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## VILLAGE INSTITUTES IN TÜRKIYE AS AN INSTRUMENT OF CULTURAL POLICY

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**Abstract.** *Introduction.* This article examines the role of Village Institutes in the educational and cultural policies of the Republic of Türkiye during the one-party period. Despite their name, they were part of the secondary education system of the Republic of Türkiye and were created as a tool for rural modernization and development. In form, the Village Institutes represented a special type of pedagogical and vocational educational institution, combining general education with practical work training. The institutes' primary goal was to train teachers and personnel for rural communities capable of performing not only educational but also socio-cultural functions. It analyzes the rural-oriented educational model and the role of certain humanities subjects in shaping students' cultural values. An examination of the 1943 and 1947 curricula and textbooks reveals the cultural and ideological emphases of the educational process and the reasons for the mixed public reaction to the Village Institutes. *Purpose and objectives.* The purpose of this study is to analyze the role of the Village Institutes in the dissemination of Turkish culture through the curricula and textbooks of 1943 and 1947. To achieve this goal, the article addresses the following objectives: examining the historical and political preconditions for the establishment of the Village Institutes; determining the place of Turkish culture in the academic system; analyzing the methods of incorporating cultural and ideological elements into curricula and textbooks; and identifying the reasons for the controversial public reaction and closure of the Village Institutes. *Materials and methods.* This article uses historical-descriptive and comparative research methods. Its sources include legislation of the Republic of Türkiye, curricula and textbooks in the humanities and cultural disciplines used in rural institutes, and the works of Turkish researchers. *Results.* The study revealed that Village Institutes served as a tool of cultural policy, shaping

national identity through educational programs and textbooks. Contradictions between the stated goals and the ideological orientation of education were also identified, influencing public opinion. *Conclusion.* These articles show that education can be both a key to modernization and a source of social tension.

**Keywords:** Village Institutions, cultural policy, modernization, national identity, curricula, textbooks.

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## ТҮРКИЯДАҒЫ АУЫЛДЫҚ ИНСТИТУТТАР МӘДЕНИ САЯСАТ ҚҰРАЛЫ РЕТІНДЕ

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**Аңдатпа.** *Kіріспе.* Мақалада бір партиялы кезеңдегі Түркия Республикасының білім беру және мәдени саясатындағы Ауылдық Институттардың ролі қарастырылады. Атауына қарамастан, олар Түркия Республикасының орта білім беру жүйесінің бөлігі болды және ауылдық жерлерді жаңғырту мен дамыту құралы ретінде құрылды. Ауылдық институттар формасында жалпы білім беруді практикалық жұмыспен біріктіретін педагогикалық және кәсіптік білім беру мекемесінің ерекше түрін білдірді. Институттардың негізгі мақсаты тек білім беру ғана емес, сонымен қатар әлеуметтік-мәдени функцияларды да орындай алатын ауылдық қауымдастықтар үшін мұғалімдер мен кадрларды даярлау болды. Ауылдық жерлерге бағытталған білім беру моделі, сондай-ақ кейбір гуманитарлық пәндердің оқушылардың мәдени құндылықтарын қалыптастырудағы ролі талданады. 1943 және 1947 жылдардағы оқу бағдарламалары мен оқулықтарды зерттеу білім беру процесінің мәдени және идеологиялық басымдықтарын және Ауылдық Институттарға деген қоғамдық реакцияның екіұшты себептерін анықтауға көмектеседі. *Мақсаты мен міндеттері.* Бұл зерттеудің мақсаты – 1943 және 1947 жылдардағы оқу бағдарламалары мен оқулықтардың мазмұны арқылы Ауылдық Институттардың түрік мәдениетін таратудағы ролін талдау. Осы мақсатқа жету үшін мақалада келесі міндеттер қарастырылады: Ауылдық Институттарды құрудың тарихи және саяси алғышарттарын зерттеу; академиялық пәндер жүйесіндегі түрік мәдениетінің орнын анықтау; оқу бағдарламалары мен оқулықтарға мәдени және идеологиялық элементтерді енгізу жолдарын талдау; қоғамдық реакцияның екіұштылығы мен Ауылдық Институттардың жабылу себептерін анықтау. *Материалдар мен әдістер.* Бұл мақалада тарихи-сипаттамалық және салыстырмалы зерттеу әдістері қолданылады. Бұл мақаланың дереккөздеріне Түркия Республикасының заңнамасы, Ауылдық Институттарда қолданылатын гуманитарлық және мәдени пәндер бойынша оқу бағдарламалары мен оқулықтар, сондай-ақ түрік зерттеушілерінің еңбектері кіреді. *Нәтижелер.* Зерттеу Ауылдық Институттардың мәдени саясат құралы ретінде қызмет еткенін, білім беру бағдарламалары мен оқулықтар арқылы ұлттық бірегейлікті қалыптастырғанын көрсетті. Қоғамдық пікірге әсер еткен қойылған мақсаттар мен білім берудің идеологиялық бағыты арасындағы қайшылықтар да анықталды. *Қорытынды.* Бұл мақалалар білім берудің жаңғыртудың кілті де, әлеуметтік шиеленістің көзі де бола алатынын көрсетеді.

