

2. 4. 8. University-Industry-Business Relations

Also, *industry-university relations* are another aspect. Although it is largely connected with the subject of marketization, the changing nature of the relation of higher education to industry and business earn a title of its own. Several authors report that relations between the university, industry and government at national, regional and local level existed all the time. However, the nature, along with the scope and magnitude of such relations seem to be transformed. In general, nature of those relations seems to turn into a fundamentally commercial one rather than a relation at the informal, personal on a base of scientific progress as fundamental understanding (Washburn 2006). Some scholars have focused on the issue as the coming into being of “academic entrepreneurship”. Urbano and Guerrero (2014) reviews more than ten different perspectives on the issue.

In the context of collaboration of the industry, government and university another important issue is University Technology Transfer (UTT) which mainly involved in the commercialization of the various products of higher education institutions. The main functions of UTT offices revolve around licensing and patenting, and therefore commercialization of university-based production.

The scope of commercialization goes as far to withholding of research results as publication delays seem to significantly be associated with academic-industry research relationships and engagement in commercialization of university research (Blumenthal et al 1997), to student exploitation.

The levels of these activities are also an important issue. Washburn (2006, p. xiii) acknowledges that even in the USA, only a few universities are capable of high-tech growth that many state governors dream about. She points out that only a very limited number of universities profit from technology licensing while the rest barely break even or lose money. Washburn (2006, p. 175) states that a few leading university-industry relationships like Boston’s Route 128 region, California’s Silicon Valley, and North Carolina’s Research Triangle Park become a dream for state planners to follow. Resulting in 390 technology diffusion programs in 1994, the period of 1970s and early 1980s was the context of a change in the USA higher education, where many older industrial regions seized on university-industry relationships as a way to spur growth.

The word “dream”, here, is more important than it looks. Quoting from Richard Florida, an expert on regional economic development, Washburn (2006) implies that the “giant technology-push experiment” based on “creating certain incentives for pumping out technologies, either in the form of intellectual property ownership, business incubation, or venture capital” would be “magically turn into economic growth” is missing and misleading.

Institutional, legal, and physical settings like university-industry research centers, and university-business partnership and technology transfer offices are all part of this vast issue.

Also, it is important to stress that the growing demand for knowledge and technology transfer from the higher education does not only come from the local and state governments, but also administrators and faculty of university, and students altogether (Libecap, 2005, p. ix-x). This is because, the process of proliferation or change of a certain set of social relations cannot, of course, bypass the higher education environment.

2. 4. 9. Changes in Educational Processes and Academic Structure

As it has been stated, the transformation of higher education has direct consequences on traditional aspects such as teaching and learning. One of the fundamental issues is the emergence of *teaching – research divide*.

The teaching was among the most fundamental aspects of higher education until concerns of application forge ahead. Smith & Webster, (1997, p. 13) express that “it is a clear matter of record that our most esteemed universities did not conduct research until the recent past; the phenomenon is relatively new, going back to at most a few decades.”. Indeed, Watson (2011, p. 538) connects this transformation to the fact that “academics returning to civilian life after the Second World War had participated in a large team-research project, or knew of this style of research from the experience of others” and state the keenness of introducing such research style into universities. It is also possible to view such a transformation with respect to student inclinations both in terms of supply and demand. Watson (2011, p. 530) states that “the science and technology subjects received an increasingly higher interest from the public and encouragement from the governments immediately after World War II”. *Vocational higher education*, sometimes also referred as upper secondary education, is another aspect. It had, and still has in many nations around the world, a major tendency of

escalation and enlarging. In connection with these, there is another issue which is generally termed as “*the crises of social sciences and/or humanities*” which corresponds to the neglect and downsizing of these disciplines. The eagerness to separate social sciences from the philosophy, as natural sciences did before, is as old as the emergence of social sciences where reflections on the relation between philosophy-natural sciences and social sciences are made (Windelband, 1980; Winch, 1990). Recently, on the other hand, the crises of the social sciences are related to the fact that humanities and social sciences are less commercially oriented -or orientable.

Also, in connection with the developments in information and communication technologies, off-campus teaching and virtualization of teaching is a part of the transformation. These innovations seem to fundamentally alter educational activities around the world. For example, the emergence of *distant learning* has been a turning point. Turning into reality in the 1970s in examples such as the “Open University”, the distant learning has increasingly incorporated into many national settings (Watson, 2011, p. 535)

There are also important trends in the academic structure that have been conceptualized. In line with the trends above such as the commercialization, the expectation from the academician appear to be altered. Symbolized by the idiom “*publish or perish*” the production belonging to academician’s work is more and more another source for the quantitative output of the academic industry. This is not only secured by international and national expectations, but the competitive drives seem to extend to every micro level. Bok (2015) states:

The pressure to publish has intensified even further because of the tendency in many universities to emphasize quantity over quality in evaluating the publication records of candidates for appointment and promotion (p. 329)

A very similar phenomenon is at work, for example, in the increasing use of adjunct faculty who are employed to teach courses as part-time workers rather than “producing the academic output”. According to statistics that Washburn (2006) supplies “44.5 percent of all faculty in higher-education was employed part-time in the USA in 2001.” In connection with that, the situation of graduate students is also another issue. Washburn (2006) reports that:

the students don’t feel like apprentices who could look for honorable, full time careers, as in the old times of academia. They feel exploited, with extra burdens of teaching assistantships to prolongue the time it takes to complete their Ph.D.s, knowing that their chances of landing

a full-time teaching position when they graduate, particularly in the humanities, are slim. (p. 211)

The increase of non-tenure track and the exploitation of graduate student can be explained by many causes, such as flexibility in advantage of the universities (meaning precarity on the side of the adjuncts and graduates), lowering teaching cost (more exploitation on the side of the academic workers), and increasing focus on other activities (more end-product, research activity and profit) etc. For us, the important thing is that these are all parallel in logic to the issues of higher education transformation analyzed in the chapter, like marketization. The actual effects of these changes in the academic structure on teaching, scientific activity, and quality, on the other hand, is a legitimate but difficult question.

2. 5. Conclusion

Overall, this chapter focused on the phenomenon of the *transformation of higher education* in conceptual terms. After a brief discussion of the concept of *transformation*, I have tried to summarize literature lines for an inquiry on the transformation of higher education. Although it is possible to argue that these lines are inseparable for an understanding of the phenomenon, most of the literature, in fact, flourish on only one of these lines. In fact, even within each line there are important disciplinary separations. As it has been hinted in the introduction chapter, this is probably due to the manifest broadness of the phenomenon, the increasing disciplinary specialization, and the nature of the higher education studies (which furnish a theme, not subject). Also, although there is an abundance on the use of the concept of transformation or a related concept with respect to higher education, there is actually an ambiguity. Many approaches try to understand it only from a limited perspective, while many other do not even try to understand the transformation but try to adopt to it or instrumentalize it. While my endeavor is clearly closer to seeking an understanding, what this thesis provides is merely a presentation of the conceptions of the transformation of higher education rather than a genuine effort to understand it. At any rate, there seem to be some lack of world-historical perspectives to understand it which is also symptomatic of the transformation itself.

Nevertheless, I have come up with three lines of inquiry for the issues of transformation of higher education: (expansion of HE), (knowledge-science), and (policy-administration).

Although there is no need to summarize these lines here, I would like to make out two points related to them.

First, a symptomatic reading of the frames of reference is needed since certain inquiry lines or some aspects of them are actually structured by the very transformation phenomena at hand. In other words, some aspects of the theoretical lines are symptomatic of the broader social transformations which are also related to the higher learning environment. For example, the third line (policy-administration) seem to be symptomatic of a free-market led competitive understanding of worldwide social relation. In fact, it is mostly an inquiry of the implementation of the total social transformation to higher education environment. Similarly, some works of the first line (expansion of HE) is reflective of the global and nation-state led democratic, equality-based principles of social arrangements. The second line (knowledge-science), on the other hand, seem to provide some of the most fruitful bases for an analysis of the transformation of higher education. However, the depth and scope of the arguments in this line are varying with respect to different approaches. In general, the passing away of this line is symptomatic of the transformation of higher education. Studies of knowledge seem to increasingly lose its reflective character and take an applied and economic character. Spring, (2015, p. 203) makes an elegant point targeting some of the perspectives outlined in the three lines of inquiry under a critical consideration of their symptomatic character:

the blinding paradigm of world culture theorists that obscures their worldview includes the assumption that mass schooling is good, that mass schooling will result in a better society, that educational research is based on a techno-rational process, that national leaders utilize techno-rational processes in planning school systems, and that religious considerations are unimportant for educational planning.(p. 203)

Second, certain conceptions seem to better encapsulate the phenomenon than others. For example, there is an outstanding use of a binary in the transformation of higher education discussions: quantity-quality. Although the latter is hugely ignored, this might be in fact another symptom of the transformation. Such a broad conceptual frame of quantity-quality is surprisingly meaningful considering it is largely referred with respect to scores of bodies and activities within the field of higher education. Above all, the stress on the economic character appears to be fundamental. In general, the activities, partners, and products of higher education environment increasingly enter the relations of economy in the narrow sense. Actually, the lines seem to relate to each other most at the economic arrangement, be

it material or rational, of the higher education. The institutional, national and global levels all seem to increasingly respond to the arrangements of a free market. While certainly the term economy here is used in the broad sense (in the sense of an embeddedness of the social in the economic), it is also true that such set of relations render everything in the higher education environment more exchangeable and transmit the character of exchange towards a narrow sense of the economy (as commodity exchange).

After the review of the literature lines, I went on to define some concepts frequently used in connection with other concepts with respect to the transformation of higher education. This was also for operational purposes and there was no purpose of understanding the phenomenon implied by the concepts.

Additionally, I would like to come up with a superficial definition of the phenomenon of the transformation. In connection with that, Jarausch's (1982) definition appears to be broad and useful:

Economic growth, social aspirations, cultural values and state policy, therefore served as essential motors of the transformation of higher learning across national frontiers. But their particular strength varied in each context, their force was buffered by the relative autonomy of educational institutions, and their impact was mediated by the conflicting decisions of corporate groups and individuals factors." (p. 29)

Here, I would also like to stress the various actors and their varying impact mentioned in Jarausch's definition. Actually, whatever the exact accuracy of the conception of the university as free intellectual spirits' open-ended orientation within the compass of its intrinsic value (Washburn, 2006), today's conception of higher education increasingly draws near to narrowly specialized career paths flowing externally. Louis Menand (taken from Washburn, 2006; p. 205) terms the former as "academic freedom" and oppose it to an "political free-for-all" in which "the decision about curricula, funding, employment, class practice, and scholarly merit are arrived at through a process of negotiation among competing interests" where "the power in such negotiations will not be wielded by the professors". However, it is important to see that, since the university, as all power, was never free from the externalities in the structure of social relations (Mücen, Topal, Yıldırım, 2016, p. 9-24), the fundamental questions are the changing nature of the relationalities and their affect with respect to the higher education.

Nevertheless, my definition of the phenomenon of the transformation of higher education can only be conceptual regarding the progression of this chapter. In brief, I would like to go only this far: the transformation of higher education is a manifest social change with a manifold character. It relates to an extensive range of socio-historical phenomena, which influence the very intellectual efforts to explain it. Some demographic, epistemological, and organizational aspects are internal to the changes implied by the transformation of higher education. Lastly, all these aspects appear to be underlined by an economy (in the broad sense) of relations in which various actors/actants effect and be affected in variable degrees. This very superficial definition would nevertheless is going to be useful in the conclusion chapter.

CHAPTER 3

THE CONDITIONS OF THE TRANSFORMATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN TURKEY

3. 1. Introduction

First of all, I must remark that the concept of “condition” submits a rather weak frame for the analysis of the transformation of higher education. If anything, the transformation of HE should be understood with respect to its *condition of possibilities*⁸ rather than by mere conditions and causes.

To put it very briefly, I hold that the transformation of higher education in the fashion of causations limits it to a specific linear setting of continuity. Posing the question of the transformation of higher education from such limited causation perspective would make it appear, necessarily, as either progression or persistence, and in fact, it seems to be the case for most of the implementing actors of the transformation. The transformation needs to work on a transcendental analysis with respect to the totality of the experience and needs to uncover discontinuities which alters the experience in historical terms. This is why Kant’s term of condition of possibility, and a somehow historical application of it by Foucault with the concept of *episteme* might have conceptual use for the study of the transformation of higher education. Nevertheless, legitimized by the methodological frame, this chapter has

⁸ To the extent that Kant referred to the *a priori* conditions of the experience, the term “condition of possibility” is distant from my use. The more the term takes the form of validity/objectivity of synthetic judgment, there are certain similarities. Foucault’s historical recast of the term in the form of *episteme* is much more in harmony with my use.

no such ends. It builds on revealing the conditions of the transformation of higher education in Turkey by a rough conception of the global transformation as it has been provided in the previous chapter. In connection with that, there is no possibility of putting all the relevant conditions. Rather, this part provides the conditions that emerge out of the analysis of the data at hand. In other words, this research comes across some international and national conditions articulate to, and in turn consolidate, the transformation of higher education in Turkey.

Three important conditions of the transformation of higher education in Turkey will be defined: First, the effect of the global actors” is argued to constitute an international condition. The second condition is called the legacy of higher education in Turkey. It relates to the historical setting of higher education and state in Turkey for Turkey’s policymaking in higher education. While some aspects of this section give various condition for the transformation of higher education in Turkey, it also provides a background for Turkey’s higher education. Third, special attention will be given to 2002-2018 era which is marked by the political party JDP. The contemporary political condition is argued to be the fundamental point of the mobilization, where the government’s willingness and power to rearrange Turkey’s higher education have intensified some aspects of the transformation of higher education. It is also important the stress that the first and second conditions accumulate into the last condition. In fact, although these lines are presented separately for analytical purposes, it has been observed that there are actually quite important interactions between all possible pairs of these three aspects as the conditions of the transformation.

