

EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS OF TURKISH MIGRANTS' CHILDREN

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The author deals with the education of Turkish migrants' children and the handicaps existing for equal access to all educational opportunities. She comes to the conclusion that unless realistic measures endeavouring bi-cultural integration on behalf of the growing generations are implemented, the dependency of Turkey's excessive manpower on the European labour market will mark these children and leave them on the threshold of adult life without equal means and opportunities to build a more prosperous and peaceful world.

Die Autorin untersucht die Erziehung der türkischen Gastarbeiterkinder und die Hindernisse, die deren freiem Zugang zu allen Bildungsmöglichkeiten entgegenstehen. Sie kommt zu dem Schluss, dass realistische Massnahmen zur bi-kulturellen Integration der jungen Generation getroffen werden müssen, wenn die Abhängigkeit des türkischen Arbeitskräfteüberschusses vom europäischen Arbeitsmarkt diese jungen Kinder nicht zeichnen und an der Schwelle des Erwachsenenlebens lassen soll, ohne ausreichende Mittel und Möglichkeiten, eine blühendere und friedlichere Welt aufzubauen.

L'auteur examine les problèmes de l'éducation des enfants des migrants turcs et les obstacles entravant l'accès égal à toutes les possibilités d'éducation. Elle conclut qu'à moins de mettre en pratique des mesures réalistes s'efforçant d'intégrer les deux cultures au nom des générations futures, la dépendance de la main-d'oeuvre excessive turque sur le marché du travail européen marquera ces enfants et les laissera sur le seuil de la vie d'adulte, sans occasions, ni moyens égaux de créer un monde paisible et plus prospère.

Until the end of the 1950s Turkey was by European standards a country of high fertility (even in 1974 its population growth rate was about 2,5 %) with little tradition of migration due to the expansionist nature of the Ottoman empire, and a predominantly rural character (in 1974, 63,4 % of the population were employed in agriculture). Its partly self-sufficient economy did not allow high rates of population release from the agrarian sector.

However, the surprisingly sharp labour scarcity in post-war Western Europe, the right to travel abroad guaranteed by the new Turkish Constitution of 1961, and the fast move toward industrialization and urbanization within Turkey, contributed to the growth of new horizons, both in the spatial as well as in the psychological sense. The most relevant attitudinal change in Turkey in the 60s was doubtless the intensive desire of a large segment of the population to migrate abroad. This desire can be seen both as a search for more income and as a propensity to

minimize the family's living costs by encouraging spouse and grown-up children to participate in the breadwinning process. This has produced widespread fragmentation of the family.

With the tendency of Turkish workers to prolong their stay in foreign countries due to shrinking job opportunities at home, and drastic cut-downs in the recruitment of foreign workers, three major trends began to show:¹

1. Due to the relatively high fertility trend among Turkish workers, each year more Turkish children are born abroad and represent a potential new population to receive a bilingual education.²
2. Contrary to the prevailing attitude until the 70s to leave family members at home, more workers are striving towards family reunion abroad.
3. Following a relevant modification of the tax laws in the FRG in January 1975, a sharp distinction has been made regarding the children's allowance of foreigners residing with their children in the FRG and those whose dependents are living in the home country. This alteration, which aimed to reduce the scope of the children's allowance (in 1973 Turkish workers received 357 million DM for 515,161 children), resulted in a real "children's exodus". During the first four months of 1975 almost 75% of the passengers on chartered flights for migrant workers were of the 0-16 age group.

This new type of migration will certainly have a deep impact on the structure of Turkish migrant workers abroad. It will also increase the cultural shock. Many family heads who for specific reasons decided to leave their family members and children of school age at home, are opting for the high financial advantages when being faced with the drastic alternative of either leaving their children at home and receiving only a small allowance, or of having them come even if housing and schooling create major problems.