**Кілт сөздер:** ауылдық Институттар, мәдени саясат, жаңғырту, ұлттық бірегейлік, оқу бағдарламалары, оқулықтар.

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## СЕЛЬСКИЕ ИНСТИТУТЫ В ТУРЦИИ КАК ИНСТРУМЕНТ КУЛЬТУРНОЙ ПОЛИТИКИ

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**Аннотация.** *Введение.* В статье рассматривается роль Сельских институтов в образовательной и культурной политике Турецкой Республике в однопартийный период. Анализируется образовательная модель, ориентированная на сельскую местность, а также роль некоторых гуманитарных предметов в формировании культурных ценностей учащихся. Несмотря на название, они относились к системе среднего образования Турецкой Республики, и были созданы в качестве инструмента модернизации и развития сельской местности. По форме Сельские институты представляли собой особый тип педагогического и профессионального учебного заведения, сочетавший общее образование с практической трудовой подготовкой. Основной задачей институтов была подготовка учителей и кадров для сельских общин, способных выполнять не только образовательную, но и социально-культурную функцию. Изучение учебных программ 1943 и 1947 годов и учебников выявляются культурные и идеологические акценты образовательного процесса и причины неоднозначной реакции общества к Сельским Институтам. *Цель и задачи.* Целью данного исследования является анализ роли Сельских Институтов в распространении турецкой культуры через содержание учебных программ 1943 и 1947 годов и учебников. Для достижения этой цели в статье решаются следующие задачи: изучение исторических и политических предпосылок создания Сельских Институтов; определение места турецкой культуры в системе учебных дисциплин; анализ способов включения культурных и идеологических элементов в учебные программы и учебники; выявление причины неоднозначной общественной реакции и закрытия Сельских Институтов. *Материалы и методы.* В данной статье использованы историко-описательный и сравнительный методы исследования. Источниковую базу данной статьи составляют законодательные акты Турецкой Республики, учебные программы и учебники по гуманитарным и культурным дисциплинам, использовавшиеся в Сельских Институтах и труды турецких исследователей. *Результаты.* В процессе исследования было определено, что Сельские Институты выполняли роль инструмента культурной политики, формируя национальную идентичность через образовательные программы и учебники. Также выявлены противоречия между заявленными целями и идеологизацией образования, которые повлияли на общественное мнение. *Заключение.* Данные статьи показывают, что образование может быть одновременно ключом к модернизации и источником социального напряжения.

**Ключевые слова:** сельские институты, культурная политика, модернизация, национальная идентичность, учебные программы, учебники.

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**Introduction.** In the Republic of Türkiye, education emerged as a vital instrument for cultural modernization in the first part of the XX century. After the Ottoman Empire fell, the new republic had to develop a new cultural identity that was in line with secularism and nationalism. This necessitated, among other things, reducing illiteracy. The educational system's inadequate service to rural communities posed a special problem. The persistence of customary and religious lifestyles was one factor underlying this inadequacy. In this regard, the Village Institutes, which were founded in 1940, emerged as a singular illustration of a cultural and educational initiative intended to modernize rural communities. The Village Institutes were part of the state education system and formally belonged to the secondary education level. They were designed as pedagogical institutions combining general secondary education with teacher training and practical vocational instruction. Their distinctive «learning through labor» model allowed students to gain skills in agriculture, crafts, and community management, preparing them to serve both as teachers and as agents of social and cultural development in rural areas. The Village Institutes were also designed to support the execution of state cultural policy aimed at molding the Republic of Türkiye's future citizens in addition to their core educational role. This study's goal is to find the inconsistencies between the Village Institutes' professed humanistic objectives and the de facto politics of education, which resulted in public condemnation and the project's death.

Examining the experience of Village Institutes has become particularly relevant in current discussions on educational reform, especially in rural and remote areas. Owing to their educational model, which emphasized practical training, the integration of learning with local socio-economic conditions, and the formation of cultural identity, these institutions can be regarded not only as a historical phenomenon of the Republic of Türkiye but also as an educational experiment with comparative potential. The experience of the Village Institutes is of particular interest for Central Asian countries, including Kazakhstan, where disparities between urban and rural education persist, as it offers insights into adapting educational practices to peripheral contexts and balancing modernization, cultural traditions, and public expectations.

