictions, as Fortna stated above. In that

period, the current educational aim of securing religious information was gradually superseded by the aim of providing a curriculum of Islam and practical-worldly content (Somel, 2001, p.49). In Istanbul, the first certain attempt toward the reformation of the school system to a worldly-practical route was seen in the report of *Meclis-i Umur-i Naifa* in the reign of Mahmud II, issued in February 1838. This memorandum is important for including the perspective of reformist bureaucrats of the pre-*Tanzimât* period about education matters and also to some extent, their political approach. There were two main parts of this document. Firstly, the significance of public education was emphasized and compulsory Sıbyan school attendance was enacted for the children lived in Istanbul. Secondly, it was underlined that expanding sciences and skills around the country was the main goal of the state. According to this, the purpose of education is to prepare children not only for the hereafter but also for life, because science and worldly-practical knowledge would provide prosperity for both people and the country. In other words, the importance of the document was for the first time Ottoman state attempted to better Sıbyan schools for the sake of secularization of the primary education. Another significant point of this document is that it was an attempt to ensure integrity in the educational system. Due to the deficiency of scientific knowledge classes in Sıbyan schools, students lacked the elementary knowledge to understand scientific knowledge in Rusdiyye schools. These reports indeed were prepared with modern a educational view that was affected by Western educational developments. Thus, the Ottoman state for the first time began to demand education rights beside the madrasah. With this report, as in other fields, two different views and mentality struggles started in educational matters between Tanzimat reformers and ulema (Kodaman, 1988, p.59).

After that development, the year 1856 became a turning point in Ottoman public education history in that a succession of institutional reforms were carried out until 1869, supporting the foundation of a ministry of public education and later resulting in the promulgation of the Regulation of Public Education (Somel, 2001, p.42). First of all, after the reform edict of 1856 (which supported the idea of equal opportunity for all subjects in many areas in the empire), religious communities had a right to establish their own school (non-Muslim schools). This led to the development of

educational networks between Bulgarians and Armenians, and the Porte gave more priority to the development of the Ottoman public school system compared to before. Regarding this, the Porte decided to establish Ministry of Public Education (MPE) in 1857 to promote a more efficient modern school system and support the development of public education, including non-Muslim schools, within a more organized state control in accordance with its centralistic plan (Somel, 2001, p.43). In that way, Ottoman state accepted non-Muslims as a part of government school. According to this regulation, while primary schools maintained the culture of the religious community and children from different communities were educated separately, *Rüşdiyye School* (secondary level) was seen as an incorporation place where non-Muslims would socialize with Ottoman imperial culture. Finally,

In an 1861 document, the state tried for the first time to integrate all the existing school within the Empire, non-Muslim as well as Muslim, into a legal framework and to connect them to the MPE with the aim 'to inspect the systems and the regulations of all schools which exist for the study and education of every community within the Protected Imperial Ottoman Dominions. (Somel, 2001, p.44)

In this regard, an Ottoman educational policy intended to overcome the social obstacles between religious communities. In 1862, the reformist statesmen of the MPE, as an independent institution from the *Ulema*, tried to renew the attempt to reform the traditional Quran schools so as to accelerate and simplify the schooling of writing and reading. But, a report by the ministry of public education in 1868 shows that graduates from these primary schools (Quran schools) were still not efficient enough to read Ottoman Turkish text properly and failed at the *Rüşdiyye* entrance examinations. This shows that the steps of 1862 to reform Quran schools were unsuccessful. Thus, the perception of primary schools as being mostly religious schooling changed into a more practical-worldly directed base. "Looking at the development of the issue of primary school from 1838-1868, the original educational aim of ensuring religious information becomes gradually changed into the aim of offering curriculum of Islamic and practical-worldly content" (Somel, 2001, p.49). The reform edict of 1856 had an important effect in this process, compelling Ottoman elites to become more determined to reform Quran schools. Indeed, the state's

policy of *Ottomanism*, which was more dominant after the edict of 1856, required an extensive education strategy to promote this ideal. Regarding this, in 1869, a set of regulations for public education was promulgated to enable a legitimate and institutional structure for Ottoman public education and remained in force until the Young Turk period. Ottoman educational modernization and expansion was not only for raising a new generation of civil servants who had the essential practical and positive knowledge to maintain state's power but it was also regarded as an apparatus of social and economic development. Moreover, the *Tanzimât* period also corresponded to the mixed education of Muslims and non-Muslims as well as the introduction of practical and secular issues. Beside all these modernistic developments, the Ottoman education system had still a prior tradition of regarding civil education as a medium of social disciplining by indoctrinating moral and religious ideas to students. Broadly speaking, the Ottoman modernization route developed that way making "...rational policies for the promotion of central power together with the legal protection of the basic civil rights of imperial subjects as well as the encouragement trade, industry and more importantly education" (Somel, 2001, p.61).

During the 1860s, despite the effort to reform the Quran schools, the inefficiency in introducing the worldly oriented and natural science courses to pupils in these institutions resulted in the establishment of the first government primary school in 1872 in Istanbul the *Ibtidai* school. Selim Sabit Efendi's educational method of *usul-i cedid* was applied in the new modern *ibtidai* school. This new method of *usul-i cedid* consisted of the tradition of social discipline and the modern way of scientific education. He used for the first time modern school equipment such as abacus and maps and because of these acts, he was faced with complaints and pressures. The shaykh al-Islam even accused him for teaching Quran to children by shaking legs on school desks rather than traditional sitting position with rahle. The sultan, who was informed about the situation, eased the matter and sent the following message to Selim Sabit Efendi with the minister of education: "please move slowly, without forgetting the traditional public opinion" (Koçer, 1991, p.98). As seen, compared to the Quran schools, the *Ibtidai* schools avoid contradictions well received by the

Muslim population, and the number of these modern schools was also limited. Thus, until 1908, the modernization of the primary schools remained restricted.

Before the Tanzimat period, the traditional Ottoman education system had two pillars: Muslim schools and non-Muslim schools. The whole Tanzimat idea was to reunite these two different education systems under the same roof in the care of the Ottoman state with a secular and liberal Western education model. It seemed an urgent need for the territorial and political integrity of the Ottoman Empire. However, Tanzimat reformers they were indecisive among themselves to specify certain modern educational model and methods and also some issues such as budget of the educational expense and moreover, status of non-muslim schools were not planned yet. Thus, the Tanzimat period witnessed unplanned education reforms based on the imitation of Western countries. However, reformers gradually moved away from the goal of establishing a central education system (Kodaman, 1988, p. xii). Leaving aside non-Muslim schools, the Ottoman state attempted to establish secular schools for only Muslim children. With this practice, the traditional education system, which preserved the integrity of the Muslim community more or less, was divided into two parts, and the duality and competition of school-madrasah was introduced into Ottoman society. (Kodaman, 1988, p. xii) Thus, neither sıbyan schools nor ibtidai schools had the scientific and cultural basis to modernize the empire and the education system. The madrasah was degenerated and isolated and the ibtidai school was imitative and aimless. In the end, Tanzimat period led to the rise of three kinds of school: madrasah, ibtidai schools and non-Muslim schools.

The political developments after 1908 within the empire in fact display the failure of the Hamidian schooling system. The Young Turk revolution was realized by students who had graduated from public schools. Many of them took common education in government schools. Considering the generation trained by the public schools, the aim of Hamidian schooling at raising obedient subjects loyal to the state seems have been ineffective. Moreover, after the Young Turk revolution, between the years 1908 and 1918, the empire disintegrated more expeditiously in all of its parts, from the Albanian rebellions and the Balkan wars to the Arab revolution in 1916 and finally the Kurdish nationalist movements in 1918. Most of the actors of these separatist

movements were educated in Hamidian public schools. The Hamidian policy of social disciplining proved unsuccessful. But according to Somel, the Young Turk regime policy also led to the acceleration of these nationalist movements as follows:

As an outcome of this education individuals were obsessed by the notions of authority, progress, order and uniformity. In contrast to the policies of Hamidian regime toward different ethnic and peripheral groups, the young Turks were impatient to put the Empire under rational law and order. When the committee of Union and Progress (CUP) came to power, their determination to impose uniform administration all over the Empire created discontent among the non-Turkish populations, which resulted in rebellions in nearly all peripheral provinces. (Somel, 2001, p.277)

Somel also added that this may have been a tragic result of an educational system which was used for raising loyal citizens of the empire and also reinforce and modernize the administrative structure. Thus, in the case of the Young Turk regime, the Ottoman education system carried another burden: with the empire at the edge of disintegration, it was attempting to create a national generation from a very young age that would have been physically strong, hardworking and politically loyal to serve its state and homeland in troubled times.

### **2.3. The Second Constitutional period and primary education**

Similar to other political regimes, the Young Turk regimes aimed to raise a new generation loyal to the new order of *Meşrutiyet* so as to maintain continuity of the system by infusing pupils with its own values. (Üstel, 2004, p.23) Since reformers considered children as the will of the regime and society, the education of young subjects according to the principles of the regime became the main pedagogical goal of particularly the primary and secondary schools. Indeed, the Young Turk era witnessed many educational and pedagogical debates by the intellectuals. Especially, the reformation of the curriculum of primary education was seen as the main vehicle for promoting the official ideology of state among students starting from a very young age. Thus, in the eight years following the Young Turk revolution, new educational methods appeared in the curricula of kindergartens, primary schools and also teacher training schools. Looking at late Ottoman education history, the Young Turk regime

indeed shared the same goal with the Hamidian regime in considering children as a critical point of contact between state planners and its citizenry. But, beside that aim, while the Hamidian schooling system also carried the burden of trying to overcome all the ethnic segmentation within the Empire by means of education, the Young Turk regime had more homogenous group of students to pursue its aim in creating loyalty to the regime through education especially, after the Balkan War between 1912 and 1913. Indeed, the Balkan wars played an important role in determining the new educational trends of the Young Turk era. The late Ottoman educators thought about the reason for the defeat and charged the Ottoman education system with being insufficient in producing effective and practical knowledge for the nation's progress. According to them, on a large scale, the success of the Balkan nations was related to their nationalist education system. Students who were educated with creative knowledge in the Balkan nations became self-confident, creative people whereas the Turkish education system gave students mere knowledge, which turned them into unconfident civil servants without any creative sense.

İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, an important educator criticized the Turkish education system for raising a weak and spiritless generation who were unable to defend their country. He also added: "In our schools, knowledgeable, polite, talkative youth with powerful memory is being educated. However, only one thing is not being educated: Man! The active, creative, determined, courageous man that our country needs..." (Enacar, 2007, p.95). According to Tüccarzâde İbrahim Hilmi (Çığıraçan) a famous writer of the Second Constitutional Period, the Balkan wars displayed the essential role both of education and the army for the survival of the state. However, Satı Bey (the head of *Darülmualimin*, the school for male teachers) claimed that Ottomans should have given weight to educational matters instead of their army. In the preface of his famous book called "The Science of Discipline" (*Fenn-i Terbiye*)<sup>3</sup>, he stated that the cultural and technological power of certain countries such as Japan and Germany was related to their resolution to develop their primary schools. In general, intellectuals of the Young Turk Era believed that the success of the Balkan nations'

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<sup>3</sup> A book which explained child education with psychological factors.



revolts was connected to their determined of educational development for the nation's progress. After a period of intense debates on educational matters both amongst intellectuals and teachers, the Young Turk regime decided to make reforms in the educational system. As Bauman claims, the new modern governors believed that educational reforms based on Western scientific methods could provide order, harmony and certainty with modern practices against the chaos and ambivalence of the old Ottoman traditional system. Unlike Satı Bey, Emrullah Efendi, one of the ministers of education of the time, advocated the idea that educational reform should start from higher education. He focused on preparing a regulation for public primary education due to the conditions of the period. He modeled it on the French educational system and cited that after French revolution, the first French national assembly focused on primary education reforms. He claimed the Ottoman state should have done the same for primary education. But his reform proposal became law only with some modifications in 1913 (Akyüz, 2010, p. 267-268). In this regulation, named "The Temporary Law of Primary Education" (Tedrisât-i İbtidâiye Kânun-i Muvakkatı), the main aim of primary school education was stated as to educate the members of the nation as useful organs for both themselves and the country. Broadly speaking, the main motivation behind a new curriculum of primary education was to equip a young generation with the most essential courses concerning their own country and culture for the sake of both nation and state. On the other hand, parallel to this aim, the government policy of Turkish nationalism, which became especially strong after the Balkan wars, needed inclusive educational planning for the spread of this ideal. With its defeat in the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, the Ottoman Empire lost part of its territories in Europe. In this case, it was necessary to instill a common spiritual thought and goal unity into the society. As a result, nations left the empire and the old policy of keeping different ethnics groups together was replaced by a state policy that was based on a single nation. After 1913, Turkish nationalism gradually became the main ideology of the state. Ziya Gökalp, as one of the members that had active role in Union and Progress Party, made great contributions to Turkish nationalism's philosophical basis. He claimed that: "a nation consists of a group of people speak the same language and share the same education, cultural values and religion. The ideal of nations provide this unification between

people and keep them within a political boundary” (Koçer, 1991, p.176). It is certain that Gökalgp was influenced by Durkheim’s concept of solidarity. According to Durkheim (one of the most important positivist philosophers of the nineteenth century), before making reform in society, first it was needed to understand what a modern society is. At this point, Durkheim claimed that in societies where the division of labor is underdeveloped, there must be a set of values above the community to hold them together. If the whole society accept these values, the society works (Mardin, 2008, p.200). Durkheim called this organization as mechanical solidarity. For Gökalgp, the national public education system would materialize this ideal by imposing the same cultural values into the children of the nation. Thus, the shaping of the primary education curricula, including public kindergartens developed along these lines according to the reforms of 1913, 1914 and 1915. But what is interesting about The Temporary Law of Primary Education is that in the late Ottoman history for the first time, kindergartens found a place in the state’s policy. According to the 1913 law, *Sıbyan* schools and kindergartens became part of primary education. Actually, the kindergarten as an educational stage was mentioned by Said Paşa<sup>4</sup> in his memorandum of 1888. According to him, humanistic education should start from kindergarten. But this model remained on the pages of the memorandum. Indeed, all these efforts indicated the same goal: a central and national education system. Certainly, three mainstream currents that appeared with the Tanzimat period disturbed Ziya Gökalgp, like his many contemporaries, because all these different systems, *sıbyan* schools, *ibtidaiye* schools and non-muslim schools, and their mentality hindered a national and centralized education system

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<sup>4</sup> Said Paşa, who was appointed many times to the Office of the Grand Vizierate, aimed to transform the schools directed by the MPE into a more general system transferring humanistic as well as practical knowledge.

## CHAPTER III

### The Children Playing for Being Tiny Citizens

**The establishment of state kindergarten and the rise of children's plays as a pedagogical method in the Second Constitutional period.**

#### **3.1. The development of state kindergartens in the Second Constitutional period**

##### **3.1.1. The origins of kindergarten**

Before addressing the development of kindergartens in the Ottoman case, it is necessary to explain the background of emergence of kindergartens in the globe. To better understand the subtext of the late Ottoman and Republican kindergartens, it is important to answer these following questions: Where did the idea of kindergarten originate from? What were the processes through which kindergarten spread around the world? What was the function of kindergarten in the minds of political leaders and educators? And more generally, "How was the miniature world of the kindergarten connected to the larger world of politics?" (Wollons, 2002, p.10-11). Indeed, the kindergarten is a politicized foundation, directly connected to the aim of the state in the creation of national identity, moral values and citizenship. Kindergarten was first organized as an early childhood institution which originated from Germany in the second half of the nineteenth century, based on Frederic Froebel's educational method of child development. Froebel thought that parents were not providing the child necessary education and discipline, likewise he also knew that young children were not yet equipped for school. Thus, he found an alternative solution called the kindergarten or children's garden as a modern pedagogical institution which was suitable to the "wealth, abundance, and vigour of the inner and outer life" (Wollons,2000, p.3). These institutions offered a protected environment for the child to be with peers apart from family restraints. The kindergartens were particularly designed to educate and to socialize children but only under someone's supervision. In the second half of the 19th century, the idea of kindergarten spread rapidly around the world with its universalism being adapted to the needs of each local setting. In this respect, the kindergarten was a hybrid institution through which one can trace cross- cultural transactions (Wollons,2000,

p.3-4). The kindergarten movement started with Frederic Froebel (1782-1852), a visionary educator in the field of early childhood development. With the defeat of Napoleon, the nationalist desire to create unified German state failed, and many German state continued to stay under some form of absolute rule. In parallel to these circumstances, similar to other German nationalists of his time, Froebel focused on the notions of national unity and liberal reform. According to him, education was an important tool for national cohesion, and he decided to become student of Pestalozzi. Froebel's educational principles were influenced by the thoughts of the Idealist philosophy rather than dominated German intellectual life. The German Idealist Philosophers believed that the duality between the self and the not-self and more generally that between the individual and the collective was the essential ethical problem which only could be resolved through the voluntary devotion of the individual to the prosperity of the nation and society. On the other hand, Pestalozzian pedagogy also promoted national unity. At this point, Froebelian pedagogy associated the Pestalozzian educational approach with idealist ethical concepts, in order to support both ethical and cognitive development (Allen,2000, p.19). the increasing popularity of kindergartens in the European countries between the years of 1870 and 1914 was also related to the rising reputation of German education and philosophy especially in the English speaking world (Allen, 2000, p.19).