Number of Turkish Migrants' Children

According to a survey carried out by the Bundesanstalt für Arbeit (Federal German Labour Office) in 1972 among the Turkish workers residing in the FRG³, 42 % were living with one child, 32 % with two, 20 % with 3 or 4 and 6 % with 5 or 6 children. However, a correct estimate of the number of Turkish children abroad has always been extremely difficult. In the FRG, as well as in many other European countries, there is no legal obligation for the registration of aliens under 16. Thus while the German Labour Bureau indicated already in 1972 a Turkish child population of 195,000 with 46 % under 6, 22 % between 6-11, 17 % from 11-16 and 15 % born prior to 1955, the Turkish Ministry of Education gave in June 1974 for the FRG a total figure of

175,000. Parallel to these estimates the Turkish Ministry of Labour published a figure of 205,371 children abroad, while the Turkish Federation of Labour (Türk-Is) mentions about 230,000 children.⁴ According to these statistics the Netherlands come second in terms of the number of children of Turkish workers (estimated at 10,619), Belgium ranks third with 6,540, Switzerland is the host of 5,715 and Sweden of 2,043 Turkish children.

Whichever source is more precise, the fact remains that the FRG as well as other host countries have rather detailed information on the "economic aspects" of the migrant work-force in their countries, but little and unreliable information on the "social aspects" of migration. This indicates how problems of migrant workers are still treated in most Western European industrialized countries. Apparently the famous phrase by Max Frisch still holds true: "They asked for workers, but human beings came"!

School Attendance

Starting from early recommendations in the 70s by the Council of Europe, almost all international and national institutions concerned with educational problems of migrant children insist on these fundamental principles:⁵

- Provision for all children of migrant workers of the same schooling or vocational training as for children of the host country. Supplementation of this programme with extra teaching at the time of their arrival designed to facilitate the migrants' integration into the normal school system.
- Eligibility for scholarships and financial assistance.
- Additional training in the culture and way of life of the migrants' countries of origin, so that the cultural values of the migrants can be kept alive during schooling and their mother tongue taught.

However the implementation of these universally valid principles has not been easy at all. Although the Constitution of the FRG requires all children, irrespective of their nationality, to attend school until the age of 16, the lack of efficient control by local authorities and the missing interest of Turkish parents have resulted in rather low school attendance. According to official reports of Turkish consulates, only about 54 % of Turkish school age children living in the FRG are attending school.⁶ School age girls are preferably used by their parents as babysitters and housekeepers.

Types of Provision

The major concern of the sending countries is to equip the new generation abroad with the language and culture of the home country, and to provide equal access to all educational institutions. The host country, on the other hand, desires a frictionless adjustment of foreign children within the national school system, a smooth transition of these children toward technical vocations and the combination of a relatively small contingent in higher education. These contradicting goals, although officially not articulated, resulted in a dual strategy of education, integration as well as segregation; and in political rivalry: teaching of the mother tongue under the control of German authorities in some Länder, submission to consular control in others.

Thus in Bavaria and West Berlin educational activities in Turkish are provided which are authorized, but not subsidized by the state education authorities, while in Hesse, Baden-Württemberg, Lower Saxony and Northrhine-Westphalia Turkish instruction is under the direct supervision of local German authorities, who also exercise full control. This practice has led to the emergence of two different types of teachers: a) Teachers recruited in Turkey and paid by the Turkish Ministry of Education; b) Former Turkish primary school teachers, who, due to downward mobility were recruited first as blue collar workers⁸, later returned to their initial profession and now receive their payment from German education authorities.

The wide use of available Turkish teaching staff enabled the children of Turkish migrant workers to adjust themselves to the curriculum of German schools without being seriously deprived of the cultural heritage of their home countries. In practice there is however an important difference between the methods adopted in Baden-Württemberg and Northrhine-Westphalia, on the one hand, and Berlin on the other. In the two former Länder the recruitment of Turkish teachers - when realized by German authorities - is based upon consultation with the Turkish consular authorities. In Berlin such a consultation is deliberately avoided, the Turkish teachers are selected by German authorities only. There is no doubt that combined educational effort, especially with regard to bilingual education, requires a maximum of harmonious administrative relations between the two authorities. This is the main reason why the Baden-Württemberg and Northrhine-Westphalia model seems to be the more suitable one. It does not force Turkish children to study in predominantly Turkish medium, so-called "dwarf" schools.