**Materials and Methods.** The Republic of Türkiye's 1943 and 1947 curriculum, textbooks on humanities and cultural subjects used at these institutions, and legislative acts governing the operations of Village Institutes were among the research resources utilized. The research's methodological foundation included a historical-descriptive approach that made it possible to reconstruct the establishment and operations of the Village Institutes, a content analysis of the textbooks and curricula to pinpoint cultural and ideological emphases, and a comparative analysis of curricula from various years.

**Discussion.** Due to the low literacy rate of the populace, the education system became one of the issues for the formation of the Republic of Türkiye following the fall of the Ottoman Empire. The unequal distribution of schools, which were primarily located in central areas and did not offer access to a wide range of individuals, is one of the reasons for this, according to research. Since most people lived in rural areas during this time, this was particularly apparent there.

The first president of the Republic of Türkiye, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, sought to increase literacy through his cultural policy. The substitution of the Latin script for the Arabic alphabet was a crucial step in this direction. Making primary education universal was the fundamental objective. In his work, Mehmet Cimi examines how young men who could read and write were dispatched to their villages to teach children while also enrolling in teacher training programs after serving in the military. In 1936, the first eight-month teacher training program began in the village of Mahmudiye, which is close to the city of Eskişehir. The Village Teachers Law № 3298, was passed on June 11, 1937, the following year [Cimi, 2001: 73–80].

İsmet İnönü became president following the death of M. K. Atatürk, and the historiography of cultural modernization began to lean toward humanism. The growth of rural areas was one of the prerequisites for the establishment of humanism. In order to achieve this, the process of creating Village Institutes was initiated by Director General of Primary Education İsmail Hakki Tonguç and Education Minister Hasan Ali Yücel. As a result, on April 17, 1940, the Law on Rural Institutes was passed. İ.H. Tonguç's study goes into great detail about these processes [Tonguç, 1945: 3].

Many scholars consider the Village Institutes to be special establishments that integrated vocational and cultural education. Three stages comprised their five-year educational program: 58 weeks of agricultural studies, 114 weeks of cultural classes, and 58 weeks of professional classes. The duration of vacations was

thirty weeks. The idea of group, practical learning was embraced by the Village Institutes [Karaömerlioglu, 2021: 287]. The majority of pupils who were unable to pursue careers as teachers or experts with a secondary specialized medical education went on to become builders or blacksmiths. As a result, the Village Institutes were positioned as both vocational schools and institutions that trained teachers.

Fatma Gök's research also provides a detailed account of education at the Village Institutes. With 22 hours per week and 5600 hours over the course of five years, cultural lessons made up over half of the whole curriculum. This illustrates how important cultural education was in the Village Institutes. The emphasis of education there was on how knowledge may benefit pupils in their daily lives. Students were required to recognize issues and make an effort to resolve them. The challenging circumstances of rural living, according to the Institutes' supporters, influenced how useful education was. Students acquired traits that made sure they didn't squander time and continuously improved their knowledge and abilities. Strong people were the result of this kind of schooling [Gök, 1999: 337].

The Village Institutes' practice-oriented educational approach was both educational and ideological. The government aimed to develop a socially engaged and state-loyal generation through group labor, discipline, and steady employment. Thus, labor fulfilled two purposes at once: it was a vehicle for socialization within the framework of republican ideology, and it also fitted education to the constraints of rural life.

The Village Institutes' educational approach was not new; it was a feature of the first half of the XX century's modernizing regimes. In this situation, education stopped being a way to impart knowledge and started acting as a tool to mold the state's desired values and behavioral patterns. Political and ideological considerations played a significant role in the founding and dissolution of the Village Institutes. From the beginning, they served as both educational establishments and tools of the one-party government system's cultural policy. They represented the intellectual agenda of the Republican elite, which aimed to transform rural culture via nationalism, secularism, and a humanistic conception of citizenship. The goal of education was to create law-abiding, disciplined, and socially active individuals who could spread republican ideals throughout rural areas.

However, the Village Institutes were also politically vulnerable due to their strong ties to official ideology. Initially defended by pedagogical and economic considerations, its emphasis on social mobilization, discipline, and group labor came under growing criticism as excessive governmental interference and ideological indoctrination. The ideological agreement that had kept the Village Institutes afloat weakened with the post-World War II shift to a multi-party government. They became seen by conservative political actors and social groupings as emblems of collectivism, secular cultural imposition, and one-party totalitarianism.

As a result, changing governmental objectives and ideological realignments led to the dissolution of the Village Institutes more so than educational failure. The Village Institutes' ideological underpinnings were incompatible with the new political environment as the political leadership shifted toward pluralism and Western liberal standards in the early stages of the Cold War.