Lastly, it is important to note here that this chapter does not adhere to a superficial *de jure* analysis. Especially with respect to empirical observation on the policy-making procedures in higher education, there emerged a *de facto* analysis. In this chapter, I wish to present an analysis with respect to both. Therefore, the axes under this section will be explained by a free combination of what is *in law* and what is *in practice*.

3. 2. International Conditions

I have already hinted the importance of the global-international debates around higher education in the previous chapter by a reference to some of the relevant literature. Leaving

behind the broad question of how the global and international effects on the nation are taking place, the influence of the International Organizations (IOs) in terms of the execution of the transformation of higher education stands out as one of the central issues.

First of all, it has been stated that many nations “implement” policies by monitoring some leading nations, or by a reference to the international. Different reports from Sub-Saharan Africa, Arab-speaking countries, South Asia and Latin America come to prove the point that the national issue of higher education has been realized by mechanisms of international policy-implementation and/or international consultancy (Teichler, 2008; p. 8-10). Most of these mechanisms arise with respect to international and transnational organizations, the giants of the new world, such as the European Union, United Nations, OECD, World Bank. In Table 1, you can observe the views and agendas of some of these IOs in higher education.

Throughout my research, I have observed that many changes regarding the higher education in Turkey are also associated with discourses and incentives of these four key IOs. Although the full assessment of such relationships cannot be made within my research design, there are many explicit economic and policy-based interventions which can be observed through policies and discourses in the field of national politics. It is also important to emphasize that these relations are not limited to the 2002-2018 period. As we will see, some of them are prior to it. Nevertheless, many of the direct outcomes resulting out of relations with international organizations seem to emerge after the 2000s. This is probably partly due to the beginning of Turkey’s EU accession. The candidate status is given in 1999, and the accession partnerships along with the harmonization processes gaining speed in the early 2000s resulted in many economic and policy-based arrangements. The problems of partnership in funds and policy alignment were so big that these resulted in the establishment of parliamentary committees (the Committee on EU Harmonization), and institutions (such as the Turkish National Agency) in addition to direct influence on older institutions (such as the State Planning Organization).

Table 1. IOs approach to higher education, taken from (Source: Shahjahan, 2012, p. 372)

Int. Org.	WB	OECD
Views on the role of higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential player for the knowledge economy • Capacity builder for responding to technological advances • Higher-order capacity builder necessary for development • Supporter of progress toward millennium development goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driver of economic competitiveness in knowledge economy • Contributor to social and economic development through: Human capital development • Construction, dissemination, and maintenance of knowledge
Current agenda and/or policy directions in higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional diversification and autonomy • Quality assurance and relevance • Equity mechanisms • Science and technology research and development capacity • Financial sustainability • Management capacity building • Information and communication technology (ICT) capacity building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with national economic and social goals • Quality assurance • Equality of opportunities and access • Research excellence and its relevance • Financial sustainability • Adequate supply of academic labor • Labor market relevance • Internationalization
Int. Org.	UNESCO	EU
Views on the role of higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key factor for cultural, economic, and social development in the knowledge society • Endogenous capacity builder • Promoter of human rights, sustainable development, democracy, peace, and justice • Supporter of progress toward Education For All (EFA) goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crucial player for global knowledge-based economy • Contributor to human capital development and job creation • New knowledge creator that transfers it to students and fosters innovation
Current agenda and/or policy directions in higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and research capacity building • Quality assurance • Equality of opportunities and access • Recognition of qualifications • Knowledge sharing across borders • Teacher training • Challenges of globalization • Use of ICTs in education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curricular reform • Recognition of qualifications • Institutional autonomy • Diversification of Funding • Quality assurance • Internationalization of HE institutions • Equity, access, and efficiency • Labor market and learner relevance • Academic mobility • Life-long learning

Interestingly, some of the first programs that Turkey participate, and had some of EU's budget, were educational programs such as Socrates (general education), Leonardo da Vinci (vocational education), and Youth. The economically driven partnerships were not limited to these programs. In fact, they were not limited to the EU. In general, economic relations and funding mostly carry over the European Union (mostly via Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance and European Investment Bank) and World Bank. Many of these relations end in direct policy implementations and programs aiming at parallelizing Turkey's education with EU's education policies and the World Bank's educational expectations. Especially in the EU's and World Banks agenda, there are direct references to encouraging privatization and increasing vocational higher education in Turkey. In these two fields, there are countless projects with huge funding and direct policy expectations.

World Bank seem to focus on the economic returns of education and its proposals to developing countries revolve around the question of how they can increase their capacity in global competition. The Bank (Strategic Directions for Higher Education in Turkey, 2007, p. 4) states in a report published 2007 (which is indeed a critical date as we will see in the next chapter), that tertiary education "is at a crossroads in Turkey and is central to many of the country's objectives for growth and competitiveness" and offer a market-based approach to higher education.

The early 2000s was also the start of the Bologna process in Turkey whose effects on Turkey's higher education cannot be overstated. By adapting the Lisbon Recognition Convention developed by the initiatives of the Council of Europe and UNESCO, it targets to create a European Region for the higher education. Turkey's involvement in the Bologna process starts in 2001 and speed up later within many related programs and projects. The process is directly related to modules such as "Qualifications Framework for European Higher Education Area" which has been focused after 2006 (fully certified in 2010) and "European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance" focused after 2005. The direct academic and organizational effect in Turkey's higher education contain almost all processes of higher education from learning, evaluation and knowledge production through adaptations of Council of Higher Education (YÖK) and each higher education institution (Erdoğan, 2010). It is important to stress the enthusiasm towards these reforms from all decision-makers and policy implementers of higher education in Turkey. Şimşek conveys

that after the fruitless policy attempt in higher education in 2003, Prime Minister Erdoğan instructed to take Bologna criteria as the base for later policies (Şimşek, 2006, p. 587).

The international programs of research and development funding and cooperation also directly affect the higher education activities in Turkey. For example, Arıkan (2003) states that universities had some %70 of the resources that have been used by Turkey provided by the 6th framework program of the EU (2003-2007 period). After that, research and development programs grew larger in extent and bigger in funding. In the 2007-2013 period, Turkey was a part of EU's 7th framework program which was the biggest civil research and development project of its time⁹. As of today, programs such as Horizon 2020 (2014-2020 period) which stresses economic growth and global competition in Europe and EUREKA which stress market and commercialization-based research in a pan-European setting are being distributed by TÜBİTAK. TÜBİTAK is the distributing agency for many other international programs on business-industry relations and entrepreneurship, in addition to the academic international programs.

In addition to direct economic and policy-based interactions which could only be outlined here, the importance of the discursive level should also be emphasized. On the discursive level, many terms and targets of the politics and policies of higher education change in Turkey seem to be almost directly taken from the international organizations. There are many references to the EU, OECD, UN, World Bank in terms of their discourses on higher education. I believe it is even possible to observe, through other researches, that the discourse of the politicians change directly after there is a change of discourses of these international organizations.

In general, a part of these discourses appears to diffuse out of publications and research made by these IOs. In politics and in policy-making debates, there are many references to the assessments and targets defined within these publications and research. It is interesting to see that the discourses and policy direction created in the international context, is seen as both a target and a justification in itself by the Turkish government. Even in committee debates, the consensus seems to be achieved on the ground of the international orientations.

⁹ Source: <https://www.ab.gov.tr/45035.html>

However, I will not focus much on the discursive level here, since the next chapter does present a great amount of the subject.

All in all, organizations and arrangements above the national level play very important roles in shaping the transformation of higher education in the national context. According to my own conceptions, there are economic aspects regarding affinities, assistances, and profitable partnerships; organizational aspects such as policy arrangements, monitoring and scrutiny; and a discursive aspect which through an unlistable implicit and explicit statements, calls and re-doctrinations. They become manifest on many levels of the transformation.

Before passing to the national conditions, I would like to stress two points about the international conditions analyzed here. First, due to the peculiarities of the national context, the ideas and agendas of the international organizations might not necessarily transfer to the national context even in direct policy influence. Leuze et al (2008) in their effort to enlighten the interplay between IOs and national effects in education policies state that “the degree to which nation-states will respond to these international stimuli is likely to be mediated by national *transformation capacities*, most prominently veto players and nationally rooted ideas of education”.

Second, and in connection with the first point, we have to be aware of the fact that the potential disharmony goes beyond the peculiarities of the national context. Jakobi (2009, p. 148) who works on the case of lifelong learning states that it is a policy that “can be found in many countries irrespective of their national preconditions”. However, he stresses that “lifelong learning is for many countries merely a symbol of modern education policy, an element that signifies they are modern societies”, and “shows that countries are not only reacting to national requirements”.

These two points are important as they open the question of the use of the discourses and implementations from a global focality into a national context. Indeed, in general terms, there might be a gap between the intention and the outcome in the interplay of the international and the national.

3. 3. National Conditions

I have already stressed that in many cases around the world, governments can play important roles at the critical turning points of the transformation of higher education. In that respect, the title “national factors” suggest that the transformation of higher education in Turkey also has been implemented partly due to facilitation from the side of the state.

3. 3. 1. The Legacy of Higher Education

One dimension of the national factors go back prior to 2002-2018 period where the society-higher education relations forms a background for the transformation. This background is mostly based on certain political relations where higher education at large is implicated in some institutional and ideological context. Here, as the legacy, I will present the duration of two decades before the beginning of the JDP rule to give some hints about the condition before it was drastically changed especially after 2007.

3. 3. 1. 1. A Brief History

Although the history of modern higher education in Turkey goes back to 19th-century trials such as the “Darülfünun” with some struggles of modernization (see: Somel, 2001) it takes the form of a modern university mostly after the establishment of the Republic. After the establishment of the Republic, the higher education has been re-arranged by all means including organizational and institutional structures, academic and scientific arrangement and more. In the first period, and indeed even thereafter, the higher education institutions have been seen as motors of intellectual and material development fundamental to securing of the perpetuity of the state. Such history indeed falls parallel to the whole re-arrangement of the Ottoman legacy in the form of a constitutional and democratic republic. In such a context, the higher education institutions which were deemed to be among the fundamental institutions of the nation had been an important social and political issue from the beginning. Indeed, higher education in Turkey was never just a public service but also a ground for politics and political power relations.

The system of higher education that the JDP government have been handed down has been formed by various policy-based state arrangements at such crucial dates like 1933, 1960, 1982. Without doubt, the last and maybe the most important fundamental constitutional and political arrangement is the law no 2457 and the establishment of the Council of Higher Education (CoHE, *Turkish: YÖK*) in the aftermath of the military coup in 1980. The “University Law” (law no 1750) enacted in 1973 has been replaced by that new law which also dictated the establishment of the CoHE. The CoHE, established in 1981, acquired almost full power in issues of administration, discipline, the financial structure of higher education. It was given many tasks from the university’s hands such as rector elections, dean appointments, staff arrangements, and curriculums. In fact, it has been widely stated that the context of military tutelage of the emergence of CoHE and the law no 2457 resulted in a quite centralized and hierarchical organization of higher education (Tekeli, 2010, p. 194; 270-2). Implemented in a repressive fashion, the law no 2457 and CoHE crystallized this centralized and hierarchical structure in such a way that later on became very difficult to change.

Since 1987 almost all government programs have announced a promise of re-evaluation and amendment of the law no 2547 and the CoHE, along with many promises of increasing the autonomy of universities (Şimşek, 2006, p. 16). In fact, after the immediate fear of the military regime ended, many prominent social and political figures seemed to share this idea in common. Unfortunately, many attempts ended in frustration. There have been only one critical, yet only partially successful amendment before JDP came to power (in 1992, law no 3826) which was nowhere near to solve the problem of autonomy of higher education institutions. Although it has some deficiencies in its evaluation, the OECD table below shows the overall deficiency of higher education autonomy by the year 2003.

Table 3.1 Extent of autonomy experienced by universities¹

Institutions are free to:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Own their buildings and equipment	Borrow funds	Spend budgets to achieve their objectives	Set academic structure/course content	Employ and dismiss academic staff ²	Set salaries ²	Decide size of student enrolment ³	Decide level of tuition fees
Mexico	●	▸	●	●	●	▸	●	●
Netherlands	●	●	●	▸	●	●	●	▸
Poland	●	●	●	●	●	▸	●	▸
Australia	●	▸	●	●	●	●	▸	▸
Ireland	●	▸	●	●	●	▸	●	▸
United Kingdom	●	▸	●	●	●	●	▸	▸
Denmark	▸	●	●	▸	●	▸	●	▸
Sweden	▸	▸	●	●	●	●	▸	▸
Norway	▸	▸	●	●	●	▸	●	▸
Finland	▸	▸	●	▸	●	●	▸	▸
Austria	▸	▸	●	●	●	●	▸	▸
Korea (national – public)			▸	▸		▸	●	
Turkey				▸	▸		▸	
Japan (national – public)				▸	▸			

Legend: Aspects in which institutions:
● have autonomy
▸ have autonomy in some respects (see the Appendix for details).

Figure 2: University autonomy, taken from OECD (2003, p. 63).