Friedrich Froebel believed in the significance of play in early childhood education. His most famous book, called *Mother and Nursery Songs (Mutter-und-Koselieder)* (1844), included a series of songs in company with simple games created to develop the infants' body, limbs and senses from the first few months of life (Allen, 2000, p.19). According to Froebel, "...play, building, modelling are the first tender blossoms of youth" (Neumann, 1974, p.34). He also designed set of toys called "gifts" to explain the link of the whole to the parts. Froebel gave importance to the manipulation of objects such as wooden blocks and wooden and woolen balls which helped familiarize children with common patterns and shapes in nature. He also believed children should engage in craft activities which he named "occupations". The occupations involved paper weaving and paper folding. His program also included children's songs and games. On the other hand, according to Montessori, by using

essential material, children could improve their abilities to gather and shape their sensory impressions so as to better absorb knowledge. She believed children could be assisted to gain a better awareness of their properties. For both Froebel and Montessori, play was not a completely free activity; rather, teachers were to provide a suitable environment and materials that would provide moral and mental growth in children. Applying exercises involving practical life skills was also important for both Froebel and Montessori. Indeed, Froebel and Montessori as prominent educators of their time both considered play as a medium for education. Moreover, both Froebel and Montessori abstracted the essential elements of the natural play activities of children to create their own method, rebuilding and systematizing them.

### **3.1.2. The establishment of state kindergartens**

Minister of Public Education Ahmet Şükrü Bey (1875-1926) asserted that the reason behind establishing state kindergartens for the first time in 1912 was to restrain children from socializing with street life (Fortna, 2000, p.264). According to him, kindergarten was a place where little children could “be taught to obtain school training, become acquainted with school discipline” (Fortna,2000, p.39). Indeed, as Bauman has stated, Ottoman state kindergartens emerged as a response of the “crisis management” type to the waning situation of the empire, in particular during the Balkan wars. In the face of the imperial crisis which arose from the loss of territories after defeats in wars and ethnic rebellions and the necessity of modernization, the Ottoman state established state kindergartens to provide uniformity and social control among its subjects starting from their early ages. Furthermore, Ottoman policy-makers also aimed at preventing missionary activities of non-Muslim private kindergartens by establishing state-run alternatives. Besides, as Bauman has stated, when planning the kindergarten, the idea that transforming it into miniature version of the future society seem practical for the Young Turk regime. At this point, the real intention behind the educational activity was to teach social obedience. To create a rational society, people were expected to conform to the public interest voluntarily and to follow the instructions of their superiors. Bauman explains this model that was supported by kindergarten as a skill of discipline that every citizen had. The important matter here was not the knowledge taught to the students, but the methods, routine

and predictability of the knowledge (Bauman,1989, p.73). The kindergarten itself and Froebel's and Montessori educational methods stood out as the most effective instrument for late Ottoman educators to realize this ideal. In other words, it became another imitative institution imported from the West hurriedly without considering the societal circumstances of the period.

### **3.1.3. Ottoman private Muslim kindergartens**

Before the first state-kindergartens established, in the second constitutional period which was the scene of intensive educational debates, Kazım Nami Duru and Satı bey who was against to Gökalp about educational reforms established first private Muslim kindergartens The first private kindergarten which used the Frobel method was established by Kazım Nami Duru in 1909 after his visit to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In 1911, he also designed a kindergarten program based on the Froebel method. Indeed, between 1909 and 1916, many educators were sent to Europe by the Ministry of Education in order to make educational observations. After Kazım Nami, between the years 1910 and 1916 Satı Bey also visited many European countries for educational research. The Ministry of Education gave him the task of examining the educational program and methods of the elementary schools in Europe and also writing reports about his observations. After he returned to Turkey, he published articles and held a conference about his observations in Europe. He believed that;

Europeans had the skills to enjoy activities, whereas in the Ottoman Empire this tendency was restrained due to the pressure applied in Ottoman schools and the "silence and laziness" that subjugated children. He came to the conclusion that European civilization was "developed" not because of a difference in intelligence but because the European environment, atmosphere, social structure, understanding and character were different. (Giorgetti, 2014, p.16)

In 1915, he established the *new school (yeni mekteb)*, which included a kindergarten, where he practiced the Montessori method for children under the age of seven, as well as an elementary school and a nursery-teacher school. The new school was founded as a private institution charging a tuition fee and it only gave education to

children of high-income families. Against Ziya Gökalp, Satı Bey also believed that private schools could help solve Ottoman educational problems owing to their flexible structure compared to the state's centralized educational program. He regarded the new school as a laboratory of practical pedagogy in which he applied his experiments and practices. In the new school's kindergarten, Satı Bey tried to apply the Froebel and Montessori educational methods in which he believed played a critical role in the education of children under the age of seven. According to him, the new school was an institution which combined these methods with Eastern culture and its morals, necessities and psychology so as to enhance the intelligence and understanding of the pupils in accordance with the needs of Ottoman society. He claimed that the aim of his method was to develop children's ability with the necessary materials and thus made a comparison between the Froebel and Montessori methods evaluating their possible positive and negative effects on the Ottoman educational system. For Satı Bey, "the Froebel method was stronger for strengthening the social abilities, whereas the Montessori Method seemed to be more efficient in increasing entrepreneurial skills". (Giorgetti, 2014, p.17) As a result, he claimed that "the activities of Froebel would be beneficial in terms of imitating and creating, if practiced within the confines of the principles recommended by Montessori" (Giorgetti, 2014, p.17). However, according to Satı Bey, the idea of leaving children to their own resources, which was supported by the Montessori and Froebel methods, was not appropriate for the Ottoman educational system. "Thus, the Ottoman children needed to be stimulated and directed by instruments to get rid of the drowsiness and laziness originating from the educational system. However, these instruments had to be chosen and organized in such a way to avoid paralyzing the children's characters and entrepreneurial skills" (Giorgetti, 2014, p.18). Satı Bey here presented a combination of practices of Montessori and Froebel for the kindergarten which were suited to the Ottoman educational system. His proposal concerning a synthesis of the practices of Froebel and Montessori formed a basis for the reformation movement of the Ottoman educational curriculum in the second constitutional era.

### 3.2. Kindergarten curriculum

Indeed, many Ottoman intellectuals considered that education should have not only a theoretical but also a practical basis. Emrullah Efendi also underlined both sides of education: the theoretical for the mind and the practical for making a life. Along with Satı Bey and Kazım Duru, his ideas seem to have been objectified by the Temporary Primary Instruction Law (*Tedrisat-ı İbtidaiye Kanun-u Muvakkati*) in 1913. With this law, new courses were planned for children containing school plays, physical education and practical knowledge. In light of this, the 1913 primary school curriculum and the 1915 kindergarten curriculum gave the feeling of limited freedom for students presenting operative approach depends on imitation, creativity and enterprising in the practice of language, gym, and living and movement courses. The Young Turk regime, who regarded education as the most operative instrument in realizing the desired society, used this formal pedagogical way only to inculcate pupils with nationalist ideas. Indeed, the first step of this education planning starting from the temporary education law was to give a national soul to the children from a very young age by injecting the love of country, state and nation through tales, stories, poems, plays and different courses. It was clearly stated in the first part of the temporary education law that:

Kindergartens and primary classes are institutions that serve for mental and physical developments of children with age-appropriate games and handworks and hymns, patriotic poems and tales, speeches and conversations about objects. Kindergartens are assigned for children aged 4 to 7. The regulations and instructions about the organization and regulation of them will be discussed in the Great Council of Education (*Meclis-i Kebir-i Maarif*) and issued. (Koçer, 1987, p. 190-191)

The dynamic between state and subject changed dramatically. In the Hamidian regime, the long term award for children attending government schools and studying hard in his/her lectures was to acquire academic skills which provided them with an opportunity for a privileged position among future official administrators. Students who graduated from these schools had a share in the state's authority. But with the Young Turk era, children, who were regarded as the future of the society and state, were transformed into patriotic citizens with the duty of defending the country by



the systematic educational program. As mentioned before, for Ziya Gökalp, the aim of education was to create nationalist individuals in order to construct a nation. In light of this, the content of the kindergarten curriculum was explained in the Kindergarten Regulation (Ana Mektepleri Nizamnamesi) document of 1915 as follows: In kindergartens, there will be games that are ethical and good for the health. Walks inside the school and regular physical education will be conducted alongside religious and patriotic stories and conversations. Beside practical knowledge, other important elements stated in the preschool education program were directly related to moral and physical education (Ana Mektepleri Nizamnamesi, 1915).

### **3.2.1. Moral education**

Moral education is a critical and integral part of citizenship, fostering dispositions and values as well as knowledge and skills. A significant course which was integrated into the kindergarten curricula was that of “moral conversations” (*Ahlâkiye*) which aimed at correcting and disciplining pupils, particularly focusing on their sentimental education. Moral education was seen as a medium of social control by inculcating moral values into young pupils to adapt them to the cultural and social norms of the new regime. Morality actually was regarded here as the sense of responsibility needed to work and to develop. However, “Children need opportunities to learn not only political and civic values but also personal moral values if they are to become mature, moral citizens, capable of meeting the moral challenges they face in their ordinary life” (Halstead, 2006, p.3). Sentimental education is important in terms of providing that kind of training. In parallel with this, Schopenhauer, the German educator, also stated that “an emotionally based motivation, rather than the capacity for moral judgments central to morality.” Hence, according to the 1915 primary education law, the course named moral conversations to be offered in kindergartens would focus on nurturing (*terbiyye*) the senses rather than stimulating the mind and reasoning. Especially stories, adventures and events would be narrated that could arouse feelings such as mercy, virtue in children. The inclination to rivalry and activity together with social, domestic, humanistic feelings would also be encouraged. A special attention would be given to the suitability of conversations to child life and child language. The term *terbiyye* here substituted for education, actually involves

meanings such as raising, training and also discipline. In the 1915 law, the term “discipline of the subjects” was stated as the common purpose of every course in the kindergarten curriculum. The first part of the 1915 document clearly reflects the importance of *terbiyye* for kindergartens. For that document, kindergarten and class were not directly a school of education and instruction but a school of civility, life and behavior and a playground for kids. Four, five and six-year-old children accepted to kindergartens. It was recommended that the classes in kindergartens not be any longer than twenty minutes and that each twenty-minute class be followed by a twenty-minute break, physical activities and pedagogic activities such as games, music, etc.

### **3.2.2. Physical education**

Besides moral education, this kindergarten’s curriculum also intended to give a character to young pupils through physical training and children’s play. In the Young Turk era, the aim of physical education was to improve the health of citizens, reinforce their physical strength and raise active generations for the defense of the country. Gymnastic activities, therefore, played a vital role in the construction and mobilization of the Turkish nation. In the 1915 laws, gymnastic lesson was recommended as collective and systematic physical activity practices so as to promote the idea of nation attached to a sense of belonging together. Thus, children could internalize the idea of unity that was based on a single nation by playing together in the classroom of kindergartens. These play activities were regarded as an instrument for the transmission of social values and also the reproduction of social harmony and cohesion. Moreover, with the effect of Balkan wars, children were prepared to use rifles in the gymnastics class. On this point, imitation was particularly significant for children to embrace their future roles and duties. In this law, the objects to be used in the activities were listed in detail. According to the 1915 document, the physical education to be provided at these schools, first of all, must be in a manner that children like. Children do not like pointless, unattractive, abstract actions and situations. Gymnastic and educative games are the best for them. These games should be combined with music and educatory actions. It is also a necessity to play games with friends, in other words collectively rather than making the games

suitable only for a few children. Games of pretending to be a soldier, seaman, farmer, carpenter, etc. will occupy an important place in kindergartens and children will get used to holding a rifle (or a stick) from an early age. The schools that have sufficient budget will provide equipment for these games. For example, for the game of seaman a wheeled boat; for the farmer game, a harvester and plow; for the carpenter game, an apron and a counter will be manufactured (Maarif-i Umûmîye Nezâreti, 1329b: 112-120, 1329c: 1330: 122-130, 1332: 181-187).

### **3.2.3. Children's play as a new pedagogical way**

The most interesting part of the 1915 curriculum was that playing games was regarded as a practical part of education. Indeed, one of the bases of the new kindergarten curriculum was to educate young pupils through playing games. Ottoman intellectuals considered play an effective instrument to give children the desired education. Through play, children became eager to participate in classes by enjoying the practice of learning. This was also related to the changing perception of childhood within Ottoman society during the Tanzimat era. Prior to the Young Turk regime, children between the ages of 4 and 6 were normally sent to Quran schools. Although Quran schools were considered as the primary level of public education, the ages of children who went to this school were equivalent to the children who participated in kindergartens in the Young Turk regime. On the other hand, during the Tanzimat era, a shift in philosophical and social attitudes toward children and the notion of childhood started among Ottoman intellectuals. With the effect of the Tanzimat reforms, children started to be viewed as separate beings. The idea of "childhood has a particular nature" which distinguishes the child from the adult became very popular among Ottoman intellectuals. Children as an independent subject needed a new kind of educational method. Indeed, the first attempt at pedagogical reform in education for the first girls' teaching school was made by Ayşe Sıdika Hanım. She was assigned to the Darülmualimat (first teaching school for girls) as morality and geography teacher by Sultan Abdulhamid II, himself. Ayşe Sıdika Hanım argued the necessity of pedagogy classes for future teacher candidates. Due to her demands, the first pedagogy class was added to the Darülmualimat program and Ayşe Sıdika Hanım gave the lectures personally. Later, she prepared a

pedagogical textbook named *Usul-ü Talim ve Terbiya dersleri* for this class in which she blended her personal ideas and a foreign pedagogical textbook in 1313. This book began to be used as a textbook at both the Darulmuallimat and the Darulmuallimin (teacher school for boys) as the first Ottoman training and education book in accordance with the European system (Koçer, 1991, p.52). Under the leadership of Satı Bey, pedagogical debates emerged in the late Ottoman period. Later, Ottoman intellectuals tried to find the most effective pedagogical way to inspire children with the state's norms and values. In this point, the theories of Froebel and Montessori were the ones that stood out most among the current debates on educational methods in the Young Turk era. Analyzing all these methods, it could be said that with the establishment of state kindergartens, play had a vital role in organizing children's learning process in early childhood education.

#### **3.2.4. The education methods of Froebel and Montessori and the kindergarten curriculum**

Ottoman intellectuals were mainly affected by Montessori and Froebel's education techniques and curriculums while preparing the 1913 primary school curriculum and the 1914 kindergarten curriculum. Nearly every course of the kindergarten curriculum was organized according to Froebelian and Montessorian education techniques. First of all, the aim of the life and activity class and the gardening class was stated as to organize and develop children's mental and physical skills, more specifically promoting exercise to supply children with a practical life skill. Hence, education should rest upon children's present and everyday experience so that living and learning are meaningful and are one. Another interesting point about these courses is that the nature of the child here was regarded as inactive. Hence, the purpose of the life and activity class, first of all, was to educate and improve the bodily and mental abilities of children: familiarizing children with moving and using their hands, arms, legs and head and creating a skillful, careful, agile and straight man out of an innately motionless and unsteady child. In these classes, teachers would teach children activities, postures that they were supposed to perform with success in their contact with nature. For example, they would teach useful manners related to life and activities like opening and closing the door. By doing and making children do

these actually and practically, they would gain children bodily habits that are so valuable for life.

In nature knowledge and gardening classes, essential materials and environmental conditions to develop children's ability were explained in detail including the size of the objects. The organization of the environment was required because a child needs boundaries as well as specific materials to improve his/her skills. Wooden block and occupations were also mentioned in that class. After explaining the purpose and function of these classes, teachers describe in detail the equipment to be used, such as wedges or sandpits. For example, they give the necessary size and measurement for wedges and what children are going to do with them. This detailed explanation suggests that the people that prepared this curriculum did not want to leave anything to chance and they took this education very seriously. The goal was for children to acquire natural knowledge by seeing, doing, hearing and actively participating, because children were learning through familiar and concrete experiences and they were realizing the nature of their environment by direct experimentation. Parallel to this, the effect of the Ottoman defeat in the Balkan wars became visible within this class. It was expected that children learn to tend and rule properly their imaginary land. Indeed, that land was an imitation of their real country. In these classes, the instructor would pursue an educative purpose. In nature classes, by using various materials children would be familiarized with making their hands skillful, their bodies dynamic, and their opinions open and strict. Also, they would be trained to love the activity and show patience and perseverance during the activity. Handicraft practices are as follows: in sandpits, children would be completely free and were expected to use their imagination and create things like mountains, hills, houses or towers. During this activity, the teacher would just encourage them and not take any action that could restrict children's freedom. Agricultural affairs in the garden of kindergartens would be one of the main focuses of this school. In these gardens, children would get used to planting flowers, cultivating the soil in sections reserved for them. Also, they learned to have a strong liking and respect for flowers and trees, to love the land they own, and to protect and defend their field. It was a must for each child – even if he or she was little – to have a unique field of his or her own.

Since play was a child's natural way of living and learning, Ottoman intellectual aimed to use play for successful teaching and learning in kindergartens. As seen above, was encouraged the active participation of the child in the learning experience through play for every course. Indeed, the function of play was the education of the child. According to Atif Bey (the head of the Boy Scouts) one of the aims of boy scouting was to educate through playing games, which he defined as follows: "play which we use to give our children the desired education, is similar to the bait on a fish line" (Cora, 2007, p.56). The subject, objects and process of play, hence, were important consideration for the educational development of children. Neumann explained this situation over Froebel and Montessori methods as follows:

The emphasis in the discussion of the play by these educators has been on the process and the objectives of play since the process and the objectives relate to the how and what of learning. Concern has been not with the criteria of play, but with the fact that play occurs and with the way it can be used to educate the child. Because of the focus on using play for educational goals, however, an important concern of the educator also was the control of the child's activity. The play was controlled because it was a means of education. In order to educate the child so that he would meet the demands of his society, these educators concluded that the child's activities had to be selected and supervised accordingly. (Neumann, 1974, p.14)

The role of kindergartens here was actually to guide and steer this process. Particularly, for Ottoman educators, the functions of educational play were the intellectual, moral and physical development of children. Thus, young pupils were prepared for their future place in society. On this basis, "Play type technique and materials were used to make the learning of the skills and information more enjoyable, more successful and easier" (Neumann, 1974, p.26). This intention became concrete in the content of music and language classes. For language classes, the children, who were very happy with puppet plays, would get used to speaking, using verbs and nouns according to events and the position of subjects and making sentences. Moreover, according to the curriculum, in music classes, it was necessary to choose songs from the subjects that children liked and while singing them, the songs should lead children to action, activity, and imitation. Another requirement of

kindergarten music classes was to sing the songs while standing, walking, moving or playing rather than sitting. Slow music was not considered beneficial for kindergartens but in fact, harmful. One of the bases of these classes was to make learning more enjoyable and easier while providing children's active participation for the class through play. In the light of this, the ultimate goal of the Young Turk regime was to create hardworking, productive, informed and enterprising generations who would be able to handle the crisis and problems of the empire easily through the systematic education program, for "only such a generation can repair the broken national honor; remove the experienced drams and difficulties; help the society release from the material and moral crisis; and especially make up for lost ground" (Gurbetođlu, 2007, p.64).