There were conflicting opinions about the Village Institutes from the start. The enormous number of pupils admitted was criticized for compromising the quality of education and ignoring the responsibilities and living situations of rural communities. There may be future disputes between villages and cities if only rural pupils are accepted. Nuri Köstüklü's work discusses this issue [Köstüklü, 2007: 100].

On June 19, 1942, Law № 4274 was passed, requiring students and village residents to participate in the construction of institute buildings. Local residents were also required to assist instructors and teachers in any way they could, or face fines. This led to a decline in the standard of living of rural residents, who were subject to crop taxes during World War II.

The Village Institutes, according to some intellectuals, were established to supply reinforcements in case Türkiye decided to join the conflict. They thought that the National Socialist German Workers' Party's Youth Branch was a model for establishing these kinds of organizations. Young people would also be prepared to fight under martial law. Additionally, the government's privileges gave teachers the ability to intimidate and harass villages who disagreed with the government [Tahir, 2019: 243–247].

Critics said that development never started in the villages, despite the government's positioning of the establishment of Village Institutes as an attempt to improve rural areas, which would lead to the growth of the state itself. The disparity between the Village Institutes' actual perception and their publicly declared humanist beliefs was a major source of public criticism. Compulsory labor, mobilization tactics, and

involvement in the building of Village Institutes were perceived by many rural inhabitants as official meddling in local customs.

Additionally, the Village Institutes' cultural policy ran counter to the conservative section of society's religious beliefs. Mistrust of these institutions, which represented a foreign culture, was stoked by secular education and coeducation of boys and girls. As a result, the Village Institutes were caught between society and the state and lacked the authority or independence to lessen the ensuing disputes. Strong schools were being constructed in the city while these institutions were being erected in villages, according to critics who thought that industrialization could be achieved at the price of urbanization [Tahir, 1995: 154].

While İ. İnönü promoted humanism and stressed universality, M. K. Atatürk's cultural policy was founded on nationalism. Humanism failed to connect with the nation's religious masses because it focused on man rather than God. In this case, society didn't care what the government thought [Tahir, 1995: 97].

In scholarly circles, the post-World War II political shifts have been extensively examined. Reşat Şemsettin Sıralı, who was appointed Minister of National Education in 1946, was largely responsible for the Village Institutes' demise. He dismissed İ.H. Tonguç almost immediately after his appointment. Under his direction, several laws and amendments were passed, including Law № 5012 of February 19, 1947, which exempted girls from primary education mobilization, and an amendment to Law № 4274, which transferred the construction of the Village Institutes to the state [Kaplan, 2002: 157]. There was also criticism of the subjects taught there. The Ministry of Education claimed that the curriculum was rife with concepts and facts that were superfluous and could undermine national morale [Uygur, 1963: 6].

The Village Institutes were viewed from three primary perspectives: some accused them of humanism, others of «Kemalist» philosophy, and a third of being a one-party government. There was no denying that the graduates of the institutions worked to establish a society that adhered to Turkish humanism's moral, spiritual, and ideological principles. However, their politicization increased public and governmental dissatisfaction, which resulted in its closure in January 1954.

Therefore, elements pertaining to the cultural character of Village Institute curriculum and texts remain unexplored despite the abundance of scholarly works devoted to Village Institutes. Cultural research is necessary because of the socio-political focus of examining these institutions' operations.

**Results.** Curricula and textbooks, the fundamental components of cultural education, served as the foundation for the Village Institutes' cultural propagation. It's important to remember that the Village Institutes had no curriculum at first. The Law on Village Institutes governed their operations until 1943. The first curriculum for the Village Institutes was approved in 1943 and was in use until 1947, when the second and final curriculum was approved. This curriculum was in use until the institutes' dissolution in 1954.

Up until 1947, there were no particular requirements for textbooks used in rural schools. The Turkish Language Association did not publish a section on them until the start of the 1947–1948 school year. All high schools and institutions used nearly identical textbooks for grades 1 through 3 after that year. The third-grade textbooks used in lyceums and teacher training colleges were identical to those used in institutes for grades four and five. The Turkish Republic's economic status, which made it challenging to publish distinct textbooks for Village Institutes, may account for the adoption of nearly identical textbooks in all educational institutions. Since students needed to be informed of vocabulary changes, the only prerequisite was that teachers had the most recent textbook editions [Maarif Vekillîği, 1942: 1].

Both courses placed a strong emphasis on Turkish culture. One of the primary means of spreading this culture was the Turkish language. According to the programs, the objective of teaching Turkish was to improve students' comprehension and ability to articulate their ideas. This served as the foundation for the creation of instructional strategies and standards for teaching speaking, writing, and reading. The absence of listening comprehension, which is a crucial component of language learning, was a disadvantage of this approach.