3. 3. 1. 2. The Council of Higher Education

The Ministry of National Education is the main executive body in terms of the administration of almost all aspects of education in Turkey. It has its own segmented structure with many specialized organs. Even though the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) can be seen under the Ministry of National Education as an organ, it is actually a state institution established by the law no 2547 which made it the main executive organ in the affairs of higher education. To be clear, the Minister of National Education is above the CoHE in hierarchy in practice. However, the CoHE is a constitutionally defined institution which is legally connected to the Presidency of the Republic. Therefore, its authority in issues of higher education is indisputable. It is influential in the process of preparation of policies and is referred to as the most specialized expert on the issues of higher education. It also has a say in legislation since the head of the council or a representative is present in many committee meetings and parliamentary discussions regarding the higher education.

As of 2018, the administration of the CoHE consists of a general board of 22 members. 7 of them are directly assigned by the President of the Republic, 7 of them are senior bureaucrats chosen by the Council of Ministers, 1 from Turkish Armed Forces General Staff and 7 from Inter-University Board (IUB, *Turkish: ÜAK*). The head of the general board is also chosen by the President of the Republic.

The regulations concerning the organization of the CoHE makes it clear that it is quite influenced by the executive branch of the state as 14 members directly appointed by the executive bodies. Along with the President of the Republic, the governments are quite influential on changing compositions of the CoHE and therefore, on its actions. However, President of the Republic and the Council of Ministers might not adhere to similar political ideas. In other words, the partition regarding the president and the ministers thought to work as a mechanism of checks and balances. The intention behind such specific arrangement was to lessen the power of the government (elected by the popular vote, and therefore possibly representing a singular political view) and increase the power of the president who was considered to be the last guarantee perpetuation of the state. Also, the Council of Ministers itself is not necessarily homogenous in terms of agendas and political ideas. In other words, the composition of the Council of Ministers, and therefore its influence on the CoHE is bound to the electoral results.

3. 3. 1. 3. The Power Relations Surrounding the Higher Education Before JDP

While the power of CoHE does not require any more words to explain, the power relations around the arrangement of higher education have some other actors. Actually, the very establishment of CoHE symbolized one of the partitions of power. Tekeli (2010, p. 206-7), referring to Gencay Şaylan's words, state that, while the CoHE was being established "with an aim to create a system which would not be affected by the politicians' decisions, and therefore in the bill, the university was connected to the President of the State, not to the political power". Although it does change within different government compositions, the political power in Şaylan's words refers mostly to the political party-based legislative and executive bodies. Most of the time it is due to a share of legislative seats and ministry compositions that the actor or the actors of such power is defined.

Nevertheless, there has been another de facto political power in addition to the President of the Republic and the governmental composition. The universities, especially prior to the establishment of CoHE, have been among important actors as it has been stated earlier. Although I will not go into a detailed discussion, the power of the universities has been commonly associated with the “ruling elite” born out in the context of the establishment of the republic (Erdem, 2003, p. 198-201). Although it had also been related to a context of larger politics of the country including the students, the power universities can also be understood in connection with an “academic oligarchy” referring to Clark’s “triangle of coordination” (Clark, 1983).

The academic oligarchy is, of course, a generalizing term, as its composition is continuously changing within the flow of Turkey’s political history and with respect to the different institutional context. In general, the mechanisms of appointment seem to be quite important in indicating the shape of politics around higher education. Actually, one can say that the Turkish context offers an exemplary case that demonstrates the political nature of the quasi-neutral bureaucrats, which is a whole subject of discussion in the public administration theories. Nevertheless, although rapidly decreased after the 1980 military coup, the universities had a certain power in the structure of politics around higher education. To illustrate the complex fabric of political relations around higher education prior to contemporary context, I would like to point out some important events during 1987-1992. Actually, it was in this period that the most important policy interventions on higher education took place between after the context of 1983 and before the Justice and Development Party’s coming to power.

The growing reactions to the law no 2547 and the CoHE first resulted in decree no 301 in 1987 making some administrative changes in the CoHE regarding issues such as the appointments and office durations of the members. However, the dispute was far from over. Tekeli (2010, p. 288-92) reports that one of the main conflicts was arising out of the dispute between the CoHE and the government during these years. For example, there were proposals to bring the CoHE under the authority of the Ministry of National Education. In 1991 when 49th government has been established, the higher education continued to be an important debate (Tekeli, 2010, p. 295-302). In the process of discussions between many figures and institutions, many proposals to decrease the power of the CoHE was at the scene. However, the CoHE had a strong stand and also had support from most of the university

rectors (Tekeli, 2010, p. 298). The support from the university rectors was indeed interesting considering that with its powers the CoHE function to limit the autonomy of higher education. However, it has been stated that the office of rector was not only under the influence of the CoHE which had a central role in the appointments, but also rectors were also a part of the centralized hierarchy of higher education. Tekeli (2010, p. 299) quotes a statement made by Ersin Kalaycıoğlu in 1992 who frankly criticize the situation by stating that he finds “it humiliating to discuss a bunch of nonsensical proposals which has no meaning other than defending what the CoHE and its dependent rectors do, and serving the purpose of preserving their offices and therefore interests”.

Nevertheless, Tekeli (2010, p. 299-300) reports another important bill that was passed in 1992 which was intended as far as deactivating the CoHE in rector elections. However, the result was less effective than projected at the beginning, due to a split between political parties DYP and SHP, which has been noted as a conflict between coalition parties. In the end, although the university elections which were abolished in 1981 came back, the power and authority of the CoHE and the President of the Republic were still ample. The university could only provide 6 rector candidates by its internal elections, for CoHE to eliminate 3 of them on its own will, and the President to choose one among these three candidates.

The morals of the story are simple: The higher education in Turkey was a highly political area with changing compositions of power spreading on a wide array of governmental compositions, the President, the CoHE and the university rectors. The simplest and most common frame of analysis of higher education which emphasizes the state-market-academy triangle (Clark, 1983) seem to say little, at least in relation to the Turkish context prior to 2002. Of course, Clark had little political perspective, but in the context where different offices and institutions of the state occupied the center of the political struggles regarding the higher education, we should at least refer to a quadrangle of “the government composition-the market-the CoHE-the universities”. This is because using terms state in its sole representation would be so misleading that the three components of this quadrangle would fall under it. Moreover, as we have seen, different pairs of the state component might come to show synergies from time to time, but also at other times they may contradict with each other.

What Clarke calls the market, had little power in the whole arrangement of higher education especially prior to 1980s. Of course, it is up to how you conceptualize the market that its

share of this power relations shows up. For example, from a political economy approach, one can regard structural adjustment processes and direct/indirect involvements of Western nations and IOs during the emergence of Turkey's higher education as a subject relating to the conception of market. Nevertheless, until 1983 there was even no university that was not founded by the state. The statist view was very powerful. Even after 1983 only non-profit foundation universities would be allowed to apply the common private university model in the West.

The governments, on the other hand, seem to have the biggest influence but in varying ways mostly due to its politically and ideologically changeable composition. Prior to JDP, there were experiences of governments taking place on various scales of *homogenous to heterogeneous* (mostly in terms of political party structures) and *long-lasting to rapidly-changing*. Also, the place of the President of the Republic is a very important subject. To put it very briefly, although the President is the head of the executive in theory, in political practice the President can be seen in a *close-distant* scale to the ministerial composition of the executive in terms of political ideas and agendas. Nevertheless, the idea is that the government which symbolizes an important power in politics and policies of higher education is open to very different compositions. This composition, in turn, quite influential in higher education especially with respect to the appointments made to universities and the CoHE.

The universities, on the other hand, do also create a problem in understanding their place in these political relations. It is widely reflected that the university in Turkey in administrative terms is itself quite hierarchical both internally and externally, and their status is quite internal to power relations in the political arena (Değirmenciöğlü, 2007; Erdem, 2003). Still, the term university in the above quadrangle might be conceptualized with respect to academics, might include students, or refer mostly to the rectors. It varies spatially and temporally. Although the status changes even between different higher education institutions, rectors seem to have a decisive administrative power within that hierarchy. The appointment of the rectors, in turn, is an important political power designating when political power intervenes as to determine the university's relationship with society.

In the end, the legacy of higher education before the JDP, as it will be clear in the next part, present complex relations revolving around the changing government compositions, the CoHE, and the universities. The remarkable point seems to be the internal conflict within

the state and the remnants of the university autonomy provided mostly by the 1961 constitution which started to decay after the 1982 constitution in the vicinities of the CoHE.

3.3.2. The Contemporary Political Condition

The results of the 3 November election in 2002 marks an important governmental transformation in Turkey. From this date on the Justice and Development Party (JDP, *Turkish: AKP*) had the majority in the parliament and was able to form all the governments¹⁰. Marked by this ample legislative and executive power, the JDP era signifies a “dominant-party rule” which makes up a common explanation ground for many aspects of the realization of the transformation of higher education. It is important to see that such a fabric of government in Turkey is very different, for example, from some earlier coalition party periods. Needless to say, discussions of tutelage were always internal to issues of Turkish politics. However, through a democracy vested in party politics, contemporary Turkey represents a case of mobility through political leading. Akkoyunlu & Öktem (2016) explains:

The tutelary arrangement that ensured the coexistence of democratic and tutelary institutions in a state of mutual fragility survived for over half a century thanks to the relatively stable geopolitical alignments of the cold war era. The realignment of the early 2000s led to the erosion of the societal power and the institutional dominance of the tutelary actors, opening space for elite-level power struggles to capture and reshape state institutions. (p. 519)

There are many aspects of this political party-based mobility. First, the dominant-party rule signifies a quantitative and qualitative dominance of one party in almost all functions of governing and policymaking. Second, the key positions of the state are quite important in terms of the fundamental impact of the government on processes such as policymaking, organization, and appointment. The analysis of the key positions and appointments will help us to figure out the demarcation lines of a dominant-party rule. Third, the existence of various formal/informal strategies in governing allows the governments to adopt certain practices that allow them to assume control over areas which were defined to be more-or-less outside of its direct authority. This point indicates that while the government regimes in parliamentary democracies are defined by laws which are quite similar in many countries,

¹⁰ With the exception of June 2015 elections which has been “overcome” by a re-election in November 2015.

the deeper politics of governing may change especially depending on the flexible nature of institutions and process of parliamentary democracy.

3. 3. 2. 1. Dominant Party Rule

The concept “dominant party” once was a prevalent concept for the analysis of political parties and party systems all over the world in the post-World War II era. Differentiating it from one-party rules, many scholars came up with different definitions and observations. Using Sartori’s conceptualization, Bogaards & Boucek (2010, p. 45) state that “a dominant party is the party that is the most effective in determining the system of interactions resulting from inter-party competition”. Definitions extend from stress on rates of votes to numbers of seats in legislative branch, to distribution of executive offices and the position of the opposition parties (Bogaards, 2004, p. 176). In general, the idea of effectiveness of one party in legislative and executive branches of the government seem to mark a general consensus among different definition. Also, Sartori (1976) argues that such dominant party can even come to define a special type of party system called the predominant party system. He (Sartori 2005, as cited in Bogaards & Boucek, 2010, p. 6) defines that “a predominant-party system is such to the extent that, and as long as, its major party is consistently supported by a winning majority (the simple majority of seats) of the voters”.

Both the conception of dominant party and predominant party system seem to be relevant to the Turkish case at certain periods after the 1950s -before which the better term was a one-party rule. Nevertheless, the concept seems to have become very relevant in the periods between 2002-2018¹¹. In fact, although there are many different analytical approaches and operationalization of the concept (for an overview see: Boucek & Bogaards, 2010, p. 1-19), the case of JDP fits most of the dominant party definitions and accordingly defined party systems in the literature. Some scholars started to make the same observation increasingly after 2007 (Sayari, 2007; Çarkoğlu, 2009; Müftüler-Baş & Keyman, 2012; Gümüşçü, 2013; Musil, 2015). By a very brief look, JDP had majority of seats and all active ministerial offices

¹¹ I believe the dominant party rule is still the de-facto case after the new election system and the elections in 2018. However, this would require a far more detailed analysis and is left outside of this study.

in this period. In Table 2 we can see the results of the elections after 2002 with respect to votes, seats, and offices of government.

Table 2: Party votes and legislative seats by elections (Source: Supreme Election Council Web Database)

Election Date	JDP Vote (%)	JDP Legisl. Seats (%)	RPP Vote (%)	RPP Legisl. Seats (%)	NMP Vote (%)	NMP Legisl. Seats (%)	PDP Vote (%)	PDP Legislative Seats (%)
November 3, 2002	34,28%	66,00%	19,42%	32,36%	8,35%	0,00%	-	-
July 22, 2007	46,58%	62,00%	20,90%	20,36%	14,30%	12,91%	-	-
June 12, 2011	49,83%	59,45%	25,98%	24,55%	13,01%	9,64%	-	-
June 7, 2015*	40,87%	46,91%	24,95%	24,00%	16,29%	14,55%	13,12%	14,55%
November 1, 2015	49,50%	57,64%	25,32%	24,36%	11,90%	7,27%	10,76%	10,73%

*No government formation

The table above demonstrates a part of what the concept dominant party stands for. Nevertheless, I would like to stress two points.