Such an educational system not only reinforces the ghetto effect, but it also leads to unnecessary administrative conflicts, thereby endangering the integration of Turkish children at all levels of German schools.

Turkish officials and academics hope to make suitable arrangements for:

- 1) favourable conditions for the active participation of Turkish migrants' children in European schools.
- 2) the elimination of discriminative practices excluding Turkish children from access to higher educational levels.
- 3) the continuity of the children's affiliation with their native language and national culture by facilitating their attendance at additional courses *besides* their regular school duties.

In 1974 about 249 Turkish teachers, directly appointed in Ankara by the Ministry of Education, were sent to the FRG, and administered supplementary Turkish courses in history, geography and Turkish literature to about 11,607 Turkish children in 321 cultural courses. In Belgium six officially appointed Turkish teachers are shouldering the heavy job of teaching about 1,544 children in 28 different classes.

The officially appointed Turkish teachers, whose salaries come from Turkey, are responsible for conducting additional, voluntary, Turkish "cultural" classes. Attendance in these classes is optional. Many children are unable to attend them, because of great distances and complicated transportation problems rather than lack of interest. Younger children, in particular cannot cope with the complicated transportation systems of metropolitan areas. Since the teachers normally have no car and do not receive an official grant for a car, the best results with these "cultural" classes are obtained in districts with a heavy concentration of Turkish migrant workers.

The Turkish teachers employed by German local authorities teach in so-called "transitional" classes; their duty is to help Turkish children to adjust to the class level their poor linguistic knowledge in German.

The co-existence of two types of teachers creates a number of conflict situations such as split personal loyalties, obligations to adhere to Turkish regulations, unnecessary competition due to higher salaries paid by the German or other European authorities, which indirectly leads to some kind of "teacher drain". It also has to be noted that the lack of a coordinating authority supervising all Turkish teachers detached from Turkey obstructs the potential willingness of Turkish teachers to conduct classes in various parts of a larger city or community. All these factors, product of the existence of two different teacher groups, deepen the cited rift to the detriment of Turkish migrant pupils.

Since the schooling problem of Turkish migrant children is particularly acute in the FRG, where public opinion is informed about the policies applied, it is worthwhile to describe this situation briefly.

The "Bavarian" model is based upon the principle that parents are given a free choice: they may decide to educate their children either predominantly in Turkish or in German. In schools with a minimum of 25 foreign children, instruction is given upon request up to two thirds in the respective mother tongue. The second alternative, called the "social integration" model, does not accept the principle of free choice for parents, but attempts to integrate foreign children fully in German society. Under this model Turkish children are either first instructed in transitional classes with the purpose of teaching them basic German, or if their command of German is sufficient, they may join regular classes in German schools.

It should be noted that while Bavaria from the beginning stood firm on the provisional nature of foreign labour employment and insisted on keeping the rotation principle, the Länder with larger industrial concentration fought for complete integration and recruitment without restrictions. Thus it becomes clear that the shaping of educational policies was determined, until the out-break of the energy crisis, by the degree of industrial absorption of foreign labour rather than pedagogical or humanistic considerations.

The official stand of the Turkish Ministry of Education has been of a dual nature: 1) insistence on teaching Turkish children born abroad their mother tongue and on creating a basis for successful re-integration, if desired; 2) special efforts to fully equip Turkish children living abroad with the national language of the host country of their parents in order to enable them to receive an adequate professional education, in other words, to avoid cultural segregation because it closes the channels of social mobility.

Education of Migrants' Children: Difficulties, Handicaps, Dilemmas

We shall now try to focus on the major actors involved in schooling abroad: parents, pupils and teachers.