Turkish language instructors were given a crucial role in the formation of moral character. The Turkish language was expressly mentioned as a way to attain higher moral standards, even though the curriculum of 1943 [Maarif Vekillîği, 1943: 10–11] and 1947 [Maarif Vekillîği, 1947: 13] did not specifically include it as an important part of Turkish culture. Cultural education can also include the study and proper usage of the native language.

The objectives of Turkish history lessons in the curriculum were as follows:

1. To expose pupils to historical works and events so they can analyze them with an understanding of the past. In doing so, students employed the Village Institutes' signature immediate environment strategy.

2. Textbooks covered important wars, revolutions, and reforms in Turkish history to teach pupils about the bravery of the Turkish people and their sacrifices throughout history. The goal of these initiatives was to inspire pupils to accomplish great things by instilling in them a spirit of appreciation and respect for Turkish historical leaders and heroes. The history of other countries was also incorporated in order to make the topic more universal.

3. To familiarize students with the nation's state structure, technological and economic advancements, and culture in order to arouse and bolster their sense of patriotism.

4. To familiarize pupils with the growth and background of organizations connected to different historical occurrences. Students were thus able to examine social order and its structure from the perspectives of the administrative, military, economic, religious, and cultural domains.

There were distinctions between the two curricula in addition to these shared objectives. The most noteworthy of these are as follows: the 1943 curriculum's «The Death of the Eternal Leader Atatürk» and «The Election of the National Leader İnönü as President» were replaced with «The Death of Atatürk» and «The Election of İsmet İnönü as President» in the 1947 curriculum, respectively; the 1947 curriculum only included the history of the Karakhanids and the Golden Horde, despite their significance to the history of all Turkic nations [Akdoğan, 2016: 126].

These modifications demonstrated how the government was reacting to the new curriculum's emphasis on Islamic principles, attempting to validate the Karakhanids' history as the first Turkic Islamic state and its cultural impact on Türkiye, and steering clear of the one-party system and the cult of personality.

In the second and third grades, civics classes were taught for just one hour each week with the same goals in both curricula: to educate students about the Türkiye's founding, the roles of governmental entities, and the duties of both the state and its citizens. Pupils were supposed to be aware of their rights and obligations in relation to their families, schools, and rural and urban lives [Maarif Vekilliği, 1943: 68].

The goal of this course was to educate pupils about the newly formed Republic of Türkiye. Serving the Republic was every Turk's top priority, and the idea of «Turk» received a lot of attention. In order to achieve this, all Turkish citizens were supposed to aspire to a set of principles.

The objectives of the geography course were the following:

1. Educating kids about the relationship between humans and nature, teaching them how to adapt to their surroundings, and equipping them with the skills necessary to use nature to enhance their quality of life. In order to facilitate the shift to contemporary farming practices, this segment examined the course's academic and practical components.

2. To familiarize pupils with organizations that produce natural resources, the geographical locations of all nations in relation to one another, and the shared interests of nations worldwide.

3. Examining the social, economic, and cultural domains of other peoples as well as the earth to see if it can provide for the requirements of people in various nations. It is important to note that the 1947 program did not include this item.

4. To teach students the skills of recognizing and understanding geographical objects and phenomena.

5. To instill in pupils the belief that Türkiye would grow, flourish, and become a wealthy nation.

The need to highlight Türkiye's natural resources, industry, and agriculture as well as its geographic location brought all of these objectives together. The fifth item demonstrated the government's aim to fortify the younger generation's sense of cultural and national identity. [Maarif Vekilliği, 1943: 44–45].

When it comes to teaching geography, these ideas were generally accepted. But one thing about the study of meteorological phenomena is worth mentioning. In addition to scientific evidence, students were encouraged to rely on omens and folk beliefs [Maarif Vekilliği, 1943: 45–48]. Based on this idea, Turkish folklore was incorporated into geography curricula.

The two curricula for music courses have different objectives. The 1943 program's objectives included teaching pupils how to play musical instruments and sing from sheet music, teaching them how to identify musical compositions, improving their performance through music classes, and instilling in them the habit of spending their spare time with music. [Maarif Vekilliği, 1943: 122].

The objectives of music classes in the 1947 curriculum were to teach singing and songwriting, as well as folk songs and music; enhance ear training, musical taste, and a sense of rhythm; and prepare students to become enthusiastic, upbeat educators who could promote musical culture [Maarif Vekilliği, 1947: 172].

Teaching Turkish music, a significant aspect of the culture, was the main focus of both curricula. Turkish folk music was generally boring and depressing, which explained the aim to make pupils happy. In

an effort to combat this, the government tried to employ music education to give the populace courage and happiness.