First, a dominant party rule does not necessarily mean an authoritative rule. For example, the party might have a good democratic representation of the national constituency which might make it problematic to associate the dominant party with an authoritative rule. Similarly, the system of governing might possess some strong checks and balances mechanisms which might balance the power of the ruling party. However, especially after 2012, there has been increasingly more arguments of the authoritative rule of JDP governments (Özbudun, 2014; Esen & Gumuscu, 2016). There are concepts such as illiberal democracy (Öktem & Akkoyunlu, 2016) and delegative democracy (Taş, 2015). Also, another observation from Table 2 is that in all elections, and especially in the 2003 election which marks the turning point, there is more legislative (and therefore executive) power than the votes should have reflected. In other words, the degree of democratic representation is problematic. In fact, in 2003, JDP got %26 of the total voter support, and %34 of the total votes, but %66 of legislative seats. Sayari (2007) explains this point:

... the representational biases inherent in the Turkish electoral system exerted a strong influence on the changing strengths of parties in the parliament. The Turkish electoral system—proportional representation with multimember districts under the d'Hondt formula and a 10 percent national threshold that parties must pass to qualify for seats—had a strong mechanical effect in translating votes into seats: the JDP won nearly two-thirds of the seats with about one-third of the vote; the CHP [RPP] controlled the remaining one-third of the parliamentary seats with only one-fifth of the popular vote, and close to 45 percent of the votes were effectively wasted since they went to parties that failed to clear the 10 percent barrier. The electoral system clearly distorted the proportionality of the party representation in the parliament by granting the JDP and, to a lesser degree, the CHP, large bonuses in terms of seats and, more importantly, by denying their competitors parliamentary representation. (p. 200-1)

Second, the continuity of the electoral success and political power -which might be partly due to having such power, resulted in an ever consolidation of governmental power in the JDP party. Although this does not mean that the cadres and the agendas of the party do not change, it signalizes the point that the dominant-party rule of the JDP indicates a homogenous and long-lasting government rule. Moreover, although there was an important change of cadres, the continuity of de facto leadership and high-party discipline inside the party proves the point.

It is important to stress that the dominant party structure is closely associated with the policy-making power of JDP which is closely associated with the policies made on higher education. Figure 3 explains the standard policy-making procedure (except decree-based lawmaking), we can see there are three key processes if we exclude veto power of the president of the republic for now. These are the Council of Ministries and the individual ministers, the Plenary (parliamentary support for the policy), and the Parliamentary Committees.

The effect of the plenary in the sense of legislative simple majority requires not much proving of the point other than stating that majority of the policy changes can be made with a simple majority (more than half of the votes). In Table 2, we can see that JDP had always such simple majority since 2002, although 2/3 of the seats which is necessary for constitutional changes was not always there. Additionally, there is an issue of “majoritarianism” which has been argued to take a form of “disregard the views of and indeed trample on the minority” (Dalacoura & Seckinelgin, 2015, p. 6). I would like to state that; the fact of a majority-based discourse and aggregation-based understanding of democracy were among my observations throughout this research. Many instances and

conversations not only show an inability of non-JDP members to alter the bills but also there were many instances where the result of voting itself was used as a tool to support JDP agenda against opposing deliberations. In other words, sometimes deliberations are left secondary to aggregative voting. Regardless of how we explain this, say, by high party discipline, majoritarianism or by something else, it is clear that the power of a political party may easily result in a by-passing of the logic of deliberation to some degree even in places identified as sources of deliberation (the committee or the plenary). The situation directly relates to the contexts where the party becomes simple majority in number and the powerful in rank as is the case with contemporary Turkish government.

Also, the power of the Council of Ministries and the individual ministries in policymaking is another important point to stress. In practice, almost as a rule, Prime Ministers are leaders of the political parties, and Ministers are chosen among parliament members of the majority political parties. For example, all Prime Ministers, all Ministers and therefore all Ministers of National Education since 2002 formed out of the JDP members.

Leaving aside the parliamentary majority and ministerial composition which are fundamental actors, the parliamentary committees also play important roles in policymaking. Briefly put, the committee responsible for education policies is “the Committee on National Education, Culture, Youth and Sport” which consists of 26 parliamentary members. Its meetings are made by the participation of the majority of the committee members and some other variable guests including related executives, voluntary parliament members, invited consultants and persons of interest, etc. Although the main government delegation present at the meetings is from the Ministry of National Education (often the Minister or his/her deputy), delegation from the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) is also present especially in issues of Higher Education.

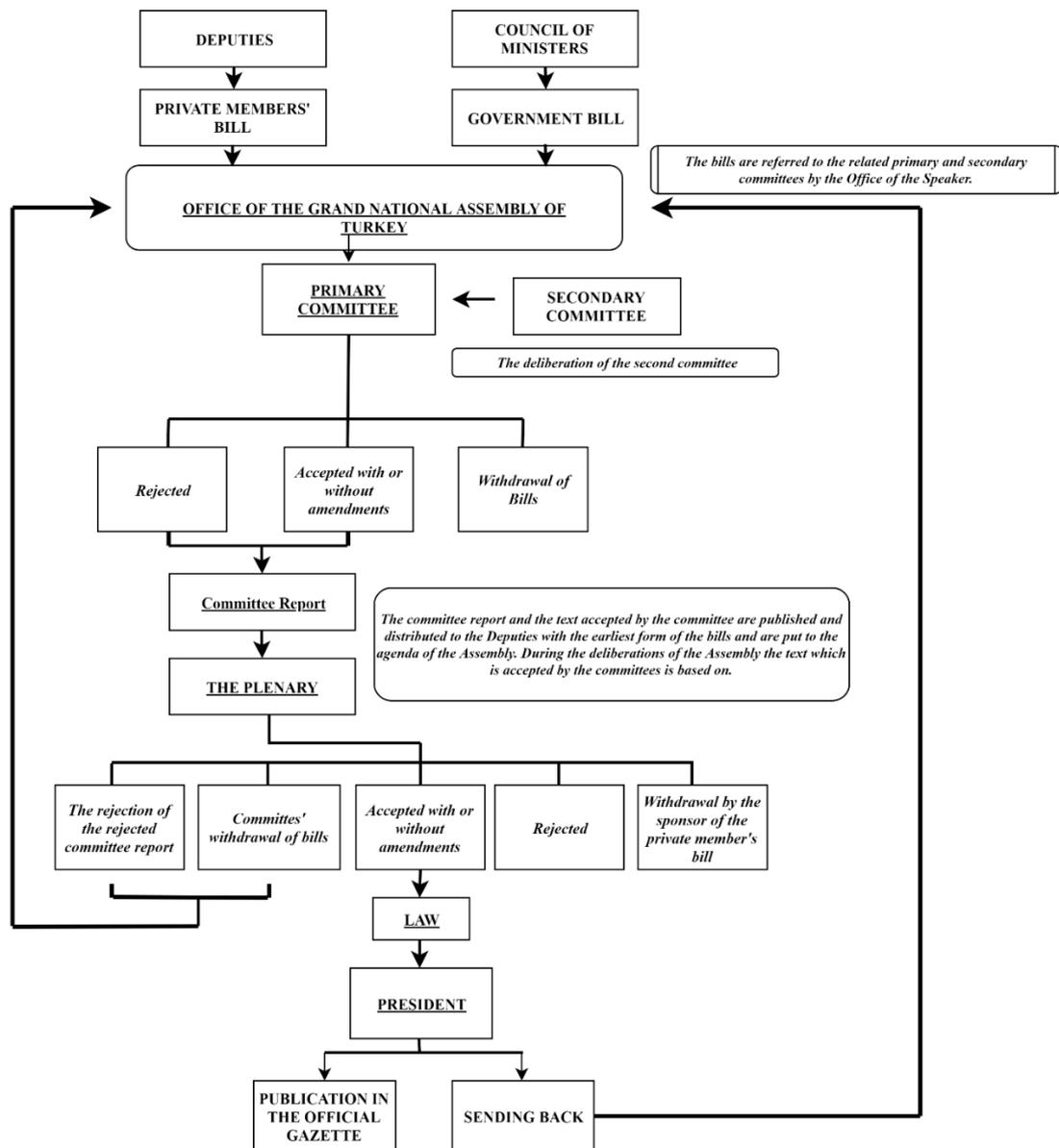


Figure 3. Policymaking process deduced from TBMM website.

The Committee on National Education, Culture, Youth and Sport gather on different frequencies depending on the amount of work assigned to them. The time and number of meetings are quite variable. The Committee consists of approximately 25 members including the special ranks of chairman, a deputy chairman, a spokesman, and a clerk. As of 2018, 15 of the members are JDP members -reflecting the proportional weight of their political part in the grand assembly, while 6 of them from Republican People's Party (RPP), 3 from Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) and 2 from Nationalist Movement Party (NMP). Apart from the number of members, the proportional weight is also reflected within the hierarchy

among the committee since all four special ranks are filled by JDP MPs. The formal and informal indicators prove the important place of the head of the committee (and his deputy, in case he is absent) in the hierarchy. The deliberations inside the committee have large power on making alterations, deletions, and additions to bills. In the end, all those processes are determined by simple majority-based on voting.

To summarize, the dominant-party rule starting early in JDP's rule¹² and the infusion of such rule into every important aspect of the policy-making process is evident. The policies around higher education, are directly influenced by the political party and the governments formed out of it.

3. 3. 2. 2. Key Positions of the State Apparatus and the Appointments

Along with securing a dominant party environment, a prerequisite of the policy changes required for the transformation of the higher education in politics took place at the level of offices of the state and relevant higher education institutions.

The office of the President of the Republic was one of the best scenes to witness the national political transition to contemporary form. By the time JDP came to power in 2002, the president's office was occupied by Ahmet Necdet Sezer who was known for his background in constitutional law and the military. He was and is still being, mentioned as a very careful examiner of policies as a former president of Constitutional Court and a secular representative of the Turkish state tradition. In 2007 when Abdullah Gül, who is a co-founder of JDP, has become the President to replace Ahmet Necdet Sezer, JDP's executive power has increased substantially.

The term "veto players" by Tsebelis (2002) which evoked attention in modern comparative studies of government, seems to offer a quite fitting frame for understanding the dynamics behind such power transition. The President of the Republic is one of the main veto-players in Turkish government along with the Constitutional Court. In his position of presidency,

¹² It is difficult to determine whether 2003 or 2007 marks the start of the dominant-party rule. This is due to a need for better analysis of the positions of other parties, key positions and institutions of the state, and the use of the temporal conception as a condition. There is no need for this study to answer such questions.

Ahmet Necdet Sezer was a quite important veto-player between 2002 and 2007. In fact, although there is not study work on the issue, the period between 2002-2007 is marked by an all-time record in Turkey's political history in the number of vetoes. Rhodes (2008) states that Tsebelis's theory shows that:

Governments, in order to change policies, must get individual actors or veto-players to agree. Institutional veto-players are specified by the constitution and partisan veto-players are specified by the party system. Each country has a set of veto-players, with specific ideological distance between them, and a degree of cohesion. This configuration is the status quo. (p. 338)

Many of the policies on education and higher education made by the JDP government have been vetoed in the 2002-2007 period. However, the veto can be overridden by the parliamentary majority, and in fact many of the vetoed policies sent back to the president without no or minor change. The president, by constitution, has no authority to veto the same bill for a second time. Still, by evoking public reaction, by the power of delaying, and especially with the involvement of the Constitutional Court, which is another veto player, vetoes played a very important part in the 2002-2007 period as we will see in the next chapter. Still, in the period between 2002-2007, there were many instances where JDP could implement some policies against reactions, by overriding vetoes and some other strategies of governing that I will explain in the next subtitle. Moreover, after Abdullah Gül's coming to the office, policies that were postponed for years by countless vetoes and rejections from various courts have been turned into laws within weeks.

It is also important to point out that the power and importance of the veto players seem to be very well known and instrumental to politicians. Many debates reveal extra-bureaucracy discourses attributing a political position or an ideologic character to the president. Needless to say, it can be observed from the plenary minutes that such accusations, in various forms, have been reversed between the power and the opposition parties after 2007.

Lastly, as the key positions of the state such as the President of the Republic have been a scene to certain political struggles, so have many institutions of higher education such as the CoHE. It is important to remind that such political struggles are internal to the modern government which deliberately produce certain checks and balances mechanisms (in this case appointment restraints and variations in durations of office). Nevertheless, some of these mechanisms can lose their impetus in the case of vast democratic representation, configurations of power such as the dominant party rule, or in continuity of power. Although

they took time, the appointments of the institutions along with certain strategies of governing are vital especially in understanding the administrative issues related to transformation of higher education.

3. 3. 2. 3. Strategies of Governing

Within whatever conceptualization it might be analyzed, the political regime under JDP rule brings forth arguments of an “increased disregard for rule of law in the country” (Müftüler-Baç, 2015). Although this is a vast issue requiring many sub-debates, I would like to point out some aspects of governing with regard to the governmental practices under JDP rule which were influential in achieving a power of implementation that facilitate the transformation of higher education.

To put it very briefly, there are some formal and informal uses of governmental strategies which produce practical backdoors for the idealistic assumptions law. The dilemma also comes from the very basic ideal assumption of neutral bureaucracy, and the practice that draws apart from it. In fact, it was possible to observe from the official parliamentary documents that the idealistic assumptions of bureaucracy and law can account only a part of the governance. However, my point is to demonstrate which strategies have been used in political and policy-making processes that facilitate the transformation of higher education, as their exact utility will be concrete in the next chapter.

3. 3. 2. 3. 1. Legislative - Executive Relations

These relations are very important in governing since one can suggest that it is exactly the relation between these two branches of the government that defines the governing process or a government system. The politics, which, said to be under the hegemony of political parties in Turkey (Özbudun, 2001, p. 261) can shape these relations on the borders of the separation of powers. Through all governmental periods between 2002-2018, there are important reciprocal legislative-executive relations which were difficult to assume during the previous coalition party periods. These relations occur as positive relations between legislative and executive bodies both in the preparation of the bills and also in the process

of turning bills to laws. There are many cases where executive-legislative relations take the form of alliances toward agenda implementation.

