



ISTANBUL  
**GELISIM**  
**UNIVERSITY**

# **ATATURK'S PRINCIPLES AND HISTORY OF TURKISH REVOLUTION II**

## **CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL REFORMS**

WEEK 4

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## Reforms in the Culture and Education

- **Law on Unification of Education (Tevhid-i Tedrisat Kanunu)**
- In accordance with this law dated March 3, 1924, and numbered 430, all educational institutions in the country were centralised under Ministry of Education (the Ministry of National Education).
- This law became the fundamental educational law and constituted the basis for all the following educational regulations.
- The Unity of Education Law which was enacted to unify the educational institutions for conducting reforms; apply the principles of nationality, secularity and modernity enabled the removal of multi-headed system.
- This law provided the infrastructure for some of the later Ataturk reforms such as the closure of the Dervish Lodges, Zawiya's and Shrines religious as well as for the adoption of the Latin Alphabet instead of the Ottoman letters which were considered as religious.



**Ataturk with  
students in Adana**



# The Law on the Educational System

- The Educational System Law was passed on March 2, 1926 for the organization of the primary school, high school and university education on certain principles.
- While the establishment of new schools were stipulated on the approval of the State, the courses, curriculum and their teaching systems were specified.
- Educational system was organized.
- Ministry of National Education was entrusted with opening schools.
- Foreign Schools were obligated to conduct History, Geography and Philosophy with Turkish teachers.
- Religious classes such as the comment of Qur'an, Hadith (Prophet's sayings) were removed from the curriculum.
- The primary education was declared to be free and mandatory.
- The principle of co-education was adopted.



Head teacher Mustafa Kemal is teaching  
the new alphabet in Sivas in 1928.



## Adoption of Latin Alphabet

- One of the most significant revolutions of modern Turkey was the Reform of the Alphabet.
- Mustafa Kemal Ataturk perceived illiteracy as the greatest obstacle before the progress and he considered the Latin Alphabet as the most suitable solution to this.
- The adoption of the new Turkish Alphabet was enacted by the National Assembly in November 1928 thereby opening a new era in the culture and education of the Turkish nation.
- After the enactment of the law, «Literacy Drive» was launched to teach the new alphabet to the masses.
- Mustafa Kemal Ataturk was entitled as «Head Teacher of the Nation Schools» on November 24, 1928.



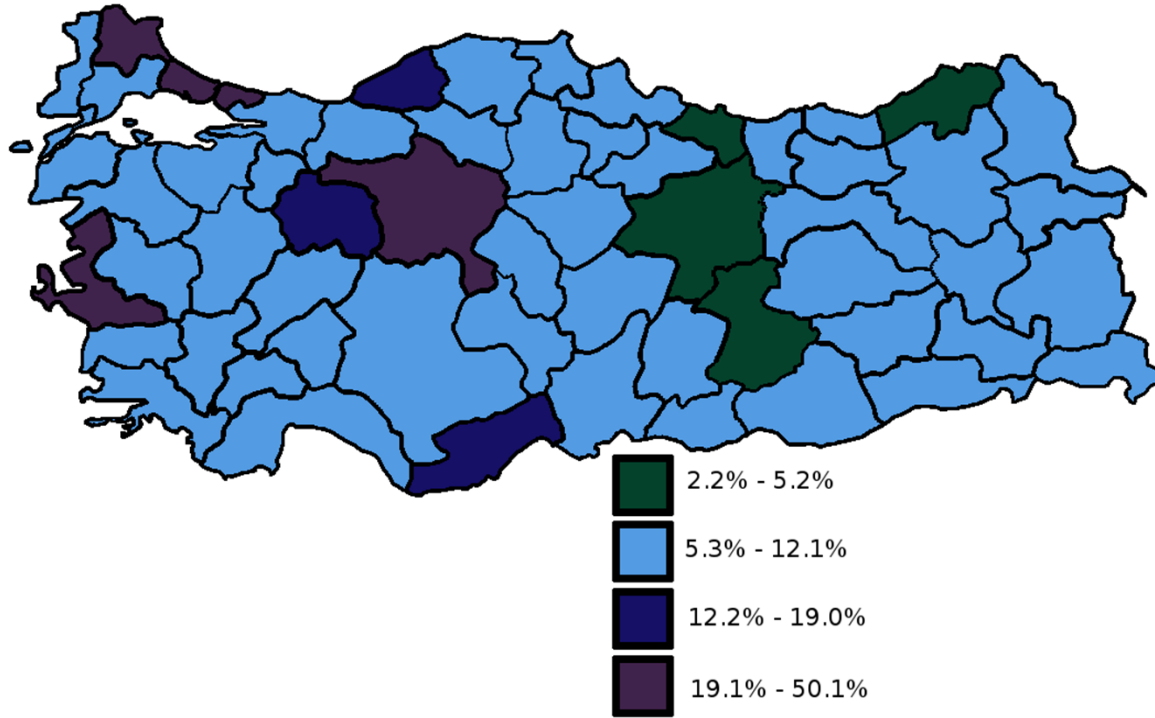
Children are viewing the poster which was hung on a tree for people to learn the new alphabet, 1930



## The Closure of the Madrasah

- Madrasahs are the secondary and higher education institutions in the Muslim countries.
- However, these madrasahs were closed due to the opinion of their being behind the times.
- On April 13, 1924, after the declaration of the Republic, it was decided the madrasahs to be closed and new modern educational institutions to be established.
- Madrasahs were closed to prevent the conflicts and tensions to be arisen in the country.
- Non-adaptation of the Madrasahs to the time was influential in this decision and new schools of religious education were established.