Parents. 1. The attitude of foreign workers to the school system is largely determined by the conditions and traditions of the home country. Turkish workers of rural background, similar to Italians from the South and unlike the Greeks and Yugoslavs, by and large only encour-

age the school attendance of their gifted male children, while trying, in spite of an absolute prohibition of juvenile employment, to obtain illegal jobs for the less bright boys of the family. With regard to the daughters of Turkish migrant workers two important factors play a decisive role in their non-attendance: a) The necessity of supervision for the younger members of the family, especially in those cases where the mother also works outside of the home, b) Dominant, negative value judgements regarding the permissive, co-educational system in Europe leads to non-enrolment, partly forced upon girls by the parents themselves, or to early dropping out. The real number of Turkish children in Europe growing up outside regular schooling remains a scandal. This assessment is even more true for countries such as Belgium, where freedom to set up schools of any kind is granted but control in regard to school attendance is not required.

2. Housing difficulties also play an indirect role in non-registration. Many parents are disinclined to register their children because the size and quality of their housing does not meet official requirements. This issue plays an even greater role in the case of illegal workers.

Pupils. 1. The various organizational handicaps that confront all migrant workers' children have an especially heavy impact on Turkish children. Lack of interest, inability of the parents to appreciate the value of pre-school education, fear of religious indoctrination, results in Turkish children having the lowest percentage of kindergarten attendance among all foreign workers' children.¹⁰

2. During primary school years a major handicap for the success or failure of Turkish children seems to stem from the inability to get access to the free distribution of books, as guaranteed in some Länder to school children in the FRG, Sweden, etc. In the FRG, some school authorities require Turkish children to buy special books which seem expensive to many parents.¹¹

3. After the completion of the obligatory nine years of elementary schooling, only 3% of the Turkish children continue their education in vocational institutions.¹² There is an almost complete reversal between the expectations and hopes of the parents and the choices opted for by the teenagers; lack of proper guidance and information, attractiveness of earning money early and socialization into the values of the consumer society play an important role in this.

Teachers. 1. Neither German nor Turkish teachers are linguistically and professionally prepared to cope with the additional burden resulting from the setting up of preparatory courses or Turkish classes

conducted in a foreign environment.

2. There is a deep rift between former Turkish primary school teachers at present employed by German authorities, who are required to prepare Turkish pupils to adjust to the German curriculum, and Turkish teachers appointed by the Ministry of Education in Ankara. The latter's primary obligation is to maintain the pupils' allegiance to their home country. Their classes, except in Bavaria, are scattered in various parts of large cities and based upon voluntary participation.

3. So far there has been no serious attempt to organize periodical seminars and workshops for Turkish teachers permitting them to acquire new educational and methodological insights.

Various institutions and scholars have started to investigate through large scale surveys the major difficulties of migrant workers' children.

TABLE 1

Major Problems of Migrant Workers' Children
(Percentual, multiple indications permitted)

Problems	Italians	Spanish	Greeks	Turks	Yugoslavs
Language difficulty	22	24	49	39	42
Curriculum too heavy	11	19	19	27	12
No help with homework	29	52	22	42	27
Distance from school	5	12	10	0	6
Lack of contact with classmates	9	12	1	24	0
Lack of contact with teachers	0	5	13	12	0
Transfer difficulties on return home	17	16	9	40	0
All problems	102	140	129	198	87
No problems	33	36	28	23	52
Other	9	0	6	14	0

Source: Ursula Mehrländer, *Soziale Aspekte der Ausländerbeschäftigung*. Bonn: Verlag Neue Gesellschaft, 1974, p. 211.

Table 1 shows clearly that among the major migrant worker nationalities, the Turks have the heaviest amount of multiple problems (198%) regarding the school attendance and education of their children. Especially relevant is the difficulty which these children encounter with regard to the content of the curriculum. This can probably be explained by strong differences in environment and cultural values.

Yet there are other serious problems which these children will encounter after return. According to Turkish laws there is no possibility for them to receive the equivalent of the five year Turkish primary school certificate. Thus returning children are either placed in lower grades, which separates them from their peer and age group, or are compelled to take detailed entrance examinations. Recommendations for a more flexible practice for returning primary school children are supported, but yet not implemented, by the Ministry of Education. Two other centers of concern seem to be the lack of help with homework, and the relative isolation of Turkish school children while attending school. The last problem can hardly be remedied by administrative measures. It appears to be a by-product of the negative, stereotypical image of the "barbaric, uncivilized, pagan, terrible Turks!" held in Western Countries.