For example, it is observed that in some laws such as the law no 7100 in 2018, the President of the Republic who was also the leader of the ruling party, has first brought the issue to policy agenda. Although some of the content had been a problem and brought into the attention of the legislation many times before, there were 11 years of silence which was broken by the president's statement. The bill comes as a private bill by the deputy chairman of JDP and MP Mustafa Elitaş indicating an in-party repercussion of the request. However, minutes clearly suggest that the bill has been prepared not by the MP, but mostly by the government with the involvement of some JDP MPs. In this example where such an important bill is prepared and made law within only a month, the executive-legislative relation involving the president of the republic is very clear. Other political parties seem to be involved in the preparation process only with respect to formal procedures like the committee and the plenary rather than the preparation. Even then, these involvements result in either minor or no alteration from their side.

Many bills enacting the establishment of new universities (Appendix B) also demonstrate the point. One can see important connections between government bills and JDP MP's private bills. In bills 1/943, 2/2313, 2/2314 the announcements by the legislators before government bills arise and hastily articulations of MP requests to government bills clearly illustrates close relations between legislators and executives. Another example is the bill no 1/893 which turned into bill no 2/1945 within one month and passed. This case shows how a government bill can turn into a bill by a private JDP member and pass. This is indeed very difficult to observe unless a strong kind of relationship was established between the government and the JDP members. Moreover, there are instances where previous Minister of Education himself illustrates the smoothness and effectualness of such relations (Committee Minutes, 2018a, p. 20) and where JDP members are clearly accepted to be more knowledgeable about the establishment of new universities than opposition party members. From the opposition's part, such facts turn into criticism and distrust even to the committees. For example, Eskisehir MP Gaye Usluer complains (Committee Minutes, 2018a, p. 15) about how she lost faith in the committee since she learns about the new university in Eskisehir not by a bill in the committee, but through the gossips of JDP MPs who are not even members of the committee. While it may be open to a governmental or political

discussion, the head of the committee evaluates the situation as ordinary and states that it is because of the JDP's discussions occurring prior to the bill (Committee Minutes, 2018a, p. 18). Similarly, in bills 1/716 and 1/721 concerning establishment of six universities, it is the government who both gives the bill and who takes it away to wait for the reasons of further "maturation" of the projects (Committee Minutes, 2017, p. 14). Although there are many instances where legislators from the opposition parties criticize these delays (Tarsus'a üniversite şoku, 2016), JDP members seem to be aware and supportive of the situation.

If we look at the issue of legislative-executive relations historically, there seems to be an opposite tendency shortly before 2003. Bills on the issue of re-arrangement of assistant professor and rector elections seem to be discrete and they illustrate an enormous non-communication. The issues are discussed both in the committee and at the plenary with different parties and executives bring forth sometimes close sometimes distant ideas. Indeed, bills demonstrate important disagreements. Most of these bills are void and null, since, even some processes like committee discussions are complete, there is at least one-party opposition against the new regulation (be it the cabinet, the president, or other political parties) preventing the finalization of most of the bills. It is clear that while the separation of power was much better, there were some indecisions regarding the policies recently before JDP's rule. However, this is a mere observation and should not be taken as a comment on the "ideal" workings of the democratic systems; as such, there is no indicator for evaluating the decisions made, even if we believe that there is a difference with respect to pace.

Lastly, there is an important leadership/chief executive issue in the contemporary Turkish government. The term chief executive which connote the power vested in a person within a formal governmental structure, mainly a Prime Minister or a President. Ethnidge & Hendelman (2008, p. 204) state that "in nearly all political systems the chief officer is the most widely recognized and most powerful governmental figure". In the case of Turkey, the discussion of leadership is made with reference to Recep Tayyip Erdogan who was the Prime Minister during 2003-2014 and President of the Republic since 2014. If we were to exceed formal logic of debates about the chief executive and bring the issue to a consolidation of power in a single person, it would be much more fitting to the Turkish case.

The issue can also be addressed in Turkey within a frame called the thesis of "presidentialization". For Poguntke and Webb (2005, p. 1) presidentialization denominates a process by which regimes are becoming more presidential in their actual practice without,

in most cases, changing their formal structure, that is, their regime-type. Many have already argued that, before his becoming the President, the PM Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was already the “de facto president” (İnsel, 2012; Tezkan, 2012) of Turkey. Others have also stated with direct reference to the term presidentialization that Turkish political system is in such a process of de-facto presidentialization now and then, especially with reference to executive structure (Uslu, 2015). In fact, the observations were so rightful that in 2018 the de facto situation has gained a de jure legitimization within a set of constitutional arrangements.

Ethnidge & Hendelman (2008, p. 218) asserts that in democratic systems where executive leadership derives from the representative legitimate power of the “people” or the “majority”, “executives justify certain policy choices on the basis of representative authority, asserting that the majority elected them to make those choices”.

In the case of establishment of new universities, it can be observed that it was Recep Tayyip Erdogan who had voiced the mobilization for a quantitative increase. Not only MPs clearly express it (Committee Minutes, 2018a), but also first announcements of these universities always lead to President Erdogan as electoral promises. There is little doubt that the establishment of a new university is a good election strategy especially in Anatolian cities and stem from the populist promises for getting more votes. This tendency seems to be also internalized by the Council of Higher Education since the head of the council Sarac clearly express (Konya’ya yeni..., 2018) that “instructions of the establishment of a new university in Konya” comes from the president and the council starts to work on it immediately.

Many criticisms come from the opposition parties toward the leadership structure in governing especially after President Erdogan took control of his political party while also in duty as a President. Same lines of criticism are also observable with respect to policies. An RPP deputy complaint about the power of President Tayyip Erdogan in influencing the outcome of the bill which also illustrates his despair:

The transformation of assistant professor rank into lecturer doctor, none of you has nothing to do about it. I know because Mr. President showed up and made this statement. We know him for fifteen years. After he made this statement no one has the power to change this including the Minister who is present here. I wish it wasn’t the case. (Committee Minutes, 2018b, p. 18)

Whether or not this criticism reflects the facts fully, Erdogan himself reveal what kind of a perspective he takes on the new policy when he opens the discussion for the first time

We have given this directive to the Head of the Council of Higher Education. Requirements of associate degree will also be re-arranged according to this and most likely will be sent to parliament and we will solve this problem too. (Erdogan tarih verdi, 2018)

All in all, findings suggest that the thinning of the lines between legislature and executive owes itself to political party dominance in the government and a homogeneity created inside the political party, with whatever way it has been achieved.

3. 3. 2. 3. 2. Decrees and Omnibus Laws

Two policy-making instruments are also vital to understand the policy changes in the contemporary context: decree (Turkish: *kanun hükmünde kararname*) and omnibus law (Turkish: *torba kanun*). Although there are different contexts, they are generally referred with respect to procedural and democratic concerns about policymaking. Sinclair-Webb (2015) through her observations of the contemporary law-making culture in Turkey - especially with respect to EU harmonization, state that ‘a legalistic approach has substituted for a real commitment to reform [on rights]’ where certain strategies of law-making and a parliamentary majority results in laws lacking proper debate and scrutiny from the parliamentarians, and even from the EU. Encountering “a problematic mode of law-making” she states (Sinclair-Webb, 2015) the following:

... in a process lacking transparency and without proper debate were merged into unwieldy omnibus bills, which turned out to be impenetrable to the parliamentarians who passed them. The bills typically contained substantive and highly significant changes to some laws buried among technical or procedural revisions of others, making it difficult to second guess what was intended with a law and to separate out the important aspects.” (p. 17)

Turkish omnibus laws can be defined as “laws which prescribe a change in a number of unrelated laws even though there is no necessity or direct relation to those laws” (Ergül, 2013, p. 38). They came to prominence during JDP governments’ first EU harmonization processes and become increasingly in the making of policies of all kinds later. Hazama & Iba (2016, 317) in their review and research on the omnibus laws between 2002-2016 period, find out that they are being used in a problematic and harmful manner. They provide good proof that “the single-party majority government strategically shields its legislative agenda from opposition scrutiny until the final stage of legislation” using the omnibus bills.

Decrees, on the other hand, are neither specific to JDP governments nor problematic by nature. However, it is commonly accepted that they are being used in terms of a by-passing of legislatures (Scheier, 2006, p. 137) and can result in weak political and judicial control in order to achieve less public attention and more pace.

A decree can be defined as a regulatory operation subject to legislative supervision and is at the level of law in the hierarchy of norms. They are made by the Council of Ministers with the authority taken from the constitution directly or with a limited transformation of authority from the legislative (Gözler, 2005: 312). Decrees should be evaluated in terms of two categories: Decrees on ordinary periods (article 91) and decrees on the state of emergencies or under martial law (article 121/3 – 122/2-3). In ordinary periods decrees demanded by Council of Ministers should be approved by the parliament with an authorization law. Extra-ordinary decrees, on the other hand, are made under the presidency of the President and they do not require any prior approval from the parliament (Gözler, 2005: 316). Especially in the context of the state of emergency in Turkey (between July 2016 – July 2018) decrees had been very common and functional. Findings of a report on recent decrees written in January 2018 (Akca et al, 2018) shows that a total of 30 State of Emergency Decrees comprising 1194 articles in aggregate, were issued, leading to over 1000 amendments in national legislation since the State of Emergency was declared. Additionally, decrees in state of emergencies are usually expected to be approved by the parliament within 30 days (Gözler, 2000: 789) and they are not subject to the supervision of Constitutional Court before the approval of the parliament (Gözler, 2000: 806)

Decrees, although they are less in quantity compared to standard laws, can include great numbers of items going into various aspects of governing and they tend to be aimed at important issues. There is also no doubt that bypassing legislative branch points out how these decrees are uniquely important in passing difficult laws and making important amendments. Nevertheless, the scope of effect of decrees can only be measured with respect to empirical studies design to do so.

As we will see, both omnibus laws and decrees have been used especially in issues of administrative importance in higher education in Turkey. There are many oppositions both from the public and the opposition parties against the use of such methods. However, probably partly due to their “effectiveness” governments kept using them.

3. 3. 2. 3. 3. Informal Strategies of Governing

Although it is rather difficult to exhaust them under defined terms, there are also some less-known strategies of rather an informal character. Some of them seem to be quite effective for JDP's political agenda of re-structuring Turkey's higher education, as it will be clear in the next chapter.

For example, in the absence of the possibility of a rejection, a political actor can deny carrying out an action -such as appointment, just by not signing a paper. Scheier (2006, p. 141) states "inaction" "can be as effective as vetoes" and is "more difficult to detect". He adds:

But nonenforcement is not simply a matter of weakness and corruption. It is also an artifact of executive power. In some cases, the most decisive act of the executive is to not act at all. A president who is hostile to an agency's mission can effectively cripple it by appointing as directors people hostile to its mission, or by simply not filling key vacancies. (Scheier, 2006, p. 141)

In the next chapter, it will be clear from his own words that the PM Erdoğan was exactly using this method in the case of TÜBİTAK, an important higher education institution in Turkey.

Another quirky strategy is to come up with certain law arrangements aiming at an ineffective organization of a process or institution. For example, in the case of appointing rectors to newly established 15 universities in 2006, the government came up with a law (law no 5556 and 5573) suggesting that $\frac{3}{4}$ of the CoHE members have to agree on each rector candidate¹³.

This example actually provides proof that some of these informal strategies are on the thin line of legal-illegal use of political power. This arrangement has been first vetoed by the president, and after a second attempt, denied by the Constitutional Court. However, as Constitutional Court's decision does not work in retrospect, the rectors remained in their positions.

¹³ I am unable to find fitting conceptions for various strategies such as this one. Regardless of my inadequacy in terms of the details of the relevant literature, I believe this proves the point that the number and potential of informal strategies have no end.

Although it was not possible to observe from this research whether informal strategies are specific to the contemporary political situation in Turkey or not, many of these strategies have been frequently pointed out by opposition parties with words such as “cunningness”, “tricks” in the contemporary context.

3. 4. Conclusion

To summarize, this chapter is reserved for the presentation of the conditions of the transformation of higher education in 2002-2018. First, some international factors which mostly relate to interactions with international organizations have been explained. Although the full character of the contribution of the international/global factors cannot be studied by this thesis, the interactions with international organizations have economic, policy-based, and discursive influences which seem to contribute to the process of transformation. They seem to gain speed in the early 2000s and we witness an eagerness from the side of Turkey to adopt. The EU harmonization, particularly, seems to cause the most prominent effect by direct policy expectations. Carrying the dream of membership for long years, Turkey takes impositions and criteria conveyed by the EU serious and implemented many policies in such inclining.

Second, national factors have been described. The first part of the national factors focuses on state-higher education relations prior to JDP’s coming to power in 2002. In general, it has been proved that especially in the context after 1980, Turkey’s higher education was a scene to complex political relations. Although altering with respect to different periods and settings, the state proved to be an important actor in the organization of higher education especially due to the CoHE. However, the political relations surrounding the higher education proved to be even more complex in which there have been many actors. In many cases, the state was in internal conflict with respect to its own composition, and with that of the CoHE.

The last part of the national factors focused on contemporary politics in Turkey. A dominant party rule due to a specific setting of legislative and executive branches of the government marks an important political shift. Especially after 2007 by the change of the president, JDP gained an ample policymaking power that it could find only partially in the

2003-2007 period. Both in the 2003-2007 period and also after 2007, JDP's formal and informal strategies in policymaking proved to be effective. Many of these strategies were internal to a re-arrangement of higher education especially with respect to a political structuring.