The primary distinction between the two programs was that the first employed music instruction to enhance students' performance, which was a more significant goal. This proved that music was equally crucial to accomplishing the Village Institutes' objectives.

The accordion was the main instrument, not Turkish instruments, even though playing musical instruments served as the basis for education. Bedri Akalın's «Handbook of Music Education in Village Institutes», which described the uelis and principles of music training, served as the music textbook from 1940 to 1950 [Akalın, 1945: 308].

The 1943 art course curriculum stated that «students must use Turkish motifs», whereas the 1947 curriculum said that «students must practice various Turkish arts». There were some distinctions between the two programs, despite their shared objective of teaching Turkish art and the techniques to produce a variety of artistic things.

The aims of the art courses in the 1943 program were as follows:

1. To help students express their feelings and research through drawing, sketching and creating three-dimensional figures.
2. To develop students' taste for color and shape.
3. To teach students national motives, the ability to distinguish them from foreign ones and at the same time to be able to adopt them.
4. To teach students about the evolution of children's drawings and their traits. This was required so that graduates of the Village Institutes may teach drawing in primary schools in the future [Maarif Vekilliği, 1943: 144].

The aims of the art courses in the 1947 program were as follows:

1. To teach students to express their feelings and observations through shapes, colors and lines, using simple tools and equipment.
2. To develop in students a sense of taste and the ability to see and describe beauty in nature and various objects.
3. To teach students the ability to evaluate the quality of art objects.
4. To teach how to create compositions corresponding to Turkish art, which can be used in embroidery, knitting, and weaving.
5. To introduce students to the characteristics of Turkish art and thereby strengthen their national feelings.
6. Raise the level of students' enjoyment of their work.
7. To introduce students to the stages of development and methods of teaching children's drawing in elementary school [Maarif Vekilliği, 1947: 155–156].

İ. H. Tonguç's book «Painting-Handicrafts and Art Education» was used for painting lessons. In addition to teaching several painting techniques, the book explained how to learn art through craft. The benefits that education provides to kids are what make it so beautiful [Türkoğlu, 2024: 296–298].

Since it was not economically feasible to publish separate textbooks for different schools at the time, it cannot be said that the textbooks used in Village Institutes were substantially different from those used in other schools.

Ancient civilization originated in Central Asia and the Turkic peoples who lived there, according to history and geography textbooks. Their movements made it easier for different civilizations to proliferate throughout the planet. The Anatolian civilization, which had its roots in the Hittites, was recognized as one of the major civilizations. Anatolia is said to have been able to move from the Stone Age to the Iron Age because of them [Unat, 1941: 88].

Turkic roots can also be found in Western society as taught in textbooks. Asia and Europe were geographically intertwined. During the Neolithic period, Central Asian peoples conquered Europe, and since then, a sophisticated civilization has grown there. Turks, Hungarians, Bulgarians, and Ural-Altai peoples are among them [Kazancıoğlu, 1938: 23]. Prior to the advent of Europeans, efforts were also attempted to connect American culture with Turkish civilization, suggesting that Native Americans had Asian ancestry [Kazancıoğlu, 1938: 105–106].

The Turks and Central Asian civilizations are credited with enhancing Europe's poor level of culture through their numerous innovations. The Turks were credited with ironworking, weaving, and mineral processing. [Duran, 1938: 290–291].

In the past, these assertions were untrue. For the country and its future to hold a prominent position among world civilizations, proponents of Turkic civilization's superiority believed it was crucial [Unat, 1941: 1]. Nonetheless, several Turkish intellectuals disagreed with this viewpoint. They thought it was a myth and that the Turkish people's primary traits were selflessness and modesty. They had never heard of boasting. It may be true that history is ancient, but it cannot be a cause for pride [Baltacıoğlu, 1942: 29].

These ideas suggested a course for education that would put Turks in the forefront of global civilization and culture. It was crucial for Turkey at the time to be both ahead of and behind other countries.

One of the most crucial components of culture is language, which links the past and present as well as many peoples. Similar to history, Turkish scholars tried to connect Turkic origins to the development of writing. Turks who immigrated to Mesopotamia from Central Asia produced the writing that first appeared there. This claim was predicated on the idea that the Sumerians were able to utilize cuneiform because to Turkic trade, and the Chinese were able to translate it into words [Günaltay, 1939: 39].

However, there is no scientific evidence to support these claims. The Orkhon inscriptions, the Uyghur script, and the «Qudadgu Bilig», which were thousands of years apart from Mesopotamian writing, are examples of Turkic writing and literature included in the book «History for High School I». Arguments concerning the Odyssey and the Iliad in the book «History for High School I» are almost ridiculous. These pieces are attributed to the poet Ömer of Izmir [Unat, 1941: 155].