Religious Education

Another complex educational factor arises from the fact that a number of Turkish workers have been asking for the establishment of Koran schools. Such demands have been vigorously criticised by the Association of Turkish teachers in the FRG in a paper stating that "the real function of such clerical schools is not to transmit religious education. This demand is an open reaction against the Turkish republican form of state in defense of the creation of an Islamic state. Their programme is a contradiction of modern civilisation and progress... Their method is solely based on memorising."¹³

If indeed these claims are right, the establishment of autonomous Koran schools is in sharp contrast with the constitutional principle of secularism in Turkey. Of course, in Turkey, public schools carry out religious education, but this is not administered by clerical personnel. It might easily be the case that the estimated 20% of Turkish children of school age not attending school, are sent by their parents solely to these non-official religious courses. Here the methods of teaching are geared exclusively to a dogmatic, theological education. The only con-

cern is to have the children memorize large portions of the Koran.

Dual or Single Language?

The discussion whether having to learn two languages overburdens the child presently continues. Meanwhile decisions in various countries have followed the economic boom. France, Belgium, Sweden still follow a policy of absolute integration, while Switzerland, desirous to send back its foreign labour force after a given period, is at present experimenting with the so-called "Scuola a due uscite - School with double exit", based on equally weighted bilingual teaching.

The most recent recommendations of the Commission of European Communities strongly stress the necessity of assisting the linguistic integration of migrant workers' children.¹⁴ The same report also recommends special courses for the training of teachers and the elaboration of pilot programmes based on new teaching methods for the realisation of bilingual education.

Conclusion

The attraction (in economic terms) of the "center" countries for people of the "peripheral" countries, resulted in the displacement of thousands of children, who are uprooted from their homes, left alone because of the double employment of the parents, condemned to loneliness at home, isolation at school and to serious handicaps in achieving an education adequate to fulfill their aspirations. The parents made their choice deliberately, the children were not asked. The Europe of tomorrow as well as the world at large will depend on the versatility of its enlarged community. This requires equal access to all education in both countries for the young generation. The parents of today have heavily mortgaged the future of their children in their search for a livelihood in alien lands. Much depends on the willingness and ability of supranational and international organizations to assume their responsibilities and indicate the ways and means to free the coming generation from being solely the next generation of "marginal men and women".

NOTES

1. The first large-scale investigation of the problems of Turkish migrant workers

was conducted by the author on behalf of the Turkish State Planning Organization. It comprised a survey with a sample of 494 Turkish workers, located in the FRG within 82 firms, in 58 cities and towns. The study was published in Turkish with summaries in German and English. N. Abadan-Unat, "Studie über die Lage und Probleme der türkischen Gastarbeiter in der BRD", in *Arbeitsplatz Europa*. Europäische Schriften des Bildungswerks Europäische Politik, Heft 11. Cologne: Bildungswerk Europäische Politik, 1966, pp. 102-124. In 1965, the Institute of Empirical Sociology, Saarbrücken, in cooperation with the Faculty of Economics, Istanbul University, launched a study in Turkey and Germany to measure the impact of industrialization on the value structure of Turkish workers. In Turkey 774, in Germany 163 workers were interviewed. Professor Orhan Tuna published in Turkish his findings on behalf of the State Planning Organization. During 1970-71, Professor Ahmet Aker of the Bosphorus University, Istanbul, conducted a survey of 590 workers, just prior to their departure. This study, published in Turkish, examined occupational mobility, unemployment and migration as well as wage differences between Turkey and the FRG. At the same time, N. Abadan-Unat undertook a small-scale study on the impact of the 1966-67 recession on Turkish workers in the FRG and their willingness to return to industrial jobs in Turkey. See "La main-d'oeuvre turque en Allemagne Fédérale. Problèmes relatifs aux secteurs conjoncturels". OCDE, MS/M/404/367, Sept. 1971. Paris: OCDE, 1971, pp. 91; N. Abadan-Unat, "Le non-retour à l'industrie, trait dominant de la chaîne migratoire turque", *Sociologie du Travail* 1972, no. 3, pp. 278-293.