However, a significant problem concerning the quality of education in kindergartens was the shortage of professionally trained female instructors. According to Kazım Nami, the kindergartens were opened in an unplanned manner in terms of providing quality teachers and therefore it was urgent to train more female teachers, particularly according to Froebel education method for the new education system as soon as possible. For Satı Bey, the root of the qualified education system was related to the qualified teacher. He also added that,

The 1908 and 1909 revolutions were of a political nature. Now, it was time for a moral, intellectual and social revolution in a general sense. Such a revolution could only be achieved by 'the army of teachers', who always played an important role in the development of nations. Undoubtedly, this was a very difficult task. However, teachers should raise children as 'hardworking, determined and intellectual Ottomans with national pride' with determination, fortitude, enthusiasm and sacrifice, because teachers were the sole hope of the motherland. (Uyanık, 2009, p.89)

Thus, in 1914, a Preschool teacher training school was opened with the following courses: psychology, Froebel's method and handicraft class, spelling and reading class, natural science, health class, introduction to geometry, music, piano, Ottoman history, Ottoman geography and physical training. The education method of Froebel was also regarded as the main reference for the teacher training school program by

Ottoman educators. Therefore, in 1911, Satı Bey prepared a kindergarten program based on the Froebel method and also gave several lectures in the teacher training school about the Froebelian method at the request of Şükrü Bey (the head of the Ministry of the Education) (Dinçer, 2007, p.59). Kazım Nami Duru summarized and translated *The Kindergarten Guide* and *L'éducation des petits enfants par la méthode froebélienne* into Turkish. In the preface of the book, he stated that it was a guide book which would help future teacher candidates to use Froebel education methods in kindergartens. In the later chapters, the main weekly course schedule was also suggested for young pupils according to their ages.

Table 3.1. Schedule for three years old children in kindergartens (Duru, 1915, p. 42-43).

Hours	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Wednesday	Thursday
8:45-9:15	Order and Play	Order and Play	Order and Play	Order and Play	Order and Play
9:15-9:45	String beads	Construnctig and navigating	Sewing	History of existence	Origami
9:45-10:10	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
10:10-11:00	Math	Physical training	Math	Painting Charcoal drawing	Math
14:00-14:40	Singing and Play	Selected creation	Handcraftin g	Handcraftin g	Orchestra
14:40-15:20	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
15:20-16:00	Hand-crafting	Gardening or cleaning	Free play	Gardening or cleaning	Free play



### **3.3. An analysis of the concept of play and children's games in child periodicals printed in the Second Constitutional period**

In common with Western education policies around the world, especially starting with the *Tanzimât* period, the Ottoman states also used education and literacy as the vehicles to carry out its aim of both creating and shaping national identity and loyalty. In this respect, besides the public school education program, school textbooks, children's publications and periodicals and pedagogy books as useful for determining the state's position towards its citizens/subjects. These sources are all ways to reach the people producing knowledge and disseminating it among society. The main role of intellectuals from these periodicals was to serve as intermediaries between state and society by writing articles supportive of the state's policy. In the late Ottoman period, especially the second constitutional period, these mediums were seen as crucial to introducing young audiences and also their guardian to the state's expectation package for its subjects. Broadly speaking, all the social norms and values the Young Turk regime attempted to convey, such as morality, class, the idea of the nation, social roles and duties, showed up clearly in the pages of these texts planned for young readers (Fortna, 2011, p.16). Beyond the particular requirements of the state, these texts also inevitably reflected the aspirations and concerns of the current period but did so in a more childish way. In other words, taking children as the main center of attraction for the regime's sake, the content of this literature was inevitably replete with childish concepts. In this respect, children's play, games, stories, music and poems, in short everything about childhood, became important tools for the regime so as to deliver its norms and values to a young audience in a more effective way. The Young Turk regime, who discovered the significance of children intended to be brought up as generations equipped with citizenship awareness, concentrated on publishing children magazines. Although the tone of this literature was still didactic and filled with normative messages, the main aim was to entertain young readers while teaching and disciplining them. Thus, children's publications picked up where school left off for the education of young pupils by making the learning process more enjoyable, dynamic and accessible to students. These publications became more popular than books among children in terms of their easiness to read. Hence, children's magazines had a supportive role for modern schools by keeping children

busy during their leisure times and holidays with puzzles, games and questions which were directly linked with their lessons in the curriculum. In other words, the entertainment article written by these periodicals associated with the schooling effort by transforming serious business (Fortna, 2011, p.59).

Indeed, there is consistency between the Hamidian period and the Young Turk regime in terms of having a tendency to promote authoritarian values such as loyalty towards the current Ottoman state by arranging the content of textbooks and publishing to suit the regime's political aim. "The first children's magazine in Ottoman Turkish appeared in 1869. Later, the number increased dramatically first during the Hamidian period and then again with the lifting of press restrictions after the Young Turk revolution of 1908" (Fortna, 2011, p.62). Starting from late Hamidian period and later in Young Turk regime, children's journals used children's play as the natural medium of learning for the child. At this point, the magazine called *Çocuklara rehber* which was published between 1897 and 1901 is a good example of how children's journal used plays and games for educational purposes. First of all, the journal, which shows its educative and instructive character in all its articles, published child games, riddles, questions and sample experiments to make it more enjoyable. In the first year editions of the journal, it is possible to encounter games published for children. The article named *Guide to Children*, which supports the idea that games are as necessary as courses in education, is very remarkable on this point. The children's games published under the title of "School Games" in the journal include the content of the games as well as the attitude of the journal. The necessity of games is emphasized in the first article: "Aren't the minds that are exposed to day's unending, tiring occupations and the delicate baby brains that are forced to memorize the solid and harsh language of science and knowledge in need of fun and liberty?" Later on the article, the need felt for games to promote body-mind balance is stated by emphasizing a mind that works all day long and a motionless body. Here, it is stated that one of the duties of schools is to have children perform gymnastics for the well-being of the body. In another article, there is also a warning that the whole day cannot be spent in play. The point that attracts attention about the games is that an educative benefit is pursued: "It is known that in school games outcomes such as

serving to the activity of the body, gaining favor in terms of fine social ethics, enriching the ideas of students with necessary information are sought” (Anon, n.d.). The need for games that can both motivate both body and mind is stated with these sentences: “They have by now learned and convinced that entertainment is not just running and playing. In fact, for the activation of mind which gets numb and loss for the mortification of the body, it is necessary to have games that can keep the body in action and mind in operation” (Anon, n.d.). The first game is *nesr-i tair* which is prepared for female students aged 7 to 10 and little children. Moreover, it can be observed that there are some other games prepared for “largish” children, girls, and school boys aged 11 to 14. In the subsequent chapters, there are detailed explanations about how the games should be played, how many students are needed in the play and catchwords. In the games that are described, there are explanations about what kind of a place is needed, how to arrange the teams, selection of it and what kind of materials are to be used in the game (Balci, 2008). It could be said that throughout these magazines, “Child readers were treated both as passive receptacles and independent thinkers, encouraged both to save the nation and to have fun, and instructed both to read for self-improvement and for sheer entertainment” (Fortna, 2011, p.62).

The impact of wars is also seen on child games. Take, for instance, The Turkish Game. The game is described to children as follows: Children gather together and one of them asks: “-Friend, who are you? The one in front answers: -I am a Turk. -Where are you going? - I am going to a fight with my enemies. I will either become a veteran or a martyr! - We are Turkish too. Take us with you too! - Can you fight? Ok let’s play a war game and we’ll see.” Children immediately split into two groups and stand apart from each other. Then one by one, they begin to attack each other. At the end of the game, whichever party takes all the children captive, that group wins. Bulgarians, who were one of the most important enemies during Balkan War, becomes a name for another child game: “The Bulgarian ran away” (Okay, 2000, p. 72-74).

In this game, one of the children, called *ebe*, takes a knotted handkerchief, called *tura*, in his hand. The *ebe* passes two times behind his standing friends and puts the

*tura* behind the one he chooses. Afterwards, the *ebe* comes to the front and, facing them, asks one of them, "Where is the Bulgarian?" The one opposite of the *ebe* replies, "The Bulgarian ran away." Then the *ebe* asks again, "Where did the Bulgarian run away?" The other says, for instance, the name the friend he thinks the *tura* is behind and says, "I think the Bulgarian is hiding behind Tarık" because of his fear. If he says the wrong name, he raises his arms up and down ten times as punishment. Whoever comes out of the round is the *ebe*, and the game continues. In the another game named "Enemy Soldiers", children come together and shout "Long live the homeland!" And then they start to walk and keep shouting at the same time, "We die for the homeland, we take glory. We live with this fame, with this glory. Long live the homeland, long live the nation." When the children stand against the balusters they stop and one of them shouts, "Here are the shoulders we are going to fight," and the others shouts with one voice "Long live the Ottomans" Thereupon, two of the children say, "Come on the brothers of homeland, attack!" And they attack the balusters. The first child to knock over the baluster wins the game, and another child, who is called "commander", congratulates the winner. The winner then says, "Thank you. But the enemy soldiers were like balusters. They were so cowardly and weak." Another child game to mention is the "game of revenge", which bears the trace of the Balkan War. In this game, one of the children plays the trumpet and shouts, "Oh the people of Islam, the Ottomans, the citizens, the sons of the dearest homeland! Do join the army voluntarily! We are going to fight. We are going to take our dear homeland." The other children shout in one voice, "Hurray the revenge! Hurray the revenge! Long live the beautiful Rumelia with its Salonika, Monastir (Bitola), Janina. Damn our enemies!" Afterwards, together they go and surround a hill to stop the enemy's passing (Okay, 2000, p. 72-74).

Selim Sırrı, the well-known educator that introduced physical education to the imperial curriculum, had a periodical called *Education and Game* that gave hints about inherited physical education heritage legacy to Early Turkish Republic in late Ottoman period. (Sarıkaya, 2018, p.64). Selim Sırrı presented different kinds of children's games and gymnastic activities under the section of physical education in his publication on 1911. The main goal of this periodical was to guide a new

generation with essential healthy, physical and moral education. In accordance with Bauman's theory, the periodical aimed at teaching the right and proper way of playing and exercising, in other words disciplining children's bodies in entertaining ways. Sarıkaya examined 24 different children's games and movements from this periodical. These games presented under the title of "children's health games" and each game was explained in detail and supported with Sirri's own children photographs. According to Selim Sirri, these games contributed to children's bodily development as well as providing individual and social discipline to children, at a broader scale ensuring social cohesion and obedience while entertaining them (Sarıkaya, 2018, p.64). Sarıkaya explained one of these games as follows:

The *Rope game* was presented as a fun and educational solution to the jumping needs of children. Instead of depriving children of their desires to jump, rope games have been proposed to turn this into a game. A three years old child can strengthen his body by spreading his knees while jumping from one floor to another. On the other hand, the rope jumping game is approved for children ages five and over. Parents have been warned against situations where children who are taught how to jump rope can become ill if they become tired or sweaty. (Sarıkaya,2018, p.68)

As can be seen, this exemplifies Smith's theory of domestication of the play. Through play, Selim Sirri attempted to teach the right way of having fun. He determined all aspects of the game. These games aimed at creating healthy citizens that put societal needs ahead of their individuality. It can be inferred that children's game was used for adapting children to current political developments by periodicals. Besides, music, education, games, literature and children's publications were all used by Ottoman statesmen to mobilize society into a national generation.

#### **3.4. The real motivation behind the use of children's plays by the Young Turk regime**

Ottoman intellectuals and policy-makers were interested in children's play as an educational method. First of all, after Sultan Abdulhamid II was deposed, many Tanzimat intellectuals in exile in European countries in the Hamidian period returned to Ottoman lands. These intellectuals played active roles in the policy-making process of the CUP and attempted to apply European education models to the Ottoman

system. The fact that the Ministry of Education had already sent many educators to European countries for educational research accelerated this process. All these educators and elites were not indifferent to the rise of play-based educational methods and the popularity of kindergarten and the science of pedagogy in the West. However, the fact that the establishment of kindergarten and the use of play-based method in the waning years of empire After Balkan wars had both advantages and disadvantages. Indeed, in an extremely unsteady period of the Empire, it was top-down reforms for society, considering that a large part of society still supported *Sibyan* schools. This compelling reforms was even made Muslim people more responsive than it was before about modern education. Modern primary schools were still limited because Muslim people preferred *Sibyan* schools due to the financial facilities provided by the foundation system. Besides, due to financial problems of the Ottoman state, there was no budget to establish kindergarten. As a result, it could not go beyond a hastily established imitation system.

However, the mentality behind the establishment of kindergarten and the use of play was consistent and intelligent. As Gökalp claimed, the Young Turk regime tried to impress a set of values on the community to hold them together. On the brink of the disintegration of the empire, the Muslim population needed a single higher identity to adapt to the new political organization of the state. As a matter of fact, citizenship classes, geography classes or physical education could fulfill the same function, but they would not be as effective as children's play. In other words, as Straughan points out, no teaching method "can guarantee to produce the appropriate motivation and subsequent behavior", for, among other things, children are free agents, "capable of accepting or rejecting what is taught." (Halstead, 2006 p.142) The policy-makers had to find a system through which children could learn the new regimes core values not just in their heads, but in their hearts. For the Young Turk regime, the philosophy and purpose underlying children's play was to provide the best way to produce active and determined citizens. Within play and games, children engaged in an active citizenship process voluntarily, absorbed the given roles naturally and felt a sense of belonging eventually. And all this process was carried out in entertaining ways in some kind of rituals. As Halstead has written, "If people learn to swim by swimming and to ride a

bike by riding a bike (in each case under the critical supervision of someone who can already do it), then there are good grounds for believing that they will learn active citizenship in a similar way, i.e. by being given opportunities to act like citizens and being guided as they do so" (Halstead, 2006, p.146). With the soldier and war games, children felt a sense of being part of the community by separating and otherizing the children from other nations. This was nothing less than micro simulation of the Balkan wars. The child became a Turkish soldier. He/she emotionally felt what he felt, because in playing several times "as if a soldier", became a soldier. This is exactly where the unserious action of play became serious. This is exactly what sentimental education means. This emotionally based motivation that children's play provided was a stronger educational method than any school lecture.

Another motivation behind the use of children's play in the late Ottoman period was directly related to the rise of biological materialism together with anatomy classes in the Hamidian medical school (Tibbiye). As mentioned before, the Committee of Union and Progress consisted of medical students in the Hamidian period. These students, because of lessons in medical school, started to see life as a result of biological and physiological processes rather than a product of God's will (Mardin, 2007, p.98). The thought of French physiology Claude Bernard, about the empirical method as an important way of generating information about lives, dominated anatomy classes in the Tibbiye. German popular materialism heavily affected Ottoman intellectuals, such that the conception of a new society was idealized with scientific truth. It was a new belief system that the medical science dominated all the rules of life. In direct proportion to what Bauman said about the new order of enlightenment mentality, the Young Turk regime, as a new type of state power, produced universal information based on scientific rules so as to re-organize and discipline society with a new certain model. The role of intellectuals was to replace the previous cultural power of the ulema with the rational design powers of the new modern state. Selim Sirri took a step further this scientific stage by introducing physical education to the Ottoman education system. With his contribution, physical education and gymnastics turned into a scientific study of the body. Starting with anatomy lessons and the idea of materialism, the fact that the body became a

political project in power relations reached another level with the rise of physical education to build strong and healthy bodies. Later, “German influence on Turkish sports and gymnastics began to be felt throughout the 1930s with the increased popularity of eugenics, or Rassenhygiene (ırk hıfzısıhhası), among the policy-makers and state intellectuals in Turkey” (Lüküslü, Dinçşahin, 2013, p.204). As seen above in Selim Sırrı’s magazine, children’s play was used to reinforce physical education among children in an entertaining way and with their voluntary participation in order to reach the ideal body of Turkish citizenship. Selim Sırrı actually sought to provide harmony between children’s organs and, even more, between the needs of the self and the society with these games based on Swedish gymnastics. This promised social harmony, or, in Durkeim’s words, a kind of solidarity among the people. Healthy bodies and happy people were the key to the harmonious society. However, Republican policy-makers, under the influence of the German ideal in sports and gymnastics, gradually pursued more aggressive policies on the body. Republican state policy on reproduction within marriage, population problems, health campaigns and child welfare progressed throughout the body politic. Thus, the Second Constitutional Monarchy period witnessed the disagreements between two separate generations who grew up with two different education systems about administering consistent state policy. While the ambivalent structure in education continues with three different schools as sıbyan schools and modern primary schools and kindergarten, in company with the rising effect Gökalp's theories on positivism and Turkish nationalism within state policy, the war period, which will last for eight years, (1914-1922) begins, first I. World War and later Independent war. The Republican state would try to heal the wounds of war with strong policies but would also face with the educational problems inherited from the Ottoman Empire. In the end, “the rapid expansion of Western style education and the flood of European materialist ideas into the Ottoman Empire produced their fruits a few decades later” (Hanioglu, 1997, p.146)



## CHAPTER IV

### The Child Playing for the Future

#### The politics of child welfare and the Children Protection Society in the early republican period

##### 4.1. The new republican regime

After the demise of the Ottoman empire and the establishment of the Turkish republic, the population of Turkey was nearly 98% Muslim and 86% of the population spoke Turkish (Mango,2008, p.159). “The dominant discourse of the national struggle period, with its talk of ‘Turkish-Muslim’ and ‘Ottoman-Muslim’ rights and ‘Turkish-Kurdish solidarity’ was abandoned overnight” (Zurcher, 2005 p.20.) The newly established national state was Turkish, and for Republican policy-makers, Turkish identity was built around the trivet of common culture, language and ideal for the republican policy-makers. Indeed, Ziya Gökalp’s thought, based on Durkheim’s positivism and solidarity, was deeply effective on the background of Turkish nationalism. The reason why the new republic chose the policy of Turkish secular nationalism instead of the dominant Ottoman-Muslim cooperation in Turkish lands was directly related to the new political organization of the state. In the late Ottoman period, governors were in search of a means of large-scale of mobilization for the survival of their diverse empire. However, after the establishment of the republic, politically saved period started after the victory of Turks in the war of independence, the most important priority of the Republican regime became the revival and modernization of the society so as to catch up with Europe with regard to wealth and power (Zurcher,2005, p.20). Mustafa Kemal and his fellows believed that this ideal would only materialize through building secular nation-state.