The book «Modern and Contemporary History» offers details on the early Turkic-Islamic states' literature and language. The belief that the Turkish language started to acquire momentum in Anatolia during the Seljuk era is supported by works like «Kudadgu Bilig» by Yusuf Balasaghuni and «Divan Lughat al-Turk» by Mahmud al-Kashgari. The Turkish language had nearly reached its classical form by the end of the XIV century as a result of this process [Mansel et al., 1942a: 11–12].

The three-volume «Turkish Language I-II-III» by Beşir Göğüs and Kemal Demiray was the textbook used by the Village Institutes. A compilation of Turkish proverbs that represented Turkish culture and the opinions of the Turkish people on a range of life circumstances was included in the first book [Göğüs, Demiray, 1946: 64]. While the third volume examined the ideas of the epic poem using «Genç Osman» as an example, the second volume sought to develop in students a love for the language and its protection. The epic poem's analysis demonstrates the efforts made to advance Turkish folk literature and cultural instruction. Additionally, Turkish terms, proverbs, and idioms pertaining to horses—which held a significant position in Turkish culture—are given particular emphasis in this collection [Göğüs, Demiray, 1950: 16–18].

The richness of the native tongue and its cultural significance for the unification of the Turkish people were therefore highlighted in Turkish language textbooks. Proverbs, poetry, and folktales were included in Turkish language textbooks to somewhat offset the lack of emphasis on language as a cultural component in the curricula of 1943 and 1947.

Although the Turkic peoples have practiced a variety of religions since the beginning, Islam is the most prevalent and has had a significant impact on Turkish culture. «History for High Schools II», written by Ali Haydar Taner, has parts on Islam. This book contains information about this religion's beginnings as well as the design and construction of the first mosque [Taner, 1940: 42–45]. In the «Arabia» portion of Rauf Seymen's «New Geography Lessons», the Kaaba and Islamic history are discussed [Seymen, 1950: 120]. The omission of the phrase «may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him» following the Prophet Muhammad's name is one of these books' distinguishing characteristics. For a country whose population is almost entirely Muslim, and whose culture was transformed by Islam, this point was immediately apparent when studying religious issues.

The previously stated book, «History for Secondary School II», emphasizes the Turks' contributions to the growth and dissemination of Islam, especially in the area of science. The blending of Muslim cultures was impacted by Islamization and the expansion of Arabic [Taner, 1940: 69]. In the past, superstitious causes of illness, such the evil eye, which is present in both Islam and the pagan beliefs of the Turkic peoples, were discussed in the book «New Hygiene», which was utilized in medical science classes at rural institutes. Nevertheless, the author believed that these causes of illness were incorrect [Kökdemir, 1939: 7].

It should be mentioned that, in contrast to today, religious classes at the Village Institutes did not include textbooks on Islam, and religion was mostly discussed in history texts.

In music classes, a variety of books were used. M. H. Öktem's 1942 book «Music in Schools» was one of them. It offered musical notation, sound descriptions, and basic information about music. Nearly the whole book was composed of music notation. In contrast to the historical books, this one did not discuss

Turkish culture, music history, or genres. This also applied to the musical instruments section, where Turkish instruments were not mentioned. A few Turkish musicians referenced Turkish music in passing.

The book «A Guide to Music Education in Village Institutes» by Bedri Akalın claims that music is ageless and essential for bringing a country together. The author wanted kids to learn about music, particularly children's and folk songs, to appreciate their harmony and beauty, and to be able to perform traditional instruments [Akalın, 1945: 1–2].

When these two volumes are compared, it becomes clear that opinions on Turkish culture changed during the three years between their release, and Turkish folk songs started to appear in textbooks.

For instance, the Village Institute in Akpınar's archives contained a book called «Folk Songs of the Villages of Erencik and Ahi» that was produced by the Ankara People's House. 24 poems and 99 folk songs from the villages of Ahi, Kazan, and Erencik were included in this anthology. The origin, spread, development, historical background, and impact of these folk songs on subsequent compositions are all examined in the analysis and conclusion sections. This illustrated the Village Institutes' research of Turkish folklore and the interest in this field as a sign of the nation's significant cultural history.

The arts included a wide range of disciplines, including marble, miniatures, metallurgy, woodworking, architecture, and textiles. Islamic culture has had a significant influence on the evolution of Turkish art throughout its history. The book «History for Secondary Schools I» features artwork by the Saka, whose history is covered in various Turkic peoples' history textbooks. It was anticipated that by emphasizing the high degree of competence, pupils would learn about the ancient arts that impacted Turkic art and develop a sense of pride in their own culture.