Since autumn 1974, a Turkish (N. Abadan-Unat and R. Keles) and a Dutch (representing IMWOO, the Dutch Institute for Development) team are studying the reintegration patterns of Turkish workers and the various problems of family members left behind. This research includes a detailed survey in Bogazliyan, the province of Yozgat and its villages, the sample size is 530. The first results will be published in autumn 1975. Ayse Kudat-Sertel at the International Management Institute, West Berlin and the sociologist Mübbece B. Kiray have investigated the problems of Turkish workers' children. (Ayse Kudat-Sertel, "Structural Change in the Migrant Turkish Family" in R.E. Krane (ed.), *Manpower Mobility Across Cultural Boundaries*. Leiden: Brill, 1975, pp. 77-95; Mübbece B. Kiray, "The Family of the Immigrant Worker" in N. Abadan-Unat (ed.) *Turkish Workers in Europe*. Leiden: Brill (in press). The problems of migrants' children have been examined by Sitki M. Bilmen and Gülten Dayioglu (Sitki M. Bilmen, "Educational Problems Encountered by the Children of Turkish Migrant Workers" in Abadan-Unat, *Turkish Workers*.)

2. *Repräsentativ-Untersuchung '72*. Nürnberg: Bundesanstalt für Arbeit, 1973, p. 25. This survey has clearly shown that the proportion of Spaniards, Italians and Turks living in the FRG with 3-4 children is rapidly increasing.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 34-37. According to this survey 9% of Turkish migrant workers intended to settle down permanently in the FRG.

4. "Yurt Dışında Çalışan Türk İşçilerinin (0-16 Yaş) Çocuklarının Eğitimi Sorunları" (Educational Problems of Turkish Migrants' Children). Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, no. 74-20. Ankara: Ministry of Education, pp. 6-7.

5. S. Bilmen, *Education of Migrant Workers' Children*. Strassbourg: Council of Europe, 1971.
6. "Yurtdisi Göç Hareketleri ve Vatandas Sorunlari" (External Migration and Problems of Turkish Citizens). T.C. Disisleri Bakanligi, Ekonomik ve Sosyal Isler Genel Müdürlüğü. Ankara: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1973, p. 52.
7. G. Mahler, *Zweitsprache Deutsch*. Donauwörth: Auer-Verlag, 1974, pp.154-155.
8. N. Abadan-Unat, "Turkish External Migration and Social Mobility" in P. Benedict et al. (eds.), *Turkey: Geographical and Social Perspectives*. Leiden: Brill, 1974.
9. R. Lohrmann and E.J. Hadjiandreou, "Auswirkungen der Ausländerbeschäftigung auf die soziale Struktur der BRD" in R. Lohrmann and K. Manfrass (Hrsg.), *Ausländerbeschäftigung und Internationale Politik*. München: Oldenbourg, 1974, p. 95.
10. U. Mehrländer, *Soziale Aspekte der Ausländerbeschäftigung*. Bonn: Verlag Neue Gesellschaft, 1974, p. 207. Only 7% of Turkish workers' children under 6 attend kindergarten; 14% of workers prefer to send young children to neighbours or foster homes.
11. Sati Erisen and Ferruh Sanir, *Türk Çocuklarının Kitabi I, IIa, IIb*. Tübingen: Horst Erdmann, 1972, are the first three books written in Turkish for primary school age children living abroad.
12. Mehrländer, *Soziale Aspekte*, p. 210.
13. Verband Türkischer Lehrer in der BRD und Westberlin, "Zur pädagogisch-politischen Funktion der türkischen Priester und Koranschulen in der Türkei und im Ausland". Paper presented at the workshop in April 1-4, 1971 at T. Heuss Akademie, Gummersbach.
14. "Programme d'Action en Faveur des Travailleurs Migrants et de leurs Familles", COM(74) 2250, 18.12.1974. Brussels: Commission des Communautés Européennes, 1975, p. 19.