The core mentality of this newly founded nation state organized around the nineteenth century positivist movement. Mustafa Kemal believed that social problems could be solved only with positive science. His ideal of the Turkish nationalism was a manifestation of Durkheim’s mechanical solidarity. “The advance in the light of positive science in order to invigorate the Turkish society”, this was the

highest priority of the early republican regime. The republican regime sought to solve all social and political problems it faced with positive science in the 1920s and 1930s. The Turkish War of Independence resulted in the death of 13,000 and the wounding of 35,000 people. Above all, "Outside Istanbul, the country was devastated, its population reduced and the fabric of its multi-ethnic and multi-confessional society destroyed" (Mango, 2008, p.159). In the early 1920s, the republican regime confronted two vital problems:

- 1) to deal with the cost of the long war years: population and health problems(including child welfare issue) due to emerging many disease because of poverty in the country
- 2) To impress the ideology of Turkish nationalism on the remaining Muslim population in order to guarantee mechanical solidarity within Turkish society.

Thus, the Republican regime viewed the ideal type of citizen as follows: physically, morally and mentally healthy Turkish citizens who also placed society's common interest before their own and who closely identified with the new Turkish culture based on rational, modern and hygienic principles. In other words, from clothing to music taste, from reproduction to hygiene, from child bearing to housekeeping, the reformers sought to create a 'civilized' body that relinquished traditional dispositions, internalized the regime's rules and ideals, and adopted civilized manners, taste and aesthetics. As part of its modernization agenda, the state aimed to discipline the human body using a discourse based on science, rationality and medicine. (Alemdaroğlu,2005,p.61)

Indeed, the republican regime endeavored to create what Bourdieu called "taste" within society through Turkish nationalism. A common taste that dominated the society was the source of mechanical solidarity as well as guarantee of classes society of Mustafa Kemal. The body itself became a field of power where the new republic and its new ideology and its distinctive practices were enforced. From Foucault's perspective, "modern identities were made visible through the body; and the effects and instruments of modern power"(Cole,2004, p.213).

After the demise of Ottoman empire, the republican regime had the people who had left behind the past, waiting for helpless management and lacking skills and communal care for their own survival after the wartime. As Bauman has stated, these people shared just one characteristic: “the infinite capacity to be acted upon, shaped, perfected. Having been bared of old and shabby clothes, they will be ready to be clothed again. This time the dress will be carefully selected, meticulously designed, and cut to the measure of common interest, as prescribed by Reason” (Bauman,1989,p.68). In this manner, As Bauman said, the republican regime as a new modern rulers would have brought order, harmony and certainty with modern practices and agencies against the ambivalence and chaos of the old traditional world. All of the individuals were integrated into this new ordered and rationally disciplined society by the agencies of the sovereign and intellectuals. At this point, for Bauman, the real intention behind the educational activity was to teach social obedience. Expected behavior patterns from the people to create rational society was to conform to public interest voluntarily and to follow instructions of the superiors. It was a skill of discipline that every citizen had. At this point, he claims that the important matter here was not the knowledge taught to the students, but the methods, routine and predictability of the knowledge. Bauman explains this situation as follows: “The kind of conduct that agreed with public interest would be decided by society in advance of any individual action, and the one ability individuals would need for the interest of society to be satisfied, was that of discipline” (Bauman,1989, p.73).

Turkey’s future rested in the minds and bodies of its citizens. From a Foucauldian perspective, the body became object of republican ideology since it was at the center of visibility, because the visibility of poor and sick people reminded republican policy-makers and intellectuals what they had failed to accomplish. That means the welfare of people started from their bodily conditions. That’s where physical education makes an entrance to the stage. Body discipline provided an aesthetic and beautiful view to people. But more importantly, body discipline thought provide intellectual and moral discipline, as Sirri Selim said, also provided live in harmony both with the healthy body of individual and the society. A well-known quote of Ataturk exemplifies

this ideal: “A healthy mind in a healthy body.” Controlled, healthy bodies regulated through positivist science became the key element of the nation-building project.

When adapting this framework to the child-welfare issue that emerged in the 1920s, the republican regime had the edge over the Ottoman state in terms of educating children more easily and imposing its ideology upon them more directly. This superiority was directly related to the countless children who were orphaned by the war. Because “it was easier to ‘try out’ things on this utterly disadvantages group of children, since they had no one to protect or defend them. Children, as a consequence, served as open grounds to essay pilot projects” (Maksudyan, 2016, p.154) of new republican policy. Thus, republican policy-makers attempted to integrate these children without a family into the new rational order of the regime through state-supplied institutions and instruments. The Children Protection Society played a main role in reaching children directly since there were no families to block this ideal of the regime anymore. Children’s play as an effective tool inherited from the late Ottoman period, was used by teachers and intellectuals in order to integrate children into the national common taste and civic responsibility as well as to make the ideal body of citizenship healthy and robust through orphanages, playgrounds and kindergartens.

#### **4.2. The rise of the child welfare issue**

The Ottoman government started to show a new interest in the child issue in the second half of the nineteenth century due to rising modernization efforts after the declaration of the Gülhane decree. The modernization process started to spread in nearly all areas of the state by taking Western ideology as a model and began to change the social structure correspondingly. Children were also affected by this rapid modernization period, as mentioned in the first chapter. However, the important point here is that in the shift from empire to national state in early republican Turkey, children as persons to whom society is going to be entrusted became the basis for the modernist and nationalist project of the republican elites and policy makers (Libal, 2000, p.255-256). Actually, in the mid-nineteenth century, the concept of childhood and the child issue had already started to be debated with amazing rapidity

around the world. The reason behind great explosion of interest in children globally was directly linked to the post war re-organization of the governments. After World War I, a huge loss of population followed by high child mortality rates, bad conditions of many orphaned, and the emergence of many diseases were immediate concerns around the globe. In parallel to this, children as a future citizens started to be seen as the root of modernized nations, military strength, social welfare and economic productivity (Libal, 2000, p.255). In this situation, the issue of child welfare started to occupy an important place in government policy and became a chief concern of national discourse, both in Turkey and in many other contemporary societies. A nation's strength was associated with its children's welfare. Thus, children became agent of national renewal and progress (Libal, 2000, p.256). At this point, the republican authorities displayed highly faith in the children in terms of their potential to carry out the ideals of the young Turkish republic. Children were the means through which republican elites hoped to realize a modern infrastructure, including the processes of nation-state building and social transformation. Thus, children were regarded as significant actors for future nationhood.

Especially after World War I and the War of Independence, child poverty and dislocated children became even more visible for republican policy makers. Thus, this child issue was seen in the agenda of the state together with the poverty problem that especially arose from the hard conditions of warfare (Balkan Wars, 1912, and World War I, 1914-18) and led to child mortality and high rates of infant death, beggars and orphan children (Libal, 2000, p.256). When Ottoman soldiers died, their children became orphans. For sure, the issue of orphans had long been a priority item in the Ottoman Empire. One of the primary example of this is that, the *Darülaceze* was established as an urban poor house to supply food and shelter to many helpless people in an effort to address public health concerns and vagrancy by Ottoman state in the mid-1890s. Later, the *Darül hayr-ı Ali* (charity home) was specifically established by Abdülhamid II to serve the disenfranchised children of the empire between 1903 and 1909 (Maksudyan, 2014, p.19). But the Balkan wars and World War I constituted a turning point in terms of increasing rates of orphaned children. Thus, the Ottoman state began to take precaution about these problems by founding

some institutions such as *Darüleytams* (orphanages) and later *Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti* (The Children Protection Society) throughout the nineteenth century<sup>1</sup>. After Abdulhamid II was overthrown, the *Darül Hayr-ı Ali* was closed in 1909, and soon after, the *İttihak ve Terakki* (committee of union and progress) which was the strongest political party after 1903 became the only political power until 1918. The *Darüleytams* were founded by *İttihak ve Terakki* to serve the thousands of children of soldiers who died in World War I between 1908 and 1918, named as the constitutional period in late Ottoman history. The *Darüleytams*, which gained public interest that time, were debated in the press and the parliament occasionally. They also existed in the republican period as well. But the important thing is that both the *Darül Hayr-ı Ali* and *Darüleytams* were founded and managed by the state for serving orphans before the *Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti* (Okay, 2008, p.38). After the war, when *Darüleytams* could not meet the needs of orphans anymore, the state and republican elites attempted to establish modern, improved, and well organized institution which could take care of fewer orphans and the destitute but with better standards. At this point, the Children Protection Society was founded as a modern child welfare organization by the new governing Ottoman bureaucrats and elites in the Young Turk era.

#### **4.2.1. The birth of Children Protection Society**

The Children Protection Society (*Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti*, later called the *Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*) was founded to help military officers and their families during and after wartimes, the first in 1869 and the second in 1917. More generally, throughout and following World War I and also the war of independence, the Children Protection Society was organized to provide urgent care for displaced children. These children, who had either lost parents or relatives or else could not be supported by their family, rural community or neighborhood were the main target group of the Children Protection Society (Libal, 2000, p.264). The lack of state-supported initiatives for protecting children due to World War I and the increasing visibility of poor and orphaned children worried some professional elites. Under this circumstance, a group of businessmen, lawyers, featured doctors and local dignitaries concerned about the cause of children's health and welfare gathered and decided to combine

all the individual and divided efforts for the protection of children into one systematic organization. Throughout 1917, the association first of all published many regulations and attempted to spread the scope of its assistance and therefore opened new branches in Samsun, İstanbul (Üsküdar, Beyoğlu, Haliç, Kadıköy, Makriköy, Yeniköy) Konya, Kırıkkale, Musul and Erzurum. At first, there were twenty founding members of the Children Protection Society. The fact that prominent members of the Committee of Union and Progress (the only political power of the period), like the well-known Minister of Finance Cavid Bey, İsmail Canbulat Bey and Emanuel Karasu Efendi, were also the founders of the CPS displays the early connection between the association and the state. Throughout its early years, the Children Protection Society was a semi-voluntary association which had an indirectly organic connection with government policy alongside funding by mostly private charity. But later, in the early 1920s and 1930s, after the new Turkish republic was declared in 1923, the association gradually became the chief supporter of government policy on the child issue and also turned into a state-supportive institution and initiative in the end. These professional elites, as members of the association, represented themselves as supporting Turkish nation-state building efforts. As an expected outcome of this, after the success of the association, the Turkish state also showed more support for the association's efforts (Libal, 2000, p.57). On the other hand, "The children protection society represented a hybrid kind of institution that mediated both state and societal interests. In a sense, the society acted as a surrogate state agency" (Libal, 2000, p.57).

The Children Protection Society presented its aims and functions in detail in its 1917 regulation. According to this regulation, children under thirteen years old were the central focus for protection. Still, the central board stated that it could protect older children if necessary. The association stated that children should not be tormented even by their parents. Another item of regulation argued that children should be raised to be healthy, well-educated, skilled. Besides, the health and hygiene issue became a central concern for the association as a part of child-care efforts because of nation-wide child-poverty and high child mortality rates arising from disease and neglect (Okay, 2008, p.39,40). Indeed, another reason behind the extra concern

about child health and welfare was directly linked to the population question, which was based on Turkish post-war construction of the government's infrastructure. Republican authorities put the child at the heart of the population and health campaigns in accordance with raising public and state discourse on the endeavor to establish a strong nation state during the 1920s and 1930s (Libal, 2002, p.113).

Healthy children meant future adult citizens of the brand new Turkish modern nation-state. Because of its huge concern with child health and nutrition, the association initiated a health campaign around the nation by establishing hospitals and sanatoria in many locations, giving treatment to poor and sick children. School buildings and the quality of the food served in schools were also mentioned in health regulations. Another important concern of the association was to educate children morally in accordance with republican ideology. The main goal was here to prevent homelessness and begging and to combat child criminality and delinquent behaviors including harmful play and immoral places, that is the street. In general, the association wanted to provide protection for children's rights and lives in times of difficulties and so on. The first attempt of the Children Protection Society was to provide accommodation for displaced and orphaned children at the end of May 1917 (Okay, 2008, p.42). The state decided to fund the association and so for the first time, the Children Protection Society took over the official responsibility of looking after these children. There were nearly five hundred orphans at that time. Only six months later, at its opening in November 1917, the guesthouse was able to service all these children. From 1917 to 1922, 2,027 children were accepted into the guesthouse. In the meantime, the association founded three different committees named the committee for legal affairs, the committee for health and the committee of publications under its roof (Okay, 2008, p.45). However, when Istanbul was invaded, the association had to re-established its headquarters in Ankara by the Turkish Grand National Assembly which constituted on 23 April 1920 to serve the national struggle directed by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, also the founder of the Turkish republic.



#### 4.2.2. The child issue and the re-birth of orphanages for educating and discipline children

Neglected children mean the loss of energy of the nation and neglected lands mean the loss of energy of the homeland. A neglected seedling dries, rots or becomes wild. A neglected child becomes sick, dies, or becomes criminal or murderous. Neglected children are a national hazard because they will join society every year. So the value of the nation and the army will fall a degree each year. The future owners of the country are the children of today. In this case, how the neglected children will be owners of this homeland is a matter to be considered today. The family's debts to the homeland are that they have as many children as possible, even if they are poor. It is the duty of the state, not theirs, to think of how to take care of them. (Karabekir, 1995, p.4)

The paragraph was a quote from Kazım Karabekir Paşa's well-known book *Çocuk Davamız* (1995). Kazım Karabekir Paşa is well-known educator, soldier and politician of the late Ottoman as well as early republican periods. He stands out most with his battlefield success as a general and also more importantly his great contribution to child welfare efforts as a responsible educator. When he was a frontline general in eastern Anatolia, under the tough conditions of the war of independence, Kazım Karabekir Paşa established a children protection society on 12 November 1921 at Sarıkamış to provide care for the province's orphaned, displaced and neglected children. He especially served these who had lost parents and accordingly suffered from war conditions during and after wartimes in eastern Anatolia. Kazım Karabekir Paşa also founded some educational institutions such as kindergarten (*anamektebi*) for needy children aged 3 to 13 in Anatolia (Sarıkaya, 2011, p.11). More than a thousand children between ages 5 and 6 benefited from his care and education program. In total, over a six thousand orphans were trained in these institutions. For that reason, he called a "father of orphans". Beside this, Kazım Karabekir Paşa frequently reported his opinions about orphan care, such as raising orphans, to the early republican state in the 1920s. As a significant figure, his above text about neglected children clearly highlights the preoccupations of republican authorities with child welfare during the early Turkish Republic. The transformation of the notion of children and childhood in the Ottoman case was inherited by the early republican

state with little change. Although child welfare as a social problem found a place in the Ottoman public discourse in the late 19th and 20th centuries, only after the emergence of the republic did the child question begin to occupy an important place in public discourse and become a subject of long-term policy debate (Duben & Behar, 1991 p.228 in Libal, 2002, p.112). Like Kazım Karabekir said, for republican governors and elites, neglected and orphaned children were symbols of the unmodern and undeveloped nation (Libal, 2003, p.260). They would be a national threat because of their potential delinquent behaviors gained from socialization on the streets (*sokak terbiyesi*). “Not only were their lives in danger due to war circumstances, poverty, and starvation, but they were also under the moral threat of losing their religion and nationality” (Maksudyan, 2016, p.149). As Bauman has claimed, on the one hand, legislators felt kindness to the orphans and neglected children who were the future of the nation; on the other hand, they regarded these children as an unpredictable and ignorant multitude and tried to keep them under control with the sense of horror.