The thinning of the separation of powers under the dominant party rule and other aspects such as the close formal/informal legislative-executive relationship, leadership, and use of informal strategies seem to work effectively in policymaking. The combination of such political condition is particularly important in terms of a policy agenda implementation from the side of the political party. Scheier (2006, p. 133) indicates that party promises "most readily transfer into programs in parliamentary systems with single-party majority cabinets". In other words, through governmental and executive power on the higher education, JDP could transfer its policy agenda effectively to implementation. Especially after 2007, legislative and executive branches and the CoHE seem to work in close association and alliance. The political parties have sometimes directly manifest sometimes concealed agendas, ideologies, and strategies. In the context of a high party-discipline, and the national policy-making power under a relative homogenous setting the contemporary political condition worked as a gate-opener for the transformation. Indeed, JDP's agenda was compatible to a neo-liberal understanding of governing and also carried a desire to restructure the whole organization which then fused the transformation of higher education as we will see in the next chapter.

Lastly, I would like to stress that the period after the early 2000s witnessed a combining of both the global condition and the national political condition. There is a good possibility that the fundamental transformation in Turkey's higher education was also due to the combination of these two factors.

CHAPTER 4

AN OUTLINE OF THE CHANGES WITHIN THE TURKISH HIGHER EDUCATION BETWEEN 2002-2018

4. 1. Introduction

In this chapter an extensive outline of 2002-2018 period in Turkey's higher education will be provided. As it has been stated earlier, the primary sources of plenary minutes, committee minutes, and policies supported by secondary data such as relevant statistics and newspaper documents will be used. Although many issues could be discussed in more detail, with more data and more empirical evidence, a balance have been achieved in the interest of brevity.

It is also important to stress that the following presentation of the analysis have no purposive focus on the issues that have been outlined in Chapter 2. The analysis here covers and outline of almost all the issues emerged out of the research with respect to their prominence, although some rather irrelevant issues have been completely taken out (see methodology in Chapter 1). In other words, this is an analysis of the Turkish case without the presupposition that it is harmonious with the concept of the transformation of higher education presented in Chapter 2. The conformity of the aspects and degrees of their consistency will be analyzed in the conclusion chapter.

There are four main topics under this analysis which corresponds shaping out of an analytical separation of the themes.

4. 2. Administrative Policies on Higher Education

Through the period of sixteen years after 2002, administrative policies and changes were at the center of a “deep-seated transformation” and they were quite decisive on many other aspects of the unfolding of the advent of changes. Justice and Development Party’s discourses on a “deep-seated transformation” in higher education have started as early as 2002 (Gül: Üniversiteler de..., 2002). The Prime Minister Erdoğan in his first manifesto in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT) said:

Increasing the quality of education, providing a genuine equality of opportunity in education, and ensuring that the field of education is not an arena for ideological fight are extremely important for raising competent and talented individuals. Providing a service of education that is appropriate to needs is bound to effective education and employment planning of institutions of education, including the higher education. For such reasons, our government is going to launch a deep seated reform movement in the field of education. As is the case for every field, a re-structuring in the Turkish National Education system will be provided to proceed to a human-centered, qualified model of education in line with social needs and contemporary civilization requirements. Our government is going to effectuate arrangements ensuring that the universities are education and research institutions in the contemporary sense. The Council of Higher Education (CoHE) is going to have a structure appropriate to providing co-ordination between the universities and designating standards: universities are going to reach the level of being education and research institutions with administrative and academic autonomy, where the academic staff and the students perform scientific activities freely. (Plenary Minutes, 18 March 2003)

However, at the first crossroads of this plan of re-structuring, the JDP run into certain obstacles. A struggle involving different political parties, public figures, academicians and various institutions have begun as early as 2003. The plan, whatever it was, proved to be difficult to realize in the first governmental period (2002-2007). This period is particularly important since the first attempts seem to cause two outcomes: First, JDP experienced the delicacies of a transformation of the higher education in this period, while also taking some half-victorious results to be used in the later periods. Second, the whole period seems to be resulted in a change of JDP’s discourse and rigidification of its agendas in the following periods.

In the parliament, one of the first issues in educational arena emerge out of the analysis, is the accusations and discussions around spoils systems and caderisation in the vast organization of National Education. The accusations start as soon as 2003 and such discussions turned out to be one of the common topics of the parliamentary and otherwise discussions on education and higher education. In general, my observation is that these

discussions exacerbated in certain periods where an increasingly pro-JDP fabric in the official administrative and educational organization has been achieved through both legal powers and informal strategies.

For this study, however, there is not much use in a focus on the issue of caderisation except one: spoils systems which is probably not specific to the JDP government¹⁴ is a powerful strategy of implementing certain policy directions in a more-or-less unified way. This is because implementation of an agenda would be otherwise difficult in a manifold and complex system of nation-wide education. In other words, this finding is complementary to the argument that the JDP government was a condition that facilitated the transformation of higher education also through its administrative power in national education. Apart from this, I have no intention of trying to reach concrete conclusions about the accusations of caderisation.

However, the issue of appointments is a whole another story. It constitutes one of the key issues of administrative policies in higher education. In addition to obvious importance of making the appointment, re-regulations of appointment processes through policies can be powerful tools of flexing the defined ways of limited and unpermitted appointments. In fact, when the JDP commence a vast policy change initiative in higher education as early as 2003, the interventions on administrative policies came both in the form of appointments and re-regulation of appointment procedures.

Nevertheless, two general findings should be outlined before going into the details of changes in the administrative fabric of the higher education. First, especially in the period between 2003-2007, JDP government seem to legitimize its attempt on the administrative re-structuring with respect to breaking up of a status quo. In the process of discussions of a new law of CoHE and the law no 2547, Erdoğan says:

Some people yell, and say “caderisation, caderisation”. Let me explain the cause of their uneasiness: we have stirred up the hornet’s nest... Because they were taking advantage there. They are uncomfortable because their interest is going to be cut. (Şimşek, 2006, p. 70)

¹⁴ Democratic Left Party (DSP) who had the office of Ministry of National Education immediately before the JDP period, have also been accused of caderisation in terms of hundreds of top-end, thousands of medium-level officers in the organization of education. However, Ince (2006, p. 29-31) claims that JDP’s caderisation was roughly ten times larger than that of DSP’s.

The same discourse can be seen in Abdullah Gül's statement in 2002 with the exact use of the term status quo:

Deep-seated reforms and deep-seated transformations are going to be made in Turkey. Universities are also going to have their share from these. (...) Consequently, we are not going to allow for status quo in Turkey. Universities shall be among the main institutions which say no to status quo. They also need to experience massive changes. (Gül: Üniversiteler de..., 2002).

Second, and somehow partly contradictory to the first point, the JDP seem to follow the steps of the "legacy" of Turkey's higher education in administrative policies, and moreover, end up creating another centralized higher education environment. For example, in many administrative policy change attempts, JDP MPs and the ministers show earlier (and problematic) policies as examples, to legitimize their own policy attempts. In a discussion on JDP's attempt to reserve the sole power of appointments of rectors in newly established universities to the Prime Minister Erdoğan, an RPP MP summarizes the situation:

At the beginning of my words, I would like to touch upon some remarks of the ruling party members. Ruling party speakers first show the practice in 1992 as an example, and they said, "in 1992 the government pursued some attitude, why can't we do the same now?". Now there is an important qualitative difference. In 1992, the opposition and the power were in a total agreement, a reconciliation. This was also valid for the President. And there is one more thing. The practice in 1992 was an abuse, an ill example, and ill examples need not to be followed, they can't serve as examples. (Plenary Minutes, 11 Jan. 2007)

JDP's turnabout is not limited to use of problematic policies. In fact, if one takes a look at the picture from above, the higher education today is even more centralized than it was 16 years ago. In other words, although no one can truly know if the JDP was sincere in its first discourses, their deeds prove to create another state of affairs. Such points, and the "differences" of this state of affairs from the early status-quo will be discussed in the conclusion chapter. Now, let us look how the administrative changes have been carried out in detail.

4. 2. 1. Chief Institutions of Higher Education

There are four important institutions related to higher education in Turkey: The CoHE (YÖK), TÜBİTAK, ÜAK (IUC), and TÜBA (TAS). We will see below that there has been important administrative intervention and policy change regarding two of these institutions

during 2002-2018 period. As it has been hinted above, the period roughly between 2002-2007 corresponds to a struggle in terms of administration of these institutions. Throughout the period the JDP's appointment power rises through use of policies and decrees. Especially after Abdullah Gül came to the office of the President of the Republic in 2007, JDP governments acquired ample administrative power. Gradually through the last years of 2000s, the struggles of political power, fights between the JDP and these institutions, and the JDP's critical discourse about these institutions left their place to relations of "alliance" and "friendship", better say, an indisputable dominance of the JDP in these institutions.

4. 2. 1. 1. The Council of Higher Education (CoHE, Turkish: *YÖK*)

As mentioned above, JDP shared the critical discourse on CoHE even in its first party program, and started a huge bill attempt as early as 2003. The first sketches of this bill included more than 90 articles and envisaged changes in many fundamental aspects of higher education including constitutional changes (Şimşek, 2006, p. 120-173). Some of the changes seem to reduce the undemocratic aspects of the former law. However, it also included many aspects that increase the power of the government by decreasing the power of the President of the Republic (the president was Ahmet Necdet Sezer at the time). It is a complex bill with manifold outcomes in the issue of centralization-autonomy. Maybe most importantly, the law had some temporary articles which dictate that the terms of office of all the ÜAK and the CoHE members end by this law. Similarly, the terms of office of some rectors (who were in their second term in the office) were also ending. The bill actually proposed that a rector can only be elected one time. Moreover, the terms of office of all deans, chairs, and directors were also ending by this law. Such regenerative aspect of the bill was actually among the most reacted and debated issues. Indeed, the whole bill sparked a nation-wide interest and dispute.

However, as the debates and discussions with the CoHE, the ÜAK and rectors were continuing, this pages-long bill kept getting shorter and shorter. By 2004, the bill draft dropped to some 15 articles which still had the important administrative and degenerative aspects. Şimşek, one of the chief officers in the whole process of preparing the bill, states that, while the work was in progress the JDP MPs intervened and the PM Erdoğan said something along the lines of "come to terms with rectors, and just made a 5-6 article short,

narrow bill and get along with this for now” (Şimşek, 2006, p. 480). And indeed, this was the result. In May 2004, the bill finally turned into a law (law no 5171) with only 12 articles. The President of the Republic, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, vetoed and the JDP government did not bother to send it back. The whole enterprise that started in 2003 was ended with almost no real policy consequence and delayed until after 2007.

Although he does not use these exact words, Şimşek believes that the whole failure of the enterprise was partly due to the status quo of the higher education in Turkey as the name of the book “Red line: The CoHE” (Turkish: *Kırmızı Çizgi YÖK*) signify. He is probably partly right. However, without saying anything explicitly, he also shadows out to the other side of the coin that I want to stress more. The JDP government aimed an administrative massacre, if it would be a correct word, and wanted to save the CoHE for later, rather than eliminating it. In fact, the whole bill, although also envisaged some important democratization aspects, was still resulting in a centralized yet regenerated administration of the higher education. In the end, as the instruction from Erdoğan and the JDP member’s intervention suggest, the JDP government saw that the “deep-seated transformation” cannot come that easy. Moreover, as we will see, from this date on, the JDP agenda would be altered towards an instrumentalization of chief institutions of higher education rather than changing or weakening them.

In 2007, the new president Abdullah Gül appointed Yusuf Ziya Özcan to the presidency of the CoHE. The plenary minutes show that while the JDP members had many critical discourses on the previous CoHE president Erdoğan Teziç, from this point on, there would be no criticism made towards Özcan and in fact against any of the following presidents. Similarly, while the RPP had no direct criticism towards Teziç, criticisms and question towards Özcan would start immediately (Plenary Minutes, 2 Jan. 2008). By 2007, we will witness some last criticisms of the CoHE from the side of the JDP, probably due to the continuing internal struggles inside the council. Below, you can see the last criticism in the official plenary minutes, that is made by an JDP member in the plenary:

My dear friends, the personnel cadre is the same, the system of getting the personnel is defined for all institutions, and the budget is the same, but what is important is this: The management of the Council of Higher Education have fought with every ruling party in ten years’ time, and they couldn’t get any result from these fight (applauses from the JDP seats). The CoHE have no worthwhile project to the date, no new project came except some talks of quality. Turkish higher education certainly needs a new structuring, a new law, and a new institution that can keep step with this government. (Plenary Minutes, 09 Dec. 2007)

From this point on up until today, there has been some couple of laws made concerning the structure of CoHE. Especially after 2016, laws such as 7033, 7100 and 7141 increased the scope and extent of the power and control of CoHE on higher education rather than weakening it. In fact, half of the sub-departments and councils in the organizational chart of the institution have been established after 2007. Moreover, the law no 7033 in 2017 gave CoHE the authority to even establish its own internal sub-departments. Along with enhancing of internal councils and sub-departments, new tasks and authorities have been given to the institution after 2007. For example, its authority on both public and foundation universities (7141 article no 3 and 4), rector appointments, academic and organizational structure have been increased. Many opposition MPs had serious criticism towards the fact that the institution has grown to its largest status since the day it has been established:

Before coming to the power, you have suffered from the CoHE and promised to change it on every channel. Now the CoHE is your stick to use. The CoHE law that you could not agree among yourselves in eleven years, is also still has not been shared with the public. (Plenary Minutes, 01 July 2013)

In the end, the CoHE continues to be a very key institution in Turkey's higher education with an ever-increased control. Today, the government and the CoHE seem to work in close association. As Zühal Topçu and many opposition party MPs stated, a regulative reform which would limit the CoHE's powers, and cut its governmental affiliation has never come. There is almost no policy even relating to the promises on turning it into only a regulative institution and promises of increasing the autonomy of higher education institutions turned out to be nothing but words. The opposite tendency of centralization, increased control and power, on the other hand, is internal to many policies especially after 2007.