Literacy in Turkey, 1924.



# The Higher Education Law

- To raise individuals having free thought, conscience and scientific approach, the Higher Education Law was enacted to reform the universities.
- Universities were planned to be autonomous and objective rather than limited and representatives of the governing structure.
- Ankara Law School, Gazi Educational Institute and Agricultural Institution were among the schools established in accordance with the goals of the Republic.
- After the preparations, the Higher Education Law was passed in 1933.
- In 1933, Istanbul University was established instead of İstanbul Dârülfünunu
- Almost half of the lecturers were removed from the office and new lecturers were hired.
- The German academicians migrating to Turkey helped the fortification of a university consciousness.
- The concept of University, Faculty and Rector were created during the reforms of 1933.



**The Istanbul University after  
its reorganization in 1933.**



## The Establishment of the Turkish Historical Society

- The history books of the Ottoman Era was primarily on Islam History and the Turkish History before Islam was not included.
- Within this sense, Ottoman Empire had a «Panislamist Historical Understanding».
- Mustafa Kemal Ataturk suggested that the Turkish History be investigated as a whole comprising the pre-Islamic Turkish History without confining it to the religious motifs.
- After the decision of closure by Turkish Hearths (Türk Ocakları), on March 29, 1931, The Turkish Historical Delegation continued studies re-organizing under the title of «Türk Tarih Tedkik Cemiyeti» (Association of Turkish History Studies).
- The name of the insitution was changed to «Türk Tarihi Araştırma Kurumu» (Turkish Historical Studies Society) in 1935 and to «Türk Tarih Kurumu» (Turkish Historical Society) later.



Establishment ceremony of the  
Turkish History Institution in 1931.

## Establishment of the Turkish Language Association

- As well as the studies on Turkish History, further studies were conducted to prove that Turkish Language is one of the oldest and systematic languages on the world.
- After the acceptance of Islam, many Arabic and Persian words entered into the language and caused the spoil of some rules of Turkish Language.
- Atatürk, who was of the opinion that the daily language was the indication of the independence of the nation, established the Turkish Language Association on July 12, 1932 to contribute to the development of Turkish.



Meeting of the Turkish Language Association, 1933.



Ülkesini, güçsöz istek-  
lâlini koru masini bilen  
Türk milleti, dilini de-  
yalancu diller bozunul-  
trijindan kurtarmalidir.  
Gazi M. Kemal

Atatürk: «Conscious of protecting his country and independence, Turkish Nation should rescue his language from the oppression of the foreign languages.»



## Opening Nation's Schools (Millet Mektepleri)

- Nation's Schools entered into service on November 1, 1928.
- The principal aim of the Nation Schools was to increase the literacy of the people and start the educational campaign with the Alphabet Reform.
- The rate of literacy among the masses began to rise with the Nation's Schools
- The graduates of the High Schools at that time worked around the country as teachers.
- A remarkable amount of people learned how to read and write thanks to these trainings.





## Summary

- The Ottoman schools were a complex "educational system" based on (differentiated) mainly on religion, established with different curricula for each path.
- The Ottoman educational system had three main educational groups of institutions.
- The most common institutions were medreses based on Arabic, teaching the Quran and using the method of memorization.
- The second type of institution was idadis (high schools) and sultanî schools, which were the reformist schools of the Tanzimat era.
- The last group included colleges and minority schools in foreign languages that used the latest teaching models in educating their pupils.
- The unification of education, along with the closure of the old-style universities, and a large-scale program of science transfer from Europe; education became an integrative system, aimed to alleviate poverty and used female education to establish gender equality.
- Turkish sociologist Şerif Mardin has noted that "Atatürk imposed the mandatory Latin alphabet in order to promote the national awareness of the Turks against a wider Muslim identity. It is also imperative to add that he hoped to relate Turkish nationalism to the modern civilization of Western Europe, which embraced the Latin alphabet."



## Summary

- *March 3, 1924*: The Unification of education
- *November 5, 1925*: Ankara Law School (then the Ankara University Faculty of Law) was opened.
- *January 1, 1928*: Establishment of Turkish Education Association.
- *November 1, 1928*: Adoption of the new Turkish alphabet.
- *1931*: Establishment of Turkish Historical Society for research on history
- *July 12, 1932*: Establishment of Turkish Language Association for regulating the Turkish language
- *May 31, 1933*: Regulation of the university education.