Indeed, many scholars in the early republican era showed great interest in the impact of environment (*muhit*) on children’s behavior and life. Among them, the well-known educator and pedagogue İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu especially focused on the importance of the environment in terms of shaping children’s morals and behaviors in his book on general pedagogy (*umumi pedagoji*). According to him

.... The discipline of childhood is subject to the destiny of customs. Thereby, a child imitates whatever is good or bad in his social environment. He thrives in good environment and worsens in bad environments (p. 47). The training of an individual is the impulse of the incidents that derives from the development of the environment. Because the worth of the physical and moral training is large at a young age. The motive of human beings depends on the benefits of the environment.... On the contrary, the motive of the children who grow up in a family environment with a garden, large sofas and rich furniture will be magnificent. The children who grow up in such an environment become an architect, engineer, orator and governor easily! This is the emphasis of the kindergartens and children toys! Froebel also wanted to grow and make alive of the children’s motive by imagining kindergartens. (Baltacıoğlu, 1930, p. 62-64)

The establishing of orphanages meant gathering all unprotected children into a geographically and morally proper living space. In this way, due to the increasing visibility of child poverty and orphaned children, the child question emerged with a save the children campaign which eventually led to the idea of establishing orphanages in early the Turkish republican era (Libal, 2003, p.256). In opening orphanages, republican reformers aimed at first removing the image of poor children who reminded them of what had still to be successes about the future of Turkey. The orphanages were instrumental in instilling the new Turkish nation state's ideals in orphaned children, as an entirely disadvantage group of children which did not have anyone to protect and defend them by educating and disciplining them with certain programs and apparatus such as magazines and kindergartens. For that reason, the opening of orphanages around the country for children was definitely politicized. Actually, all modern child welfare efforts in the 1920s and 1930s were deeply politicized in terms of being used by state officials to exercise control over their tiny citizens. The orphanages are key here to better understand how children's lives were shaped by new forms of institutional control and regulation. This explains why children became a main target of the population and health campaigns. In the 1920s, orphanages and day nurseries, which operated as a kind of kindergarten were established to further two main objectives:

- (1) reduce infant and child mortality rates to combat the population problem due to human costs on the battlefields, the ignorance of mothers about child-rearing, and poverty.
- (2) attempt to raise those children healthy and with a solid education in the scientific principles of child-rearing, and transform them into productive adult citizens for the sake of a strong Turkish nation-state.

As Foucault claimed, in direct proportion to the rising illness and mortality rate among society because of tough war conditions, orphanages emerged as charitable institutions so as to prevent medical problems among society that sapped the population's strength and wasted energy. In other words, with the rise of medical discourse that underlined public hygiene, the CPS had a duty that normalized

knowledge, organized medical-care and centralized power in one hand (Foucault, 2003 p.244). Apart from orphanages, the other services of the CPS, such as day nurseries, mother schools and playgrounds, contributed to the public discourse about the nationalization of everyday life with imported modern pedagogical techniques from West. In the absence of the state-run kindergartens because of state's financial difficulties, these institutions served little children and their parents. During the 1920s and 1930s, the CPS operated much like a site of political agency which attempted to infuse the essential practices of constructing national identity and the country's cultural character into children by using early education and children's play through its institutions. But the most important thing is here that pedagogy as a new trend beginning in the Young Turk era started to directly affect republican education policy but with a more forceful character than in the late Ottoman case (Fortna, 2000, p.266). This was the biggest difference between late Ottoman and early republican educational history. After the numerous loss of territories of the empire because of wars, the new republican state was left with a much more homogenous society and smaller homeland. Clearly, this homogenous population and homeland played significant role for national discourse and practices to formalize and nationalize education, policy and everyday life more effectively with the purpose of ensuring both social integration and better central government control. Moreover, unlike the Ottoman case, the republican regime had a chance to educate children directly without a family barrier. The state did not have to educate children only six or eight hours a day anymore; instead; the whole circle of their daily life belonged to the state power. This was beyond the original goal of schooling in modern times. This was what Foucault called the panopticon. In a full-capacity complex including children's dispensaries, playgrounds and swimming pools, children lived with some specialist's eyes on them day and night. "As Foucault describes it, power is realized in its reach "into the very grain of individuals . . . their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday life" (Cole, 2004, p.212). Social obedience and docile bodies became a 7/24 panoptic project in orphanages. In other words, children "who make up and circulate through the social body are made by and are the primary vehicles of modern power" (Cole, 2004, p. 28).

#### **4.2.3. Replacement of the family by an idealized teacher figure**

As Bauman asserted that education was an effective project for both adapting human being to the new social order as well as positioning society and legislators were responsible for this adaptation. Both the state and the CPS as society's leadership gradually agreed about the replacement of the family by the state in child-rearing. Similar to articles 272 and 273 of the 1926 Turkish civic law, which was the most extensive regulation about child-care, keeping children away from all immoral and unpleasant environments and, if necessary, taking the child away from its family and transferring the child to a proper (healthier) environment was in the regulations of the CPS as one of its primary goals. As Bauman has stated, another dichotomy called bad or good education which decided what was wrong or right appeared here. The republican regime here positioned itself as normal, specialist one that knew what was right or wrong. Preoccupation with child welfare coupled with the increase of modern-style education strengthened the role of the teacher "...with a seemingly perfect representation of modern pedagogy who doubles as an eminently suitable father figure" (Fortna, 2014, p.56). As Fortna has stated, the new modern teacher was presented as a "surrogate father" in the republican publications. The replacement of the family by the state was regarded as necessary in order to establish the strong bond between the new style state schooling and the students by republican authorities. Thus, teacher became an idealized figure that was fully aware of how to educate both students and their families with new modern educational methods, thus taking the place of the family, which mostly was depicted as uneducated and unconcerned. In this case, even Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, received the title of "head teacher" in 1928 with the alphabet reform.

As Bauman has stated, the teacher became an expert legislator who disseminated knowledge about right and wrong. Thus, republican teachers were intermediaries that managed society according to certain rules of the state authority. They also had the duty to legitimate the authority of the republican state, justifying the knowledge produced by state officials as true and real. Republican authorities completely believed that direct assistance to this beleaguered populace had the transformative capacity to create a new kind of citizen. Thus, through social work services and

interventions, the state as a *parents patriate* tried to raise directly the children of the nation (Libal, 2002, p.303). In the end, orphanages offered the opportunity of creating a new kind of people who were free from prejudices and ready to be shaped in the ingenious hands of legislators and specialist teachers.

Since the child became national wealth and future prosperity, the state gradually intervened in the familial sphere through many attempts about modern child-rearing for the common weal of the nation. Indeed, the child-rearing issue was portrayed as one of the most crucial problems of the early republican period, connected with both economic and political concerns and also habits of family life by professional elites and policy makers in the print media. Many educators in the 1920s and 1930s debated this issue as a national issue to be addressed by the republican state and the broader society. Among them, Hıfzı Tevfik stated in his article named “Our children” from *Çocuk Haftası* (Children’s Week, 1929, p.88,89) that the child issue was two dimensional: the issue of caring for orphans and providing the nation’s children with national and uniform education and nurture (*terbiye*). His text was also a typical example that supported the idealized teacher figure of the republican period. According to Hıfzı Tevfik, the ultimate mission of the society was to raise children properly and carefully in order to protect and maintain societal and republican benefits in the future. But according to him, mothers failed to realize this basic truth. Thus, primary school teachers had the huge responsibility of realizing this mission. Hıfzı Tevfik finished his article as follows: “This wish of a pedagogue who loves children very much and wants to see them as the heroes of the new Turkish world with national consciousness should not be grudged to much.” As seen, the value attributed to children was directly connected with the potential benefits they would supply for the welfare of the nation (Libal, 2003, p.47). Similar to Tevfik Fikret, another important republican educator, Kazım Nami, also stressed the necessity of proper upbringing in order to achieve the ideal of a strong nation in his article “Children Belong to the Society” (*çocuk cemiyetindir*). However, contrary to Fikret, he also claimed that nurture (*terbiye*) was not alone sufficient for the building of a strong nation (Children’s Week, 1929, p. 89). According to Kazım Nami’s account, the welfare of the society would be only possible with “physically, mentally and morally

healthy children". A nation of healthy children would create a civilized and stronger nation-state. For this very reason, the children and their upbringing ought to belong to the nation itself rather than families. Kazim Nami regarded children as an object of the society by eliminating the family bounds. Going even further, he legitimized the control of society and the state over the child and family above even the institution of marriage: "No, sir, the child is not yours. It is the society that legitimizes your relationship with a woman who marries you." Since according to republican elites' families were failing to sufficiently educate and nurture to children, and thus failing to provide for the welfare of the society, the state attempted to undertake the traditional roles of the family by intervening even in the privacy of family life.

#### **4.3. Development of kindergarten after World War I**

In the 19th century, Froebel established the first kindergarten with the same concern as republican intellectuals: with the thought that parents were not providing the child necessary education and discipline. The kindergartens and the science of pedagogy were seen as valuable educational vehicles for the modernist projects of both the Ottoman Empire and the republican government to remedy the unequal relationship with Western power to imbue their citizens with imperial and national ideology from early ages (Libal, 2002, p.42). From external problems to indigenous concerns, both the kindergarten and the pedagogy were used in order to spread the Western modernization model around the whole century and also to provide ideological commitment to the state by republican elites and governors. Most importantly, the kindergartens and pedagogy were seen as very adaptable to the indigenous necessities of the new republic (Fortna, 2000, p.254). However, with World War I and the War of Independence, the Young Turk project of the state-run kindergarten was interrupted. Later, after the establishment of the republican regime, because of financial difficulties, the state chose to invest in primary education. This was indeed a consistent investment when one considers the Ottoman focus on the development of primary school in the last period of the empire. In this case, similar to Ottoman educators, republican reformers believed in the importance of primary school for both higher education and imposing state ideology on tiny citizens. But this time, differently from the Ottoman state, the republican regime started educational

reforms by terminating the indecisive dual structure of primary education with the Law on the Unification of Education (Tevhid-i Tedrisat Kanunu) dated March 3, 1924, and Sibyan school were abolished. However, the republican regime considered Muslim population needs and thus, the first school curricula prepared by Turkish ministry of education in 1924 still included Quran and religious classes. Vasif Bey, the minister of education, made this statement about the 1924 law: "With this regulation, in Turkey, a single discipline, a single school, there will be a single education method." This unification of education system indeed supported Ziya Gökalp's populism, which was based on the principle of equal opportunity within society, in other words the ideal of a classless society. The philosophy behind republican educational modernization was socialist and Durkheim-based and held societal needs as more important than individual interest.

Although the republican state lacked the financial resources to open public kindergartens, the Children Protection Society established children's institutions which consisted of three departments, kindergartens (*ana kucağı*), day nurseries (*kreş*) and children's homes/orphanages (*çocuk yuvaları*), as well as children's playgrounds, in cooperation with the state's education policy in the provinces and cities (Sarıkaya ,2011, p.127, 131, 134, 157). These institutions were early childhood education institutions and functioned as kindergartens. The new education policy of the republican state was all about the nationalization and modernization of the education project. Thus, republican officials recognized that the most efficient way to maintain this educational policy was to borrow modern pedagogical techniques and institutions from the West, especially from America, France and Germany. Both pedagogical techniques and kindergartens became strong means by which state education policy imbued Turkey's tiny citizens with national ideas, duties and attitudes. Especially after 1923, children's games and play, as a new pedagogical way, were used effectively by republican policy-makers to create healthy and intelligent citizens who were extremely loyal to the Turkish national identity and homeland and to teach collective national duties and manners under the supervision of the new modern educational institutions and their educators. As a result, the establishment



of such institutions led to the emergence of the modern child-care system where the state fulfilled its ideology directly.

Kindergartens developed in parallel in both West and East. With World War I, the kindergarten became part of education systems in both modern and developing nations. "As kindergartens became institutionalized around the globe, it took on the values and cultural symbols of those in control of education" (Wollons, 2000, p.6). In other words, the kindergarten inevitably gained a political meaning as a part of a national educational system. Thus, the kindergarten started to be exported to Western Europe countries and became popular especially for middle class families in both Britain and the United States. The kindergarten methods were also introduced to day-care centers to serve children of the poor by many states and charitable organizations (Allen, 2000, p.29). Indeed, the development of the kindergarten under the German Empire (1871-1918) led to the spread of social services aimed at promoting social welfare by ameliorating the conditions of urban poverty. Official concern centered on saving lower-class children from the dangers of neglect and criminal activity on the streets, dangers arising from their potential inadequate familial nurture in the mind of local authorities. Thus, urban policy makers promoted Free Kindergartens to secure the social order by regenerating and disciplining the children of the poor.

After the death of Froebel, the idea of kindergarten disseminated to the West with the contribution of Froebel's niece Schrader-Breyman. However, Schrader-Breyman, who was the founder of Pestalozzi-Froebel House criticized the Froebel's games for being too abstract and philosophical, and replaced them with exercises created to introduce children to the natural environment, the adult world and the skills of daily life. (Allen, 2000, p.27). For instance, she asserted that every kindergarten should have a garden so as to show children the origin of their daily foods. "Indeed, the transition from Froebel games to more practically oriented forms of learning which occurred in kindergartens throughout the western world around 1900 (in the United States under the leadership of Hall and John Dewey) owed much to the influence of the Pestalozzi-Froebel house" (Allen, 2000, p.27). Pestalozzi-

Froebel House operated like the settlement house which was popular in England and the United States at that time. Due to the increasing prestige of Schrader-Breyman's pedagogy in modern nations, many European and American educators started to visit and study at the Pestalozzi-Froebel House. Among them, American psychologist G. Stanley Hall described the institution as "the finest kindergarten installation in the world" (Allen, 2000, p.27). John Dewey, an American philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer, was also impressed by Froebelian pedagogy and used the activities of Pestalozzi-Froebel House to develop the idea of kindergarten in the United States. He specially gave importance the role of play in the education of democratic societies.

#### **4.3.1. John Dewey and the impacts of his play theory on the Children Protection Society**

John Dewey was an important figure for his contribution to Turkish educational history. His ideas were influential in both Turkish early childhood and primary education. In this case, Dewey's educational system fitted in exactly with Gökalp and Atatürk's populist ideas based on Durkheim's solidarity. In fact, early republic education system of the 1920s and 1930s was affected by Dewey's ideas. The primary education program dated 1926 was even prepared in line with his educational methods. Similar to Durkheim, Dewey believed in the social function of education in adapting individuals to the society's norms. According to Dewey children's play was to provide social democracy starting from early ages of people over the critics of Froebel methods.

Similar to Schrader-Breyman, Dewey criticized Froebelian scripted play pedagogy in kindergarten and suggested more rational play theory which promoted experiential learning and active participation of willing providing social order within play that conveyed finally to Liberal Democracy. To him, teacher-guided free play was an effective means of accommodating the contradiction between the needs of the individual and social discipline. Like many other the late nineteenth century progressive kindergarten supporters in the United State, he argued that children should experiment and surpass problems themselves but under teacher supervision.

Dewey stated that teacher should allow children to develop their own rules and ideas. Indeed, he decided to adapt and transform Frobelian play pedagogy into a more active, creative and progressive educational method in order to eliminate the contradiction between voluntary assent and social control in a democratic society (Beatty, 2017, p.244). For Dewey, free play was a key element to explain the natural link between play, work and societal needs. Moreover, he stated that the tension between individual freedom and social control was defused under the guidance of free play and the link between play and work. Like Froebel, Dewey contested the opinion that play was unimportant and lacked seriousness. To him, while play was naturally transformed into work as the child developed, the necessities of the child and the necessities of society fused. "Teachers planned environments and activities in which children as individuals were motivated to play at and be introduced to things they would do and study as adults, *co-operatively*" (Beatty, 2017, p.431). Play and the natural transition from play into work is the only means of reconciling the development of social efficiency with that of individual fullness of life" (Beatty,2017, p.431). Indeed, Dewey regarded play as a strong vehicle for the child to find out the play and work of the grown-up world. At this point, modern kindergarten became the center to use play "not only as a method of making work interesting to children, but for the education values of the activities it involves, and for giving the children the right sort of ideals and ideas about every day life" (Beatty, 2017, p.434). As the idea of kindergarten expanded and was adapted in several countries, it was used by local authorities for the goals of the state. Dewey's play pedagogy and the idea of kindergarten became influential on the kindergarten movement around the globe. Dewey's idea about kindergarten, play and the American education system as a whole as well as German Philosophy and French health based methods had a deep impact on republican educators and officials debating and modifying the Turkish national education system, including early childhood education and care. Indeed, between 1925 and 1935 many educators and medical professionals were sent to the United States and Europe by the Ministry of Education in order to make educational observations. Among them, Fuad Umay, the head of Himaye-I Etfal Cemiyeti shared his memories about American kindergartens during his trip to the United States in 1922 in his book *Memories of a Revolutionary Doctor* (2003). Similar to Umay, many

educators published opinions and observations about American school system in columns in *Gürbüz Türk Çocuğu* (Robust Child Magazine), the weekly children's magazine of the CPS. Later, in 1924, Dewey and a German called Kuhne were asked to visit the country and write reports including recommendations to revise the contemporary pedagogical situation by republican officials (Fortna, 2000, p.266). Thus, republican officials and elites used kindergarten and play for both adapting children to social change and inculcating in them national ideas (identity, loyalty) entertainingly and naturally in order to provide social integration and political control. In other words, republican policy-makers saw play as a serious and important education method at the basis of learning, though it was generally considered as unserious, trivial and connected with childish innocence. Actually, the history of kindergarten is the discovery of play as a serious political tool to educate and discipline tiny citizens in accordance with local needs. Thus, children were motivated to learn all this 'serious information' which normally belonged to the adult world, in an enjoyable way through play with their active and voluntary participation. This kind of use of play surely brought along with it confusions and contradictions in practice for both children and adults while building republican child-centered discourse. The inconsistent attitudes of republican elites and officials about child-centered policies and discourse was evidenced especially in the pages of the periodical and printed media of the Children Protection Society during the 1920s and 1930s.