4. 2. 2. 2. TÜBİTAK (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey)

The administrative policies on the TÜBİTAK which is the chief institution for the higher education activities of science, development, and technology in Turkey have a peculiar character. Especially between 2003-2007 period administrative policies on this institution was a scene to a set of events which might made its stamp on Turkish political history.

Prior to JDP's coming to power, the law on TÜBİTAK defines it is an autonomous institution which carried out its elections on the Science Board and president internally. However,

through some use of certain formal and informal strategies we mentioned in the previous chapter, election process inside TÜBİTAK has been gradually replaced by appointment from governments.

The first and most critical action is made by PM Erdoğan in 2003. In 1.05.2003 the Science Board re-chooses Namık Pak as the president. While the law makes it clear that the PM (Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, at the time) had the duty of only the approving of elected TÜBİTAK president and the members of the Science Board, the PM Erdoğan changes the game. Although the result of the election was sent to Prime Minister's office for approval in 06.05.2003, the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan did not sign the appointment until the time of termination of the current president's office time, which is 31.05.2003. The institution which now operate without a president tries to continue within an acting president. In 20.09.2003 the institution makes the election of 6 members of its Science Board as their office duration is also about to end. However, the PM makes a similar move and does not approve the election of these members.

On a TV program Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was asked about why he was not signing the TÜBİTAK by-law. Erdoğan explained that the attorney of the institution is not a member of the Science Board of TÜBİTAK and the election was illegal since the attorney of the institution should be a member of the science committee by law. While the problems of election are clearly a result of his own actions, there is also a use of uncertainty in the law. After all, the law is defined for the election process and there is no certainty in the situation of a necessary acting president. The law says that an attorney should at least have the qualifications of someone who can be appointed to the science committee. However, it does not say anything about whether or not an acting president should be a member of the Science Board. The attorney Prof. Dr. Tuğrul Tankut actually met all of the conditions. The real reasons were implicit in the continuation of the Erdoğan's answer to the question. He added:

Is a Prime Minister there [to approve] when you send him someone? Is he there in the office for this reason? I am not obligated to approve everything you sent to me. I am the prime Minister of this country and such power has been given to me. (İnce, 2006, p. 67-68)

Interestingly, the TÜBİTAK law makes it clear that it is a Prime Minister's duty to approve whoever the TÜBİTAK choose and the law does not give any powers to the Prime Minister for the election or of the rejection of the elected. There is no formal "not to approve authority" and this is an informal inaction strategy of the executive. One way or the other,

this rejection results in the termination of office durations of 6 members of the Science Board, leaving only 6 active members left within the institution. The aftermath is an institution without a president and only 6 active members which is below the number of necessary members for a decision or election to take place: a deadlock.

Later, in 09.10.2003 a simple bill is prepared by the JDP government which suggested that, since there is not enough members, there is no president of the institution, the PM Erdoğan should appoint 6 Science Board Members and the president of the institution. Despite heavy criticism from the opposition, the bill was accepted in the parliament by JDP votes in 1.12.2003. However, President of the Republic Ahmet Necdet Sezer vetoed the bill with serious criticisms and send it back to the parliament. While harsh criticisms continued to occur, JDP MPs passed the bill again, with almost no change and send it back to the President of the Republic. Having no power of vetoing the same bill a second time, Ahmet Necdet Sezer signed the law but took it to the Constitutional Court. Constitutional Court agreed with the criticisms and canceled the law.

Later, almost the same attempt was made by JDP government by a bill turning into law in 04.05.2005. The history recurred by the veto of the Ahmet Necdet Sezer and Constitutional Court decision to cancel the law in 18 May 2005. Moreover, the judicial reactions to JDP's moves were not limited to Constitutional Court. First, the Administrative Court found ex-president Kemal Pak's application just and cancelled the government's appointments. Since Administrative Court had the power of retrospective overriding (while the Constitutional Court does not) the appointed president of the institution, Nükhet Yetiş acted as a co-president after this date. Similarly, in 2006, the Prime Minister Erdoğan himself found guilty of not listening the court's decision in a civil court and convicted to pay a compensation.

After 4 bills, 2 vetoes and 2 Constitutional Court rejections, and many other court cancellations the struggle continued, but this time with full success. For example, in 2008 by the law no 5798 the internal elections have been lifted and the appointments have been regulated in a way that give direct power to various institutions such as the CoHE and mostly to the Prime Minister, along with many such changes. In 2011 by the decree law no 635 it is directly brought under the ministry of industry and technology along with Turkish Academy of Sciences (TAS, Turkish: *TÜBA*).

In the whole process JDP members openly argued that TÜBİTAK was not autonomous in the first place and needed regulation. Their arguments were going as far as to say that “TÜBİTAK has become a family company” (Plenary Minutes, 29 April, 2005, p. 656). Although I do not intend to do an analysis of the institution prior to 2002, it is clear that the JDP provided no solution to the problem of autonomy. Their conduct can clearly be criticized on the basis that they only transferred the authority, rather than forming a new regulation for autonomy or implementing better mechanism with some checks and balances.

4. 2. 2. The Universities and the Rectors

The rector appointment process after 1992 have been explained in the previous chapter. To put it short, there was an election system inside the university. 6 candidates are chosen by the elections were being sent to the CoHE to be narrowed down to 3, and the final decision was left to the President. Although the election inside university symbolizes an institutional autonomy, the power of the CoHE and the President should be stressed. In fact, the candidate with the least votes can be elected as the rector.

However, the law on rector elections made in 1992 left something unclear. The law defined how to make election and appointment of the rectors, but it did not say anything about how the process will work on newly established universities. In fact, when 15 new universities established in 2006, another debate started on how to appoint the rectors of these universities. JDP government came up with bills giving huge powers to the ministry of National Education and the Prime Minister Erdoğan in directly choosing the rectors. In fact, the government proposed a bill in which the CoHE had been left with no authority in the appointment process. The government tried to legitimize this practice on the grounds that it has been done before by other governments. However, since the CoHE’s authority was defined by the constitutions, vetoes came both from the President Ahmet Necdet Sezer and the Constitutional Court. In another bill the JDP government proposed that the CoHE should give $\frac{3}{4}$ vote consent on each rector. It was indeed interesting because normally the CoHE was making decision by simple majority (more than half). The bill actually projected that it would prevent the CoHE from giving decisions and dictated that if the CoHE cannot come to a decision, the authority of appointment was transferred to the ministry. An opposition MP explains:

8. “The CoHE board is 21 people, it can come together with 14 members, and can make a decision by simple majority”. That is to say, the CoHE board can make decisions with 8 people. Now you say that three fourths majority, 16 members, is needed for the appointment of rectors in newly established universities. So...7 of the members are appointed by the government and 14 remains when you subtract them. Can the CoHE make a decision like this? And the President says “the quorum of decision based on the total number of members is too high and makes the performing of the election unfeasible. Moreover, the legislator anticipates that such election cannot be carried out and say, “if you can’t do it in one month, the authority of election transfers to the Ministry of National Education”. The legislator also see that this system will not work. (Plenary Minutes, 11 Jan. 2007)

It was no surprise that this law was also vetoed. However, after the veto player president Ahmet Necdet Sezer was replaced by Abdullah Gül, JDP government was able to define the law on the rector appointments in newly founded universities. By the law no 5772 in 2008, the authority in rector appointments on newly established public universities was given to the CoHE and the president. At that point one thing was clear. In 2002-2007 period there were instances where JDP MPs criticized the rector appointment law and called it undemocratic (Plenary Minutes, 14 Nov. 2006). In 2008, however, it was not touched. Moreover, a similar process based on the authority of the CoHE and the president was brought to the newly established universities.

In 2016, the circle was completed by a new decree. Since it was a decree under the state of emergency, there was little legislative involvement. The elections inside the university have been lifted. The system used for the newly established universities was now used for all the universities. In other words, the authority was consolidated in the hands of the President of the Republic, along with a mediation of the CoHE. This was actually a direct turn back to the situation following the 1980 coup which continued up until 1992. Moreover, the foundation universities were also subject to appointment from the state, while the appointment process took place inside the board of trustees before. There were many other regulations regarding the office durations. Also, the rectors are also empowered themselves in administrative issues inside the university.

It is interesting to observe the contrast between what the JDP government projected in the duration of 2003 bill and what it did by 2016. There, one of the main purposes was to shorten office duration of the rectors. JDP was trying to shorten it to 4, or at maximum to 6 years. Also, they were trying to decrease the power of the rectors. With the 2016 law, on the other hand, rectors were more powerful than ever with a possibility of 8 years of office duration at one university and with potential to continue in other universities. Moreover, in 2018 by

the law no 7100, rectors' administrative power has been further increased regarding the issues of academic positions and more.

In summary, 2002-2018 period was marked by an increase in the power of the state in higher education. Especially the policies in 2008, 2016, and 2018 (law no 5772, decree law 676, and law no 7100) actually provide homogeneity since they seem to be consistent with each other by also providing support for each other in the trend of centralization. Moreover, the trends of centralization is also observable with respect to the administration of academy in general and specifically academic institutions. The policy on academic regulations brought changes both about the acquisition of academic ranks and employment in academic positions. Firstly, the power of university rectors in the selection of faculty members is increased. Although former assistant professors were already appointed by the rectors, the new system also gives the power of appointment of associate professors to rectors without any other board or examination. Since the acquisition of associate professor title is also made easier (no oral examination; less foreign language barrier; no necessary labor as assistant professor) it means there is only one barrier after the completion of doctoral study; appointment by the rectors. Although it is clear that the main goal of the policy is making the acquisition of the academic positions and titles easier, it is open to make use of spoils systems as the opposition parties insisted (Committee Minutes, 2018b, p. 25). Everyone agreed that the old system was problematic and should be changed. However, the way it is re-arranged removes certain processes of merit-based selection and leaves the emerging gap to be used by decision maker focal figures; the President indirectly, and the rector directly.

Interestingly, the CoHE promoted these changes by some populist discourses, as ways to de-centralization and an increasing of autonomy of universities by making university-based decision possible. However, when we look closer, there is nothing even to consider in terms of de-centralization. The claim of increase in autonomy of the universities, on the other hand, is more like an increase in the power of the rectors, appointed by the government, in university administration. When decisions are coming from such appointed rectors, the result is the opposite of autonomy of the universities and members of the university may be pushed into a more controlled environment. An opposition MP expresses this situation by pointing out (Committee Minutes, 2018b, p. 14) to the decreasing administrative and political autonomy within a centralized system of appointment.

In conclusion, as the policies that have been briefly outlined on the rector election, academic positions and titles indicate, there has been a tendency to create a power arrangement in the administration of higher education which has a clear line of diffusion; simplified and crystallized. The new regulations are very open to political and social polarizations which may lower academic autonomy and work for the benefit of the power parties.

4. 3. Massification and Quantification

One of the most striking aspects of the transformation of higher education in Turkey between 2002-2018 revolves around the subject of the expansion of the scope of higher education. In general, electoral promises, developmental discourses, assessments of global measures, and a reference to the expansion itself as a goal seem to underpin such drive. Interestingly, there is almost no reference to what the higher education expansion might really mean, or why it might be good other than the crude concepts of “development” and “competition”. JDP MP Yüksel Özden summarizes the point on a speech in December 2007:

9. Another issue is that, our newly established universities are constantly being made an affair and criticized. However, getting out of an elite education in the university is possible in a process that began around 80s, accelerated in 90s, and continued with the establishment of increasingly more new universities in 2000s. (...) If and only by this means university education can turn into a mass education. On one hand, it can reduce the old universities’ burden and make university education bearable for the parents, and on the other hand, newly established universities get into the race, and struggle to find themselves a place in the system. For these reasons, I project that, within the next ten years, new public and foundation universities are going to be established to an extent that cannot even be predicted today. (Plenary Minutes, 09 Dec. 2007)

The expansion in higher education also seems to underline many facts about the transformation of higher education. In fact, it will be clear by the end of the study that the subject matter is not merely the expansion itself. It is also about how the expansion is taking place and what kind of re-arrangements of higher education it encapsulates.

Besides the expansion, but also in line with it, there is an ever-increasing reference to quantity in the conceptualization of the higher education. What I call “quantification” shows itself first and foremost on the projection and assessment of higher education in terms of quantity of the outputs. This process of quantification is not limited to student numbers, the number of universities, and the number of academicians. They stretch out to almost all aspect

of higher education in terms of numbers, rates and other quantitative calculations. Such logic also extends to academic evaluations and knowledge production processes. Increasing the number of products and rising in global quantitative competitive rankings turn out to be among the most stressed goals. Even the prospects of academic salaries increasingly relate to the quantity of product. However, the reference to such quantitative assessments does not reflect adequate elaboration of the quality: they are very rough and superficial. While political discourse of the politicians and the government itself reflect such quantitative assessment and projection of higher education in almost all cases, there are also many policies materializing the quantification. Only some minor policies on quality seem to emerge around 2017, with some very limited scope. For example, higher education entrance thresholds which had been decreased 3 times after 2009, have been increased for the first time in 2016. However, the difference is very little. Actually, it can be said that these minor policies in the last 2 years were, at best, successful in keeping the standards of the preceding year.