The book «History of the Middle Ages» features both pre-Islamic and Islamic Turkic art in its fine arts part. Temple painting, metalworking, and book design are examples of artistic accomplishments. Miniatures and wall paintings found in the remains of Kara Khocho are two examples. The Alhambra Palace in Granada, the tiles of Samarkand, and the wall paintings in the mosques of Omar in Jerusalem and Ibn Tulun in Cairo are examples of the Islamic era. Turks are also notable for their architectural creations. The Izzettin Keykavus Tomb at the Şifaye Madrasah, the İnçe Minareli Madrasah in Konya, the Twin Minarets in Sivas, the Sahibiye Madrasah in Kayseri, the Mengüçek Madrasah in Divriği, and the Sultan Hotel in Kayseri, all constructed by the Turks following the Battle of Manzikert, are especially notable [Mansel et al., 1942b: 26].

The Village Institutes taught Turkish architecture, which was crucial for giving pupils a passion for architecture. It was evident, meanwhile, that the textbooks offered scant details regarding other facets of Turkish art.

In addition to serving as a teaching aid, the Village Institutes' textbooks played a significant role in disseminating the official narrative of the nation's history and culture. A historical memory that aligned with the ideology of the republican state at the time was created by highlighting the Turkic roots of civilizations and the unique contribution of the Turkish people and culture.

Even though some of these assertions lacked empirical support, education became one of the tools used in the post-imperial era to restore national pride and international standing.

The Village Institutes' operations were also affected by the 1946 shift to a multiparty political system. H. A. Yücel and İ. H. Tonguç were fired one after the other [Pazar, 2001: 105]. İ. İnönü was forced to distance himself from the Village Institutes in order to avoid political issues as the Democratic Party grew stronger [Avcıoğlu, 1969: 238].

In 1947, amendments were made to the «Regulations on Village Institutes», prohibiting students from holding meetings, conferences, and distributing books, magazines, and brochures. Smoking and alcohol bans were no longer imposed by the institutes themselves, but by the Ministry of National Education [MEB, 1947].

The Democratic Party took control after the nation's elections in 1950. The Village Institutes' demise began with these political shifts. During this period, the new government also established close relations with the United States. In this context the new administration chose to invite American scholar Kate Wofford, who had studied in the Turkish intellectual community from 1951 to 1955, in addition to standardizing them. The American expert's approach was motivated by her external and comparative research perspective, allowing her to examine the Village Institutes outside the framework of the internal Turkish ideological discussion.

She cited the Village Institutes' political roots and contended that they were ineffectual. K. Wofford's criticism was also linked to the onset of the Cold War and the change of power in Türkiye, focusing on the collectivist and ideological aspects of the Village Institutes. Elements of communal work and living were

perceived as potentially socialist, heightening political and public suspicion. Thus, K. Wofford pointed to both organizational and ideological risks, which aligned with the interests of the new administration. She suggested turning them into vocational schools by combining them with teacher training colleges [Kirby, 2019: 495–499].

As a result of all these actions, Law № 6234 was adopted on January 27, 1954. According to this law, Village Institutes were transformed into Primary teacher training schools (Tangülü, 2012: 404). Thus ended the history of the Village Institutes that represented the most concrete solution to the problem of the village and education.

The Village Institutes became unique educational institutions, unparalleled in Türkiye. Compared to other well-known projects, such as the Gülen Schools, they cannot be considered a direct borrowing or continuation of the Village Institutes model. These schools were formed in different social and institutional conditions and represented an adaptive innovation, combining elements of religious and ethical tradition, a secular educational organization, and global educational standards.

**Conclusion.** During the one-party rule, the Republic of Türkiye's most ambitious and contentious cultural and educational policy initiatives were the Village Institutes. By training new citizens who could both educate and uphold republican values, these organizations aimed to modernize the countryside.

Turkish culture played a significant role in the Village Institutes' educational system, according to an examination of the curricula and textbooks used in 1943 and 1947. A set of concepts on national identity, historical memory, and the cultural legacy of the Turkish people was established through the teaching of Turkish language, history, geography, music, and art.

The Village Institutes had an ideological basis at the same time. This showed up as political control, ideological interpretations of history and culture, and humanistic discourse. During the shift to a multi-party system, some members of the public and officials criticized these paradoxical aspects.

Despite their brief existence, Village Institutes have significantly improved the rural population's cultural and educational standards. These organizations' experiences show that there is a lot of promise for modernization when education is used as a tool for cultural reform. However, societal factors and ideals must be considered in this process.

Therefore, Village Institutes serve as an illustration of how a nation's cultural policy can lead to both social conflict and advancement.

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