## CHAPTER V

### The Child Playing for Civilization and Bio-power

#### An analysis on children' plays on printed media in republican period

##### 5.1. *Robust Turkish Child* magazine as promoters of child welfare and health propaganda

The special edition of periodicals of The Children Protection Society called *Children's Week* (*Çocuk Haftası*) published in 1930 for the April 23 holiday featured an article introducing the Children's Palace to the public. The article, "Let's visit the Children Palace together" (*Çocuk sarayını birlikte gezelim*), presented all departments of the Children's Palace with pictures. The Children's Palace, the head of The CUP, was located on a wide street of the same name in the new capital in Ankara. Since 1926, the palace became general headquarters both worked to associate branches under a single bureaucratic management and to provide first-hand assistance to all children and the mothers. The CPS services included day nursery for children of working woman, children's clinic, bathroom suit, milk depots, children's playground, educational activities and weekly journal as a part of nation-wide campaign to promote child health and welfare. Indeed, this chief concern of The CPS about child health and rearing eventually led to publish a monthly journal called *Gürbüz Türk Çocuğu* (*Robust Turkish Child*) and many other educational materials to propagate its own works and missions and promote child-health and care (*Let's visit The Children Palace Together, Children's week*, p.201). This weekly journal and pamphlets were given to mothers and families at exhibitions and conferences, public centers, the association's own clinic and milk depots (Libal, 2002, p.67). Neşet Halil (Atay) stated the targeted audience for *Robust Turkish Child* as follows:

It does not appeal to children, but appeals to those who raise children, and those who have formal and special relevance to child rearing jobs and institutions. It struggles for the child. Gives material to those who struggle for the child. In other words, it helps to disseminate propaganda of The CPS in the whole country. (*Robust Turkish Child*, 1934)

In a sense, medical and childcare professionals, teachers and mothers, in other words everyone who was part of child-rearing, were the expected audience for the journal (Libal,2000, p.67). From breast-feeding to children's play, the journal included extensive topics about child-welfare and education aiming at elevating the "child question" in the national social policy agenda (Libal,2002, p.109). However, at a time when the literacy rate is low, the magazine targeted a literate audience of women who had time and resources to devote their attention to child-rearing. As such, the generalized campaign for robust children spoke first and foremost to an educated middle-class and upper-class elite, rather than to the whole populace. Imagining the robust child, then, conflated notions of health and social class in the building of the Turkish nation-state. (Libal,2002, p.125)

As Şerif Mardin claimed, "the modernization of media and of cultural life in Turkey generally increased, rather than decreased, the gap between the little and the great culture" (Mardin, 1973, p.179). From Bauman's perspective, the project of republican modernization was "by necessity, a two-edged one: aimed at the 'enlightening' of the state, its policies and its methods of action on the one hand, and at the containing, taming or otherwise regulating of their subjects on the other" (Bauman,1989, p.75). With this explanation, he claims that another contradiction regarding the management of the ruling class of the society disappeared. That is to say, people were regarded on the one hand as citizens of the future, a periphery which would be placed in the orbit of the "center" and equipped with its values and norms. At the same time, with or without people's consent, their forced supervision, if necessary, was perceived as a "multitude" that had to be kept under the control of the "center" and reduced to harmless. In other words, *Robust Turkish Child Magazine* and republican child-rearing practices caused continue disagreement between center and periphery. All these activities were for people that had the power, like republican legislators, to rehabilitate the periphery or multitude. This was where the ideal of a classless society failed.

Many articles from the *Robust Turkish Child* and *Children Week (Çocuk Haftası)* were written either by state officials (political leaders, bureaucratic elites, ministers) or

professional elites who promoted state policy in an intensive way. In both cases, the journal became an important tool both to reach the people and to imbue these people with republican ideology. In other words, especially after 1928, the newly founded Turkish state effectually used publications to construct a national consciousness about child-development and rearing and to popularize pedagogy, modern educational institutions and medical care in across the whole country. “Communication through a series of linked text and images was vital to the efficacy of the top-down political, social and cultural project of the Kemalist state” (Fortna,2012, p.100). It is crucial to note that the journal was not for children, or at least did not include any entertaining materials for children. Instead, it included everything about children but only for specialist adults in order to inform them about proper ways of child-rearing. In other words, both the state and The CPS controlled what was read which was the medium of constructing public discourse to rationalize and standardize the republican ideology among broader audiences. As Bauman states the state wanted to create a “*managed society*” that was planned, guided and regulated by central power. Indeed, ruling class materialized this vision in the educational institutions via intellectuals by producing knowledge, subject’s identity, moral and social values and conducts. Thus, ruling class was the authority over the society to decide what was wrong or right and what was proper or not. In other words, those who possessed the knowledge also possessed the power and through certain institutions, discourse of these ruling class was consolidated among the society as if it was the only reality from the beginning.

In both the late Ottoman period and the republican era, the same primary desire to control pedagogical practices by producing literacy was a prominent trend, especially for republican officials to achieve cultural development for the sake of national unity and cohesion (Fortna,2012, p.55). The orphanage was the institution where this desire became concrete in the early republican period.

## **5.2. Fashioning children's plays in civilizing process**

### **5.2.1. Re-reading republican children's games in the light of Norbert Elias' civilizing process and Foucault's discipline**

Norbert Elias, in his well-known book *civilizing process*, points out that from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, with the emergence of the modern-nation state, a new technique of control developed which decided socially accepted standards of behavior, sentiments and etiquette so as to ameliorate the human habitat for effective social transformation within society. The civilizing process formed by the bourgeoisie of the 18th and 19th centuries penetrated every facet of the human body's physical existence. Movement, gestures and attitudes became socially constructed in order to provide self-control within society. Propriety was dominated by the new kind of control to create ideal and civilized people with bodily practices and physical activities. Elias was an important scholar who depicted the connection between historically different forms of social control and people's bodily functions such as the way people move and express their emotions. The civilizing process was a project to ensure social control over bodily control. Similar to Elias, Foucault also claimed that with the end of eighteenth century, a new kind of power emerged that focused on bodily construction of the subject in order to discipline and domesticate thought and behavior on behalf of rationality and science. This new disciplinary power aimed at a high degree of self-control over bodily functions and expression in order to penetrate the soul of people. "Elias and Foucault are both concerned with how perceptions of selfhood and society along with standards of behavior with respect to bodily functions and the management of human feelings have been transformed in the course of Western history" (Smith, 1999, p.79).

During Turkish nation building period, the republican regime aimed at civilizing society in accordance with rational and scientific rules by creating new set of values and social habits in society for effective social transformation within republican citizens. The new type of citizens would be raised up with common social habits and public values. Indeed, the cultural cliff between the center and periphery, the rulers and masses in late Ottoman history increased with the Tanzimat period and imitative reformers' insistence on Western manners (Mardin,1973, p.174). In this situation, the



republican regime focused on establishing direct relations between the state and its citizens in order to provide social integrity within new ethical regulations and scientific reason. Besides, on the verge of post-war recovery, the population problem and the reproduction of the society with health problem arised from national poverty caused that medicine became national endeavour being integral part of state function. Early republican Turkey witnessed a rise in public hygiene propaganda and prevalent and intensive health policies and interventions.

Throughout the nation-building period, the Republican regime pursued hygienic and ethical regulation of the human body in order to create a large, healthy and civilized populace from its tiny citizens. As a matter of fact, Children's health and moral discipline was a chief concern for the republican authorities who believed that healthy, strong and loyal children were the key to the well-being of society and the effectiveness of the new state. In this way, children's play was used as an effective social control mechanism in order to provide mechanical solidarity among children as well as to create ideal citizens through bodily discipline and regulation. Thus, the importance of children's plays as a modern educational method became popular in the early republican regime. The fact that the Republican state sent educators abroad to visit and study the Western education system had a great share in the popularity of children's play among republican educators. Besides, whether traveling abroad or not, many educators wrote about children's play and its function, and also sometimes debated it theoretically, in the early republican era. Among them, İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, the pedagogy professor in Istanbul University, played an important role in educational reforms both in the Late Ottoman and in the early republican period. As a Western instructed educator, Baltacıoğlu frequently wrote on children's play and its positive effects on training children easily. He described play as an incontestable right of children all over the world. However, he aimed to use this natural part of early childhood for political and national necessities. Almost all republican educators believed that play was an inseparable part of being children and also that it had an important place in child development. At the same time, all these educators have almost agreed about using of children's play to cultivate the nation's children mentally and physically well. They attempted to benefit from its functional side.

Baltacıoğlu was one of the pioneers who declared the necessity of children plays to raising children in accordance with the new republican regime and its social habits and public values. Children's play and gymnastics were important instruments that helped children adapt to new civilized social and moral values. According to him, correct upbringing would bring about national unity and cohesion eventually. At this point, Baltacıoğlu aimed to rationalize the new regime, its reforms and ideology by standardizing the child-rearing system for the common good of the nation. To him, pedagogy as a science of discipline (*terbiye*) and the proper way of child-rearing was key to transforming society and creating a strong nation. Baltacıoğlu explained this issue as follows:

Nurture is a means of living, getting used to a civilized environment. Without nurture, new generations would not be able to get used to their environment, so the legacy of the values and techniques we call civilization and nationality could not pass from generation to generation, and neither social and moral life nor development in this life would be possible for people. The destiny of the nurture is the destiny of the society. Theory is also needed for nurture. In particular, the nurture of nations is as difficult as the management of a mixed machine. How is it possible to see such a gentle job with one or two rules? The teacher absolutely needs pedagogy, which is the theory of nurture. Everyone who has something to do with nurture needs pedagogy, mother, father, master ..... (Baltacıoğlu, 1930, p.27,28)

Baltacıoğlu underlined the importance of play as a functional child-rearing medium. According to him, children learned through material experiment such as imitation, plays, movement and production. As for social play and sport, these were preliminary to ethics and philosophy, which were the basis of social and intellectual development (Baltacıoğlu, 1930, p.157). Through play, children gained habits that will influence their whole life. Since children learned by playing, repetition within play affected the development of children's characters. Like Dewey said, "these simple activities provided a *sense of continuity* that was the *basis of attention and of all intellectual growth*" (Beatty, 2017 p.438). Children's play here was one of the techniques of what Foucault called disciplinary power in the civilizing process. Because children's play promised to instill a new civilized and ethical order into children well as keeping them fit and trim through their voluntary and natural participation. It was to kill two birds

with one stone. Children's play offered republican educators the opportunity to create the ideal figure of republican children, which was the combination of strong bodies and active minds, effortlessly. Games and plays functioned in helping to discipline and to control children's bodily development. Republican policy-makers "used children's own reformulation of sport and active play as fun and enjoyment to maintain institutional power. Enjoyment was thus used both as a 'currency' to 'buy' children's co-operation as well as a strategy for enrichment to increase children's motivation and engagement in their learning"(Hemming,2007,p.367).

On the other hand, team games provided social discipline and unity. As a result, the ultimate desire of the republican educators was to create modern and civilized new generations with aesthetic and beautiful bodies and strong minds that symbolize their strong nation. This scene displayed why Fuad Umay, the head of the CPS, supported and imitated Dewey's educational model and emphasized children play's in early childhood education. Fuad Umay visited one of the kindergartens which followed Dewey's pedagogical methods in America and wrote about the American kindergarten system and programs in detail in a work that directly affected republican educators: his *Devrimci bir doktorun hatıraları* (2003). He revealed how he was fascinated by Dewey's system, which highlighted playing and games in the early-childhood learning stage, in these American kindergartens. Dewey's children's games provided active participation of willing and social order that conveyed finally to Liberal Democracy.

Clearly, Umay supported Dewey's active learning methods and his play-based rather than passive, reading-based school system. After his visit to America, he discussed at length children's playgrounds both in kindergartens and around New York City. He stated that seasonally, the children in these kindergartens were often played outdoors in the garden under the supervision of teachers. Children in the garden mostly played in the sandpit, where they built sand bridges, kilns and wheels (Umay,2003, p.75). According to him, swings, slides and teacher managed collective games were also very popular among children. After the children learn the game, they take the place of the teacher and manage the game. Thus, thanks to these

games, children gained some skills such as adapting to the social order of society, focusing their attention and being kind to their friends. In other words, they became civilized. There were many game that were organized by American specialist. He explained one of these games in detail:

A vertical board is placed in the middle of a smooth circle drawn on the ground. A certain length boundary is drawn on both sides of the circle. The children are lined up on one side of the border, and a child who will attack on the other side. The boy who is in the position of referee is on the other side at the level of the circle. He starts the game by hitting the two boards in his hand. The child who, will be attacking, takes the board in the middle of the circle and kidnaps it to a certain limit in his direction. The other kid standing in front of his knee is following him to that limit. If he reaches him in a certain distance, he wins. If he can't reach him, he loses. If he wins, he goes into attacking position... (Umay,2003, p.76)

Umay reported that the game was played with enthusiasm and more complicated games were played under the charge of the teachers. However, it is seen clearly from his notes how he was influenced by the self-control of children and their obedience in the game. Eventually, the self-control of the body in the game affected their souls and attitudes and it civilized them.

The child, who acts as a referee, determines whether or not a certain place has been reached. The referee's decision is final. While watching the game I'm glad to see the fact that a six-year-old boy, who served as a referee, starts the game by hitting the boards in his hand, makes the arbitration seriously when the dispute came out and manages the game. (Umay,2003, p.76).

Here, the game and playing, itself, was transform into responsibility and seriousness instead of entertainment and childishness. His vision reminds one of Froebel's theory about play that naturally transforms into work as a child grows. In the end, republican specialists attempted to organize everything about children's life in order to create organized citizens for the sake of the future of the Turkish nation. As a matter of fact, this control-freak attitude of republican policy-makers and educators was directly

related to the rising importance of hygiene and medicine in state policy. Foucault mentioned “how medicine, over the course of a century, became a national endeavor, decisively radicalized during the French Revolution and Empire According to him, it was from this time that medicine became inseparable from State functions” (Martins&Munoz,2019, p.2). Foucault claimed that with the late eighteenth century, birth and morbidity rates and other similar phenomena led to the improvement of medicine which focused on public hygiene, and institutions emerged that normalized knowledge, organized medical-care and centralized power (Foucault, 2003, p.244). These institutions targeted to teach hygiene and to medicalize the whole population with propaganda. Charitable institution dealt with the problem of birth ratio, mortality and reproduction through this medical knowledge of safety measures.

In particular, children’s play and sports served this purpose of the state: to provide physically and morally healthy children according to hygienic, rational and medical principles, in other words, to provide civilized robust children. K.M. Bahaittin, one of the writers for the magazine, expressed this situation well. Firstly, the author mentioned the organic link between play and the child under the title *Child and a Matter of Play* (Bahaittin, 1930, p.58-60). For him, playing was natural part of the childhood that made children active and healthy. Playing was the most important activity of the robust child, which was the ideal figure of modernity because life was nothing more than activity. Poor, feeble, lazy children represented only the backwardness of the nation. The author criticized the popular belief that active children are naughty and emphasized the function of play in shaping children’s character and physical structure as well as the future of the nation.

Here, the lazy, backward, and uncivilized child was represented by the Ottoman children who sat on the ground in front of rahle in the sibyan schools. The new civilized republican children must be active and healthy and robust. This new type of children needed a new taste, new habitus and new activity. Another article called “Winter...Children’s Most Enjoyable Season” was a good example of the above thesis. At the beginning of the article, the author stated how Western children were waiting for the Winter as if for a festival. Later, he mentioned the healthy and good

transformation in Turkish children's life. According to him, before Turkish children were unhealthy and poor, now they grow lively and nimble. He continued that "...and now, our little children playing on the snow with sleds offers an unexpected pleasure to our eyes" (Rifai, 1929, p.50). Indeed, to the author, children were growing up in a healthy way thanks to republican specialists' meticulous care and some activities like sports and games that keep their bodies active and healthy. His next sentence supports this argument: "As children run in snow and ice, their lungs are filled with life. As they engage in these clean and cute games, they understand and recognize bliss at an early age" (Rifai, 1929, p.50). The proper and clean activity in the snow was to sled in a country that was faced by hunger and disease. The vision of a blond girl who sleds in the snow was civilized; however, children who tried to slip with basic tool and doing snow battle was vulgar and uncivilized. In the end, there was a shape and rules of fun and play. It was clear that for the author, only certain games, which he called "clean", make children happy and healthy. He finished his article by stating that the winter games played in the fresh air both keep children's bodies strong and promote their moral development. All these "clean" games and activities aimed to reach the ideal figure of republican children: the robust child.

During the 1920s and 1930s, the broad discourse on children's health and hygiene and eugenics imported from Western countries and the United States during the 1930s was decisive in choosing which game was proper politically and socially for children to play. A game was regarded as appropriate and useful if it could serve the ideal figure of the robust child. Thus, controlling children's play and recreation by popular health discourse was critical to the achievement of the ideal robust child figure that was the visual representation of the strong nation. Another article called "The Aim of School Sport" stated the significance of sports and gymnastics in raising intelligent, well-behaved, capable, strong children (Children's Week, 1929, p.170,171). For Vildan Aşir, the author, the power of the Turkish nation was not about the number of people, but about the quality of each person. Therefore, she asserted that physical education was as important as the other courses in school. Aşir's article clearly supported Mustafa Kemal's well-known thought: A healthy mind in a healthy body. As seen, Foucault's disciplinary power aimed at regulation and discipline of the

body as well as control over appearance through physical activities, children's play and sport. Indeed, the whole republican project was established based on disciplining and educating the body over common taste. As children play a game which is appropriate and hygienic, clean and moral in other words, a politically and socially established game, they will eventually embrace the feelings and emotions that their bodily actions bring along. This can be seen better with this following example. The article "The country where children are fortunate" from *Çocuk Haftası* showed American children learning Japanese culture through play. According to this article:

The teacher, who wants to teach about Japan, says the children the day before: welcome me tomorrow at a Japanese house. Now the children's job is to act a Japanese life in the small scene of the school. They immediately apply to the museum of the school, which is very rich, to provide the necessary decoration. Children walking around with Japanese umbrellas, little girls strolling through the throne, children eating rice like a Japanese appear in a corner. There is no doubt that the children who prepare all these things have enough knowledge about Japan. The country where children are happy means happy. The aim of the Children Protection Society is to ensure that all Turkish children are in peace and joy. (*Çocuk Haftası*, 1930, p.158-160).

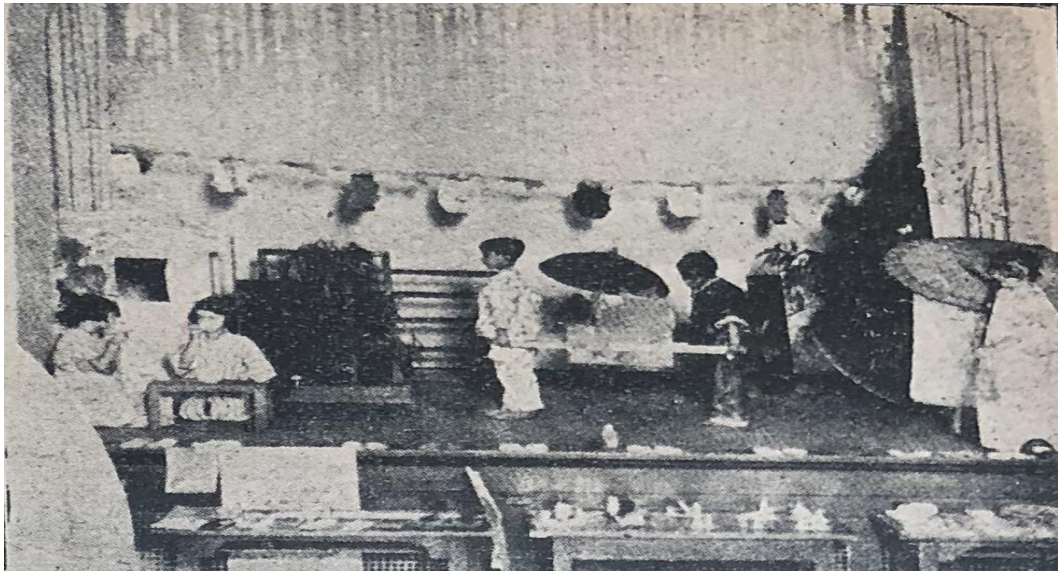


Figure 5.1. American children showing Japanese culture through play (*Çocuk Haftası*, 1930, p.159)

For the author, in order for children learn Japanese culture, they behave like the Japanese, they feel Japanese. All the manners, sentiments and visual appearance of children was part of the miniature scene of the play. Children learned to have fun like the Japanese and to use their body as the Japanese do, in other words, they learned all standards of behavior, manners and attitudes of being Japanese. In the end, children learned with bodily activities. Unserious and childish play became a serious and targeted activity. As Elias claimed, children “fitted for society by theatrical rather than by nature.” Legislators as policy-makers had a duty to regulate emotions and bodies and behaviours in the play.

### **5.2.2. Children’s playground and civilization and discipline**

For the republican regime, it was not enough to control and educate children only six or eight hours a day. As both Elias and Foucault claimed, since the dynamic of power is intertwined within the fabric of everyday life, apart from school, playgrounds as public space of children promised to more effective control by leaching into everyday life practices naturally. The involvement of students, including disruptive students, in the development of school and classroom rules or playground rules may help to develop their understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in several ways. It may help them to understand the nature of rules, the role of law in society and the broad. Teaching and assessing moral principles and shared values that are part of life in society (Halstead, 2006,146).

Children’s playgrounds, imported from America by Fuad Umay, were one of the significant project of the CPS. The reason behind founding these playground was explained best under the name of *Children’s Playground* in the magazine (*Children’s Week*,1930, p.325). First of all, the author divided the playgrounds into bad ones and good ones. According to this, the old neighborhood culture and the streets misguided children to live without order of the community. Indeed, this misleading resulted from the neglect of the families. Thus, the children socialized in the street culture were deprived of common moral values that promoted the unity of the society. These uneducated children were regarded as dangerous for the society by republican elites in that they did not accept being under any control mechanism of the modern world,



such as school or teacher. For the CPS, social guidance and the control of children's life was the key to both the progress of the nation and social solidarity and the value attributed to children in the society indicate the level of civilization of the nation. Even if children played in the street which was right next door to the playground, they were tagged as a "potential danger". It was the control of the legislators who made the playground better than the street. The author explained this vision of republican regime as follows:

The meaning of the child in today's civilized society, which follows the child step by step from the moment he was born, teaches him useful entertainment, good reading, regular secrets one by one and shows the greatest citizen attention to his humble child, is not only the owner and heir of the future. It is the love of the child and help and services of the child which is the source of sincerity that shakes the heart of a person with the most noble excitement. (Children's week,1930, p.325)

The author finished his article saying that the children's playground is the first institution where the child will meet the community. Kemal Hüsnü, in his article named "Benefits of the Children Playgrounds", addressed the playgrounds as like a laboratory that helped to control, manage and examine children for the sake of the nation (Children's Week,1930, p.36,37). Like the other republican educators, Hüsnü believed that play and playgrounds promote the moral, social, cognitive and especially physical growth of the children. In other words, playing was all about development and having fun was only a bonus of that provided voluntary participation in play and adaptation to the order of the playground. Such a point that he classified play equipment according to their shapes, functions and children's different age segments in detail. Indeed, all these standards were decided by New York play commission and were believed made a great contribution to the developments and control of the children by republican educators. From the reports of this commission:

The tools to be placed in the playgrounds must be of various sizes and heights. Children should be kept under the supervision of teachers during the use of play instruments. The climate and the seasons should also be taken into account when using play instruments. For example, swings, merry-go-rounds are more suitable for summer. The age of children should be taken into account when using play instruments. Mostly slip ladders, swings and sand pools belong to little children. "Utki bars", "utki stairs" and "filayn rinks" are for older children. (Hüsni,1930, p.37)

Besides this, the report claimed to ensure the expected benefits from play equipment, each tool must be well located, always kept under supervision of specialists and must be neath regulated. Indeed some of republican educators, like Fuad Umay (the head of the CPS) were attempted to operate this system in major cities of these, the playground of the orphanges of HEC in Keçiören/Ankara shined the most. As mentioned before, HEC's book about its history gave a brief explanation about its playground and included some pictures.



Figure 5.2. A group of children on a slide in the orphanage garden (Türkiye Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu'nun Küçük Bir Tarihçesi, 1940,p. 31)



Figure 5.3. Day Nursery: Children play in garden (Türkiye Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu'nun Küçük Bir Tarihçesi 1940).



Figure 5.4. Day Nursery: Children at play (Türkiye Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu'nun Küçük Bir Tarihçesi 1940).

As mentioned in many articles of the magazine, in the picture, some nurses always supervised children who played in the playground. The most important question here is how these children, who always played under the supervision of the nurses, will become strong future citizens. During his visit to the United States, Umay was most impressed by the ability of American children to manage their games. Many writers

agreed with Umay, but the association chose to constantly control children rather than guiding them in play. This was another contradiction about the CPS's approach to the child issue. Actually, the following words of Foucault's explain the situation: "discipline increases bodies' strength (in economic terms of usefulness) and decreases these very strengths (in political terms of obedience)" (Martins, Munoz, 2019, p.2).

Indeed, republican educators and policy-makers desired to infiltrate into the everyday life practices of children and to keep an eye on children 24/7. Aside for orphanages, the playgrounds which children enjoyed going to after school or in their leisure time on the weekends eased this proces. They precisely attempt to do what Foucaults called panoptican and "the gaze". As seen from the above pictures, aside from school and classes, children were under the control of a panoptic system in their everyday life practices, especially in their play. As Foucault claimed, their social body was made by and was the chief agency of modern power. (Cole, 2004, p.211) For this reason, the spatial organization of playgrounds, orphanages and the teachers constitute a panoptic space. All details about playgrounds such as the standard of play equipment and the rules of play, were to provide effective control over children under the teacher's gaze.

The visibility, or perceived visibility, of the body plays a vital role in exercising power over and through those being observed, because it allows the observer to collect and record information about the behaviors of those being watched, quite literally amassing power through knowledge of an individual and their actions. (Cliff, Millei, 2013, p.353). The other picture below which shows children playing in sandpit is another proof of this.



Figure 5.5. Children in sandpit (Türkiye Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu'nun Küçük Bir Tarihçesi, 1940, p. 30)

Children under the gaze of teachers learned and absorbed proper civilized behavior in public space naturally, voluntarily and in a funny way while playing. In this sense, as Foucault asserted, discipline works as a technology that cautiously creates and produce individuals over individuals and social bodies. In more general terms, disciplinary matrices create “docile bodies”: controlled, healthy, and regulated bodies, bodies whose training extends their capacity and usefulness. This breeds a politics of coercion that works on the body, a calculated manipulation of its elements, its gestures and its behaviors. The human body becomes part of a machinery of power that ransacks it, disarticulates it and re-composes it. (Cole, 2004, p.212)

At this point, the republican regime desired to produce submissive and strong bodies over the children’s play, in Foucault’s own words, to produce docile bodies. Children’s play was a technique of discipline in Foucaultian terms which domesticated children and their bodies and eventually their drives and impulses by instilling so-called proper civilized behavior. In other words, as Elias said, their drives and impulses were socially constructed over their bodies.

### **5.3. A health game by Sadrettin Celal Antel and bio-power**

#### **5.3.1. Foucault and bio-power**

According to Foucault, in addition to discipline power, a new kind of power emerged, containing the old discipline power but working in a completely different way, with different devices and for different purposes: biological power, centering on the control of the state. According to Foucault, unlike disciplinary power, this new power did not focus on man through his body, but man as living-being, in other words, "*man as species*". The old disciplinary power attempted to govern the multiplicity of men by reducing this multiplicity to individual bodies which can be trained, guarded and used. Although the new power was also interested in the multiplicity of men, it did not see them as only individual bodies but as a global population which is affected by biological processes such as birth, illness, death, re-production and so on. Foucault explains this situation as a transformation of power from individualizing to massifying, that is to say, from anatomo-politics to bio-politics. Anatomic power tried to discipline individual bodies; bio-power aimed to regulate both the body and lives of the population.

Foucault tries to display the exercise field of bio-power over body and life. Bio-power used the knowledge obtained from individuals, turning it into techniques, information and classifications in order to discipline and organize both body and life. Foucault revealed this relationship between biological processes and economic and political problems with the example of the problem of morbidity, which was one of the biggest nightmares of political power. For him, illness was an important phenomenon for bio-politics because it led to many deaths. Illness, "sapped the population's strength, shortened the working week, wasted energy, and cost money, both because they led to a fall in production and because treating them was expensive. In a word, illness as phenomena affecting a population..." (Foucault, 2003, p.244). Thus, the real intention of bio-politics in preventing illnesses among the population was not to block the death of individuals but to sustain the productivity and operability of modern power. At this point, in the eighteenth century, charitable institutions aimed at teaching hygiene and to medicalize whole population with certain propagandas. These institutions dealt with the problem of birth ratio,


mortality and finally reproduction through this medical knowledge of safety measures.

### **5.3.2. An analysis on Sadrettin Celal's health game with bio-power**

This vision of Foucault provides an insight in analyzing the relationship between Turkish state nationalism and its application on the bodily construction of the population in the 1920s and 1930s. At one point, republican reformers took an increasingly aggressive attitude on bodily construction of children. Indeed, the early republican Turkey witnessed a rise in public hygiene propaganda and prevalent and intensive health policies and interventions. On the verge of post-war recovery, the state and especially the CPS focused on children's welfare due to economic and political crises such as poverty, the high rate of children morbidity and the problems of orphans. Thus, a wide range of regular medical check-ups, producing medical and health games, focusing on bodily strength and beautification through physical activities, keeping statistic of each data from donations to a number of illnesses and disease and treatments, were published in the periodicals and these were part of the rising health policy of the republican state. In the light of all this, the real intention of the republican state was to ensure political, economic and social productivity for the sake of the nation's future and to enhance the medical situation of the population, from a very early age. As Sadi Irmak stated, "the child was too precious and important for the regime and society for parents to be allowed to raise according to their preferences. The child stood at the center of both the population growth policy and the nation-building and modernization effort" (Libal,2003, p.49). This aggressive process of republican reformers was seen better in republican health games. Sadrettin Celal, in his well-known book *Pedagogy*, proposed very interesting children's games about health examination imported from Belgium. Celal, pedagogy professor of Istanbul University, wrote this book for final year students of teacher training schools. Before explaining the game, Celal expressed that some schools in Europe used this health game to help children comply with health principles as well as gain the health habits. The game was as follows:

Every child will weigh himself/herself and measure his/her height every month regularly and then they will look at the average height and weight for their age on the ruler showing how many kilos they should weigh. If the child's measurements matched with average numbers, then he/she got yellow. If ten percent was missing from his/her results, then he/she got blue, finally, if more than ten percent was missing, he/she was red. If the child is red, he/she will try to be blue and blue to yellow; if it is yellow, he/she will try to stay yellow. (Antel, 1929, p.176)

Yetişin, dişlerini çürümekten kurtarın!



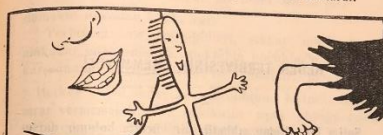
AYI	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Süt											
2. Sebze ve meyva											
3. Su											
4. Kabine											
5. Yıkanmak											
6. Diş temizliği											
7. Uyku											
8. Oyun											
9.											
10.											
11.											

Her gün sıvıyı sırtınıza kaide ediniz  
 sırtaki sütü rakama — sırtaki 5  
 kaideye sıvıyı sırtınıza 5 rakama  
 su — kışın bir miktar koyar  
 sıvı. Bu sıvıyı sırtınıza koyar  
 için mükemmel rakama — kışın  
 sırtaki kaidelere koyduğunuz sırtın  
 bir kade — kışın sırtınıza  
 sırtınıza — sırtınıza — sırtınıza  
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 sırtınıza — sırtınıza — sırtınıza

Boyum : ..... Bu yaşta ağırlığım .....  
 ağırlığım : ..... demek kazanacağım : .....

(a)

Dişirçası yetişti ve dişlerini çürümekten kurtardı!



AYI	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

Ebeveynin imzası

(b)

Figure 5.6. A health schedule (Antel, 1929, p.176)

Celal presented eight different health principles to reach yellow. Among them were eating fresh vegetables every day, playing games, bathing at least once a week, defecating and brushing one's teeth every day. Each student has a report card to mark these principles for thirty days, (see figs.1.1 (a) and 1.1 (b)). At the end of the year, these report cards became their personal health certificate (*Sıhhat cüzdanı*), If the child does not gain weight despite all these efforts, he should consult a doctor (Celal,1929, p.177). However, Celal claimed that republican educators made some changes about these principles because recommending to drink half a liter of milk a day to the child who has to be fed with a bite of dry bread and four or five olives is to mock his/her misery. Healthy children corresponded with fat and robust children.



This vision of republican officials is seen on almost every page of Robust Children Magazine with photographs. Another article from Children's Weeks called "a cute children home: orphanages" (anakucağı) mentioned the regular health examinations in the HEC orphanages. Server Rifat, the author of the article, narrated this procedure as follows:

Go especially if you have a child. You will understand how to look after a child in this establishment(orphanages).... This establishment tells us more than anything about what the The Children Protection Society is busy with.... There are little babies in this room. Among these, the newly arrived and those who have come to the establishment for a while attract attention immediately. Some of them are weak and skinny, the others are robust. Each baby has a signboard. In this board, every day's motion and weight is recorded (under the supervision of the doctor). Every child has a file; these records are saved to this file day by day. (Rifat,1929, p.20)

All little details about one's everyday life routine mentioned in Celal's game provided better administration and regulation. Orphanages and dispensaries of the CPS were the places where bio-power effectively operated by conforming to all health examination, from searching contagious disease to properly inoculating. Doctors in these institutions examined each children's medical conditions weekly and then reported these medical inspections in order to inform their families. Actually, these report were not only prepared for families but also for the state and nation itself. The numbers were greatly important for republican policy makers as a part of a state control mechanism. All disease, treatments, allowances, the number of children helped and the amount of milk were delicately recorded by medical professionals and constantly published in the journal. The CPS was a surrogate institution of bio-power that measured and calculated each individual of the population mathematically and drew a conclusion from its results about the population to discipline and regulate them to ensure the productivity and operability of the modern state authority. Bio-power monitored biological processes and life through the data and statistics of the birth rate, health checks, the ratio of illnesses and death and longevity. This picture of republican organization was what distinguished the republican regime from the Late Ottoman state: 24/7 control over orphanages, dispensaries, playgrounds by

*parens patriae*, the system that gives them the chance to pursue aggressive policies. It could be said that, on the one hand, individuals and population as a whole became an object of the scientific investigation which operated mostly by executive power institutions. On the other hand, with this scientific knowledge, modern authorities teach people the way of disciplining and controlling themselves. In one sense, bio-power control both individuals with regular check-up and population with numbers and statistics. At the same time, it gives people personal health record to fill and make health propaganda via broadcast and written materials.

All these efforts to make children more robust and fat were directly related to the right to make live of the bio-power. This is because, for a man to be useful to the state, he must first survive and then be strong. As Foucault said that the man as a living-being became main object and target of the modern power. Children's everyday life routines were regularized and controlled with health certificates that included regular health principles with their own consent. And what is more, children filled these health records by themselves consentingly within the game in an entertaining way. This is exactly what bio-power aimed at in exercising its techniques: having every detail about individuals and using them to regulate the population with its general consent for the productivity of the state power as well as applying all these practices in a non-disciplinary way.

The modernization efforts that started from the late Ottoman period and reached its peak point in the early republican period were constructed on the child's body itself. In other words, the modern nation-building project legitimized itself over the child's body. The body became a commodity in which all the political struggles of the Kemalist regime were exercised and finally resolved. "The body becomes an invested body. By this Foucault means that the body increasingly becomes subject to social controls and interventions (powers) aimed at channeling and managing its forces, at acting on its behavior" (Harvey&Sparks, 1991, p.169). This was where the modernist bodily politics evolved into a eugenic status in the early republican period. Eugenic which means ameliorate the genetic composition of human race is classified as both positive and negative. Although positive eugenics believes in the undeniable

importance of heredity, it also believes that it can intervene in the hereditary process and the conditions through medical and educational means and that the heredity process can be changed to a certain point as a result of this intervention (Akin, 2004, p. 114). In the republican case, eugenics was based on the idea that the population could be corrected as not only numerical but also qualification. This vision perfectly fit the Kemalist regime that claimed classless society as a part of the corporative state<sup>5</sup>. The purification of the race for the sake of economic productivity and societal coherent displayed Republican state's totalitarian policy on the population. Thus, positive eugenics operated as a social-engineering instrument to annihilate the large-scale poverty accompanied by many diseases and high mortality rates that arose from tough war conditions. Indeed, German state racism that arose in the nineteenth century, was partially effective on the republican eugenic vision. German State racism focused on the biological protection of the race, to guarantee the hygiene of an orderly society. In the early Republican period, children's plays were designed in the perspective of positive eugenics to create physically, morally and mentally healthy children to ensure the desired modern, pure and orderly society.

#### **5.4. Children's happiness and civility**

Nurullah Ata, another writer for the magazine, claimed that Turkish children were the least playful children in the world. For him, that explained why Turkish people were sullen and bored at work (Children's Week, 1930, p.178). That also explained why Turkey did not have many craftsmen, because the beginning of the art was play. Similar to Dewey's theory that claimed play transformed naturally into work, Nurullah Ata asserted the link between play, work and societal needs. Children playing at an early age became happy and grateful for their future work. Actually by controlling children's play, republican specialists planned to take precautions to ensure the nation's future social efficiency. Children that played happily were future voluntary productive citizens of the nation. Indeed, children's happiness was a benchmark in the progress of civilization. The orphans Sevinç and Seyit Mehmed

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<sup>5</sup> Corporative state is a term used by Parla and Davison as a political ideology that pursues capitalist modernity and societal transformation but rejects both an individualist vision of liberalism and the class-based vision of society and social transformation of socialism.

were depicted as the idealized child figures of republican era by Server Rifat, the author of the Robust Children Magazine. Rifat wrote an article named: "Cheerful baby: Miss Sevinç" under the series of *Memories of Orphanages* in which he pictured Sevinç as follows:

Sevinç was ringleader of her friends with her naughtiness and vivacity. She certainly will have basis of a happy house, because cheerfulness is necessity for solid family basis. Sevinç became a source of the joy as a Robust Turk Children thanks to the efforts of Children Protection Society. Smile Sevinç smile, you will always laugh without crying. I see the bliss of future generation in your laughter. (Rifat, 1929, p.211)

Similar to Sevinç, Seyit Mehmed became a symbol of national strength. According to Rifat, "Seyit Mehmed symbolized the perfect human being of my race. I see sincerity, sweetness and strength in him and a man who matured well." Sevinç and Seyit Mehmed were cheerful orphans with shining smiles who represented the republican nation's claim to modernization. As it seen, "the child symbolized all that decent and caring about society, it was the very index of a civilization" (Libal, 2002, p.67). As seen the visibility of children's bodies was directly related to the feelings of the children. Children who played actively, behaved properly and civilized with a healthy and robust body were the happiest kids in the world. We can ask again: What was the function of children's play for republican authorities? And we can now answer as follows: children's play as a natural and entertaining part of the early-childhood stage was seen as an effective way of politicizing, socializing and disciplining republican children along nationalist, modernist and moralist lines in accordance with ideals of the state. In other words, republican elites attempted to imbue children with the intended social habits and public values of the new Turkish republican culture by using children's play. Children played entertaining games without realizing they were part of bigger national interests. However, republican reformers missed a point. As Huizinga said, "play is not ordinary or real life. It is rather a stepping out of real life into a temporary sphere of activity with a disposition all of its own. Every child knows perfectly well that he is only pretending, or that it was only for fun"(Huizinga, 1949,p.8). This being case, wasn't it emotional diversion republican regime tried to do with children's plays. Well, couldn't children just pretend civilized in public sphere

to feel safe in this way? Where is the self-resistance in that? The term of “only pretending” was the key word to better understand why republican policy on children’s play failed in 1940s.



## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

The present study was designed to investigate how children's play became politicized and associated with seriousness in the state agenda within the theoretical context. The political status of children's play was analyzed considering the rise of modernity in both the late Ottoman and the early republican eras. First of all, it was necessary to trace back to the origin of the issue as well as developments that led to the usage of children's play as an effective educational and disciplinary agency by both imperial and republican modern states. The conceptualization of children's plays as a modern social state practice made it possible to integrate the late Ottoman and early republican periods into a single paradigm and a single historical narrative. The Tanzimat era was the turning point in the modernization of the educational system and for children and plays to become visible in state policies. This development even materialized in the educational reforms and regulations and intellectuals' statements. The year 1923 was another turning point of the children's play trajectory in that republican policymakers carried out more aggressive social state policy compared to earlier periods.

State kindergarten was one of the important pillars of this study due to being a symbol of the institutionalization of children's play. At this point, the establishment of state kindergarten as a part of the modernization effort was not only considered a solution to the social and political crisis the Ottoman state faced, but was also represented as a means of cutting the teeth of Ottoman children to make them diligent civil servants for the new administrative construction to guarantee the future state's efficiency. In other words, initially, education was seen as a useful method to create productive and skilled worker and citizens. For this reason, on the one hand, the educational policy and curriculum focused on mathematics, geometry, geography, and literacy to strengthen the intelligence and abilities of future civil servants. On the other hand, because of several defeats of the Ottoman military in battles, physical education also started to occupy an important place in the public

school curriculum. Thus, children's play was affected by a militaristic atmosphere. Physical activities also became significant activities in the public kindergarten's daily schedule, especially for boys, in order to promote physical strength for the sake of the military and empire. Later, the early republican state faced difficult post-war conditions. In the context of national renewal and the population problem, the intelligent and productive role of children transformed into an obsession with healthy and civilized children as a symbol of catching up with Western civilization. In that way, national beautification propaganda on children became the main public discourse for both republican intellectuals and governors. The figure of intelligent and capable tiny citizens was not significant anymore but robust children that smiled with chubby cheeks acting in civilized manner were the savior of the future of the Turkish nation. In that way, the Children Protection Society, its orphanages and its periodical called *Robust Turkish Child* became important agencies to institutionalize and politicize children's play like a tower of strength of state social policy on child welfare.

This thesis has provided a deeper insight into the main public discourse on educational matter through children's play as a serious instrument to realize state control over society in the late Ottoman and early republican periods in the context of Bauman's educational concept, and Elias's civilization debate and Foucault's biopolitics theory. This research has shown that the seriousness of play based on naturally transforming into work in adulthood in Ottoman period shifted to the seriousness of play became intertwined with modernist bodily politics of republican state. From the perspective of Republican policy-makers, "society was to regenerate the social fabric (collectivist values) in order to reorient people's self-interest and build virtuous and modest citizens. The hygienist physicians provided the model for this program. Legislators were to become physicians of the social body" (Harvey, Sparks, 1991, p. 177). Children's play was regarded as a form of physical training that would contribute to this reshaping of society in early-childhood education. As Elias stated, new citizens became civilized and modern through a new set of etiquette. In other words, the citizen-making process aimed at taming and tidying people of the old order up by dominating their taste and habitus of them through controlling and disciplining their bodily formation. Thus, mechanical solidarity, the Kemalist regime's

ultimate desire, was guaranteed. The subtext of Atatürk's well-known sentence "to bring national culture to the level of contemporary civilization" on the tenth anniversary of the foundation of the Turkish Republic was actually establishing national unity and solidarity based on common pleasure, habits and etiquette. So-called civilized and modern Western culture became part of our culture. It went even further and became our own culture. At this point, little children as tiny citizens as seeds ready for cultivating along this civilizing process through children's plays, imitating the new civilized etiquette of Turkish republican society over bodily performance.

In the Republican era, children's play was related to being healthy and beautiful, not being intelligent or capable anymore. The rhetoric of children's play did not only aim at disciplining of the individual's body; it also became a scientific method engaged with the regulation of population. Children obtained a channel for being visible regarding their own bodies' beauty, robustness. The modernization efforts that started in the late Ottoman period and reached their peak point in the early republican period were constructed on the child's body itself. In other words, the modern nation-building project legitimized itself over the child's body. The body became a commodity in which all the political struggles of the Kemalist regime were exercised and finally resolved. "The body becomes an invested body. By this Foucault means that the body increasingly becomes subject to social controls and interventions (powers) aimed at channeling and managing its forces, at acting on its behavior" (Harvey&Sparks, 1991, p.169). This was where the modernist bodily politics evolved into a eugenic status in the early republican period. In the early republican period, children's play was designed in the perspective of positive eugenics to create physically, morally and mentally healthy children to ensure the desired modern, pure and orderly society. As Kathryn Libal stated, it was "to visualize nation-state through their children" (Libal,2000, p.110) and its visibility and bodily construction. This explains why the major tendency toward beauty is the representation of the level of Western civilization among contemporary Turkish society. It was also related that in robust children magazine, all pictures used in the articles about children's play and care belong to western children as the level of



civilization. The results of this study indicate that children's play in the early republican period was used as a political tool to reach this western ideal figure of children for the sake of national achievement while changing the perception about aesthetic and beauty and civilization within aggressive body politics among the society. In one sense, the dominant discourse that considered the force of military as criteria of a nation's progress in the late Ottoman period exchanged with the new criteria that regarded beautiful and sterile population as a symbol of the nation's strength. The old discourse, which based the power of nation on the military's force and citizens' bodily strength, was replaced by the new discourse that measured the nation's strength with its citizen's beauty, robustness, body discipline, and civilized manners.

Although the Children Protection Society was widely considered as the most significant association working for the sake of children in the early republican period, it was certainly at the beginning of the 1930s, the work of The CPS could not remediate the problem of child poverty and social and health problems in the country. (Libal, 2000 p.76). On the other hand, at the same time, a large number of professional elites debated whether the state must play a broader role in child welfare. These debates also indicated radical institutional transformations. "Their modernist vision supported a more full-scale investment in the institutions and organizations at the level of the state, which would, in turn, imply a more engaged and totalizing form of governmentality" (Libal, 2003 p.268). The same vision was shared by the Kemalist ideology which imagined a more centralized and uniform administration. Even though the Children Protection Society was criticized at one level by some professional elites (mostly socialist ones), it made a huge contribution to the state's policy on child welfare. One of these contributions of the CPS was events of children's weeks arranged by the association and children's games that were designed according to scientific child-rearing methods and used in orphanages and day-nurseries stood out most. In many issues of the *Robust Turkish Child Magazine*, celebrations held in each province during the children's week were described in detail with pictures. Thus, Children's Day declared on 23 April 1920, was celebrated for a week around the country. The week intended to expand awareness

about child welfare and how important the child issue was for the state and the CPS. The Children Protection society hosted many activities such as children's parades and games in the parks and playgrounds. Children's parades were designed to consolidate national unity and solidarity as a national ceremony. One of the most popular activities was the "Zeibek folk dance" that was staged in many provinces. The fact that Zeibeks made huge efforts in the Turkish war of independence against the Greek invasion between 1919 and 1922 could be another reason why it was so popular for the Children's Week celebrations. Actually many Turkish intellectuals became concerned with the undeniable effect of folklore on the construction of a national solidarity. Ziya Gökalp considered folk dances where original Turkish culture was represented. Selim Sirri, during his trip in Sweden, had a chance to observe Swedish folk dances which helped to arouse national feeling among the people. For him, Swedish folklorist reformed dance repertoire of folk dances and made the moves refined. He attempted to do the same for Turkish Folk dance. Thus, he re-designed every manner and every movement in the "yellow zeibek dance" in detail. Selim Sirri's new type of Zeibek consisted of firm and sharp but at the same time graceful and not spontaneous movements, because for him, the aim of national folk dance is very high. It is a lively expression of the character, emotions, temperament and morality of the people. If the movements of the Zeibek dance was rearranged according to the republican etiquette, people would behave properly even while having fun and drinking at weddings and festivals. According to Atatürk, men should have performed Zeibek dance with a women partner while wearing tuxedo. (Öztürkmen,2013 p.142) men not only acted civilized but also felt civilized while dancing with women and so called proper clothes. All these efforts were for having fun in a civilized manner in order to catch up to the civilizational level of Western countries while also ensuring mechanical solidarity through folk dance among society. However, today's Children's Day celebrations are far away from early republican ideological lines. Most of the children's activities that take place on April 23 consists of dance shows set to Turkish or foreign popular music. The only aim of these dances is to have children entertained, not discipline their manner or bodily formation but only having fun on their special childish day. Indeed, today everything serious about children has become childish again.

The last decade of Turkey has been a witness to significant change in attitudes related to early childhood education. In the 1920s, the primary school education had socialist base under the effect of Ziya Gökalp. Society was more important than the individual (Hesapçioğlu,2005, p.57). The old education system, which was based on the superiority of teachers over students shifted with the unique child-based educational system. This transformation started with a break in our national education system at the end of the 1990s. The main step of this break was a new primary school program prepared by the Ministry of National Education and implemented in the 2002-2003 academic year. The basis of this program is the constructivist philosophy that puts the student at the center of the learning process. Indeed, it was a transformation from the philosophy of Durkheimian education to an individual-based philosophy in the national education system (Hesapçioğlu,2005, p.58). Later, in the year of 2005, another school program which aimed at mental and cognitive development of children under the constructivist line was implemented in classes. This program was enriched with activities and it was planned in the form of lessons that children enjoy and participate in actively. Indeed, under the thumb of globalization and fast capitalism, the ambiguity of borders and the rising of self-interest instead of societal needs strengthened and accelerated this system.

Still, there is similarity between the early republican education project and the 2023 education vision of the state. First of all, the catchword of the 2023 state education vision, “happy children, powerful Turkey” is reminiscent of the early republican vision that considered children’s smiles and happiness as a bliss of future nationhood. That means that, as in the early republican period, today’s Turkish state still aims at enhancing the welfare level of children in terms of its contribution to “the increase in social welfare and the social, cultural and sustainable economic development of our country which starts from the pre-school which is the first step of the education system” (2023 Turkish education vision). However, the difference between the early republican and the 2023 early childhood education vision is that the 2023 vision underlined the importance of play-based child activity for only psychological aims such as social, emotional, cognitive, linguistic and motor development of children. But, in the last instance, as Öztürk and Arcan said, based on James J. Heckman, “for

pre-school education in Turkey benefit-cost analysis studies shows that for every 1 dollar invested \$ 4.35 was taken back. In these respects, qualified investment in early childhood education has highly critical importance in both national economy and the development of the individual and society” (Arcan& Öztürk, 2018, p.2).

In general, today, for early childhood education, instead of Froebelian pedagogical techniques, which have fallen into disfavor for teachers and professional elites, the Montessori method, which promotes simple and freely chosen work for children, has become popular in kindergartens. The Montessorian educational method is based on self-directed activity. Thus, children are encouraged to personalize concrete objects and to play following their interests. As a matter of fact, the Montessori methods are now very popular among mothers, such that most children have a basic wooden Montessori bed, on which they can design it in detail according to their wishes. These beds are also playgrounds, shaped by children’s imagination, sometimes as a tent, sometimes as a home. Moreover, parents pay more tuition fees to the Montessori classes, which are commonly used in private kindergartens. In these classes, children learn everything about everyday life by playing with ordinary but expensive equipment. Besides, under the name of children's development, a frantic consumption culture for children is developing. Children games and equipment suitable for the Montessorian method have become a large sector. Today, children’s play is under the domination of consumption culture; in other words, the bodies of children are a commodity of capitalism now as a new civilizing process. Modern parents now take their children to play academies by paying money for their plays. Children practice yoga as well as doing physical exercises with so-called specialist teachers in these academies.

On the other hand, the time allocated for children's play in public kindergartens is getting shorter. According to the research of Demir, in full-time public kindergartens, only one and a half hours are reserved for play (Demir,2004 p.69). Although the Turkish Ministry of National Education determined a certain program for children’s play in kindergartens, most kindergartens and teachers prepared their play programs according to their preference (Demir, 2004, p.77). As can be seen from the pre-school

education program prepared by the Turkish Ministry of National Education in 2013, although the time allocated to games during the day is shortened, the state still attempts to control and manage play to discipline children. Under the title of playtime, the following directions are given to teachers:

In the early hours of school, the teachers ask children; “where do you want to play today? Each child chooses their learning centers. Thus, children start to learn how to plan their days. Children turn to their preferred learning centers and play freely. However, but teachers need to develop and use methods that help children choose centers themselves, and often remind them of the rules to be followed in centers. (Ministry of national education’s preschool education program, 2013, p. 52)

Here, the content of children’s play is not explained in detail. The state still maintains its intrusive nature as the heir of early republican elites and uses children's games as a disciplinary instrument. However, there seems to be no way for the state to designate a national and integrated early childhood education program in this period when private kindergartens are on the rise. Under the thumb of globalization and fast capitalism, the ambiguity of borders and the rise of self-interest instead of societal needs has made the private sector even stronger than before. These private enterprises are mostly affected by global developments in their field. Even the state's preschool education program for 2013 embraced child-based psychological explanations about play activities. Children’s play is divided into three-parts as free play, semi-structured play and structured play. All these aim only at the development of children’s senses and generally support free-choice games and basic toys for children to create their imaginal world. Every child has basic Ikea toys and they are expected to create something quite different from that. Every child is special now. The old education system which was based on the superiority of teachers over students has shifted with the unique child-based educational system. Based on national education programs and my kindergarten visits, it can be said that this fracture first began in the z generation. Children’s wishes and imagination are more important than anything. This is the transformation from the discourse of "the child for a nation" to that of " the nation for a child". In the end, children’s play is an

important component of early childhood education that needs to be discussed and improved from many perspectives. Although the state once intervened in children's games, their content seems superficial now. There is no certain ideology behind them. Indeed, it is necessary to analyze deeper for a better understanding of the relationship between the early republican dominant discourse on education and today's educational policy. But, this can be a topic of another study.



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