4. 3. 1. Number of Students

Although student numbers in Turkey have always showed a tendency of increase from the establishment of republic, the numbers come close to signify a boom in the 2002-2018 period, especially after 2008. One of the key factors behind such explosion is the increasing of number of higher education institutions. Another factor relating to the supply is the increase of the higher education quotas. For example, by a decision made by the CoHE in 2008, the quotas have been increased by %40 which resulted in a substantial increase in both face-to-face and non-face-to-face higher education (Günay & Günay, 2016, p. 13).

9 out of 21 members of the CoHE have challenged this view on the basis that it would cause quality problems, that it does not take into consideration the inadequacies of infrastructure and difficulties of financial source, and that the decision under the pressure of political reasons (YÖK Üniversite..., 2008). Actually, there have been many such views from the CoHE before 2007, that has been mentioned in the parliamentary discussions. However, we can observe that such criticisms would diminish in time and disappear almost completely after 2008.

Nevertheless, the decision to increase the student quotas of universities has been welcomed not by the JDP members but also many opposition parties. As a matter fact, all such increases have been mostly received positively. Criticisms revolved around some balances regarding the supply-demand, and high unemployment rates among the youth. Nevertheless, policies and decisions to increase the number of students in already established universities as well as the number of institutions by founding new one kept coming.

In Table 3, one can see the changes in the number of students at higher education with respect to some other related indicators. The total number of students have risen 3 times between 1987-2002, which indeed constituted another period of expansion, and rose to 1.677.936 from 505.091. However, in the period between 2002-2018, it has grown 4,5 times and reached 7.198.987. As of 2019 the number is 7.740.502. It has been observed that newly registered students seem to stabilize around 1,3-1,4 million level after 2013 (Gür, Çelik & Yurdakul, 2019, p. 32). Also, open education constitutes a considerable share in this trend. While the number of open education students was approximately 500.000 in 2002 with almost no change since 1994, it rose to 2,8 million in 2014, and 3,9 million in 2018. The share of open education in total higher education student numbers also rose rapidly after 2002. While it was around %30 in 2002, in 2018 it has reached %53,5 (Gür, Çelik & Yurdakul, 2019, p. 23). In other words, more than half of the higher education students in Turkey are open education students which is actually very high in comparison to world averages. As of 2019, almost half of these open education students are enrolled to vocational higher education schools.

In Table 4, we can see that the largest increase in terms of meeting the demand has happened after 2008. While the mean of application/registration rate was %27,7 in the 16 years between 1987-2002, it is %41,3 for the next 16 years. While it has been balanced a little bit after the grand increase following 2008, still, all the years since 2008 have largest application/registration rates than the period of 1980-2007.

In Turkey the rate of higher education graduates to the total population between age 25-34 is, %10.5 in 2002, %14,2 in 2007, %21 in 2012, %31,6 in 2017. OECD averages for the same dates are %28 in 2002, %34,2 in 2007, %40 in 2012, %44.5 in 2017 (OECD, 2019). In other words, the rate of higher education graduates to the total population between age 25-34 has approximately increased 3 times in Turkey, which is much higher than OECD

average. Actually, only a very small number of other countries within 46 countries with OECD data have been observed to have an increase closer to such amount.

Table 3. Number of Students in Turkish higher education

Year	Upper Secondary	Undergrad.	Master	Doctorate	Total
2001-2002	442.359	1.117.679	73.466	22.514	1.656.018
2002-2003	589.651	1.190.080	79.811	23.088	1.882.630
2003-2004	700.974	1.120.020	90.057	24.835	1.935.886
2004-2005	764.183	1.178.812	92.566	27.335	2.062.896
2005-2006	819.834	1.335.270	111.814	32.503	2.299.421
2006-2007	827.713	1.437.223	108.683	33.711	2.407.330
2007-2008	828.390	1.517.497	104.028	34.879	2.484.794
2008-2009	945.115	1.786.713	109.281	35.669	2.876.778
2009-2010	1.043.755	2.252.618	137.199	44.368	3.477.940
2010-2011	1.094.278	2.505.306	125.690	42.938	3.768.212
2011-2012	1.274.639	2.809.287	168.156	51.468	4.303.550
2012-2013	1.525.408	3.121.181	217.588	59.763	4.923.940
2013-2014	1.761.492	3.377.977	265.895	67.157	5.474.535
2014-2015	2.013.762	3.628.800	342.101	78.223	5.615.293
2015-2016	2.285.406	3.900.601	417.084	86.094	6.137.014
2016-2017	2.555.926	4.071.579	480.215	91.267	6.629.961
2017-2018	2.768.757	4.241.841	454.673	95.100	6.963.903
2018-2019	2.829.430	4.420.699	394.174	96.199	7.134.674

Sources: The CoHE Information Management System and Çetinsaya (2014)

Higher education schooling rates are among other important indicators for quantitative changes with respect to students. According to calculations made by Günay & Günay (2016, p. 18) the schooling rates for face-to-face higher education are %15,06 in 2000, and %49.98 in 2015. It has surpassed %50 limit after this date. In gross calculations which include distant and open education, higher education schooling rate was %22.30 in 2000, %94 in 2015, and %103 in 2018. According to commonly used schema suggested by Trow (1974), higher education schooling rates between %0-15 is elite higher education, %15-50 is mass higher education, and over %50 is universal higher education. Using this rough schema, we can say that Turkey has made the transition from elite to mass higher education in early 1990s, from mass to universal after 2008. However, it is possible that Trow did not foresee such a share

of distant and open education in higher education. If we take the schema and use it only on face-to-face higher education, we can state that Turkey has made the transition from elite to mass higher education in early the 2000s, from mass to universal in mid-2010s.

Table 4. Applications and registers to higher education (Source: CoHE Information Management System)

Year	Total Application	Total Register	Rate (%)	Year	Total Application	Total Register	Rate (%)
1980	466.963	41.574	8,9	2000	1.407.920	414.647	29,5
1981	420.850	54.818	13,0	2001	1.471.197	455.913	31,0
1982	408.573	72.983	17,9	2002	1.817.590	614.125	33,8
1983	361.158	105.158	29,1	2003	1.593.831	506.637	31,8
1984	436.175	148.766	34,1	2004	1.897.196	574.867	30,3
1985	480.633	156.065	32,5	2005	1.844.891	607.994	33,0
1986	503.481	165.817	32,9	2006	1.678.326	590.533	35,2
1987	628.089	174.269	27,7	2007	1.776.427	626.425	35,3
1988	693.277	188.183	27,1	2008	1.645.416	833.532	50,7
1989	824.128	193.665	23,5	2009	1.450.582	786.677	54,2
1990	892.975	196.253	22,0	2010	1.587.866	763.516	48,1
1991	875.385	199.599	22,8	2011	1.759.403	789.169	44,9
1992	977.550	260.268	26,6	2012	1.895.478	865.631	45,7
1993	1.154.571	324.432	28,1	2013	1.924.547	877.787	45,6
1994	1.249.880	345.907	27,7	2014	2.086.115	922.275	44,2
1995	1.263.379	353.300	28,0	2015	2.126.681	983.090	46,2
1996	1.398.768	386.372	27,6	2016	2.256.367	961.864	42,6
1997	1.398.367	421.453	30,1	2017	2.265.844	825.397	36,4
1998	1.355.707	394.432	29,1	2018	2.381.412	857.240	36,0
1999	1.478.365	414.341	28,0				

4. 3. 2. Number of Higher Education Institutions

In addition to the increase in student and graduate numbers, one of the biggest quantitative changes has been experienced with respect to higher education institutions. In Figure 4, we can see the changes in the number of universities. According to this, number of public universities have been multiplied roughly by 2.5 and increase from 53 in 2003 to 129 in 2019, and number of foundation universities have been multiplied roughly by 3 times and increased from 24 in 2003 to 73 in 2019.

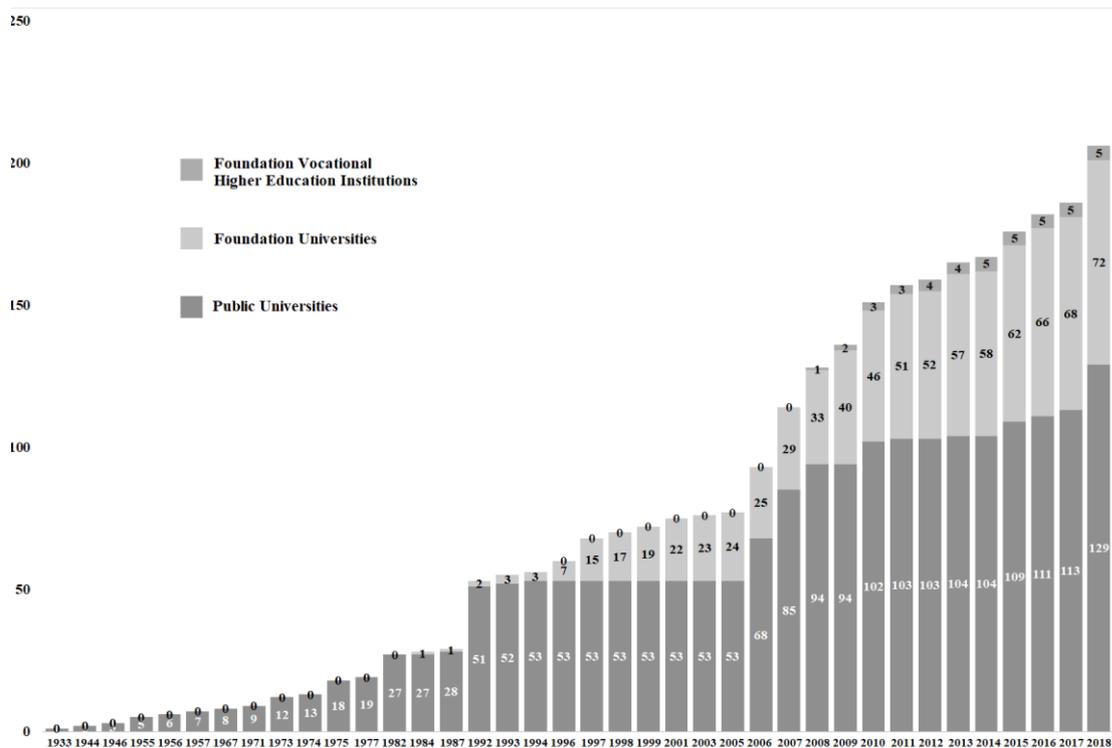


Figure 4. Number of higher education institutions by year (Source: The CoHE Statistics Database)

Lifting of the obligation to open a faculty of arts and sciences to establish a university by a law in 2008, has been one of the factors of this increase. One thing from the figure that is glaring, is that there has been no increase in the numbers of public universities from 1992 to 2003, although there is an increase in the number of foundation universities. Also, it should be stated that after the coup attempt in 2016, 15 foundation universities have been shut down by the decree no 667. Therefore, the decrease in the rates of increase after 2016, as if there

is a slowing down, is probably only due to that fact. All these 15 universities are foundation universities which have been established between 2007-2016.

Additionally, the increase in the number of higher education institutions are not limited to the universities. The increase with respect to units and other higher education institutions reflect the phenomenon even better.

This rapid process of increase in the number of universities has been received by the JDP and the government with applauses and celebrations. There was almost no criticism against this process from the side of the JDP MPs except than some minor criticisms in the 2002-2007 period. For example, in this period, we can observe that some concerns relating to the quality-quantity problems have been expressed by JDP MP Ömer İnan in 2003, and JDP MP Tayyar Altıkulaç in 2005:

Education is a serious affair, and we know that everyone is in alliance on that matter. In this serious affair, in education, especially in university, the number have been doubled within the past ten years in Turkey, as you all know. Nevertheless, there is still capacity deficiency, but also, in quality, unfortunately, there is regression; the quality of our universities is not increasing, on the contrary, it is decreasing. The quality must be improved too. Quantitative increase is of course important, but, increase in quality, a qualitative increase is also a necessity for the universities. (Plenary Minutes, 26 June 2003)

Our purpose is not to raise scholars from the cradle¹⁵ as in the old idiom, but to actualize universities which can compete with the universities of the contemporary world. It is not an accomplishment to open universities only with a signboard but without libraries and laboratories. In fact, if our present universities have such problems in education and scientific activity, it is among our duties to lean on them, to cooperate to raise them to the level of contemporary universities. However, it is also important to see the subject of university from a different perspective. It is not possible to ignore the fact that approximately 1,5 million young people force the doors of the universities and return in tears, as also indicated by some of the rectors I have discussed with. In that case, we have a responsibility to see the other side of the medallion and make the sensitive balance between the reality of lack of number and quality of academic personnel and the reality of the young people who turned away from the university doors, without reaching to a point of populism. (Plenary Minutes, 29 Dec. 2005)

However, especially after 2007, JDP's appeal to a "macro-plan" in higher education seem to be quite prominent as the self-criticisms and quality concerns decline and disappear completely. The speech made in 2008 by JDP MP İbrahim Mete Doğruer demonstrate how

¹⁵ The original term is "*beşik uleması*" which refers to a practice in Ottoman Empire in which some privileged children were being raised as scholars within a system of nepotism.

the expansion is in line with a plan, and relate it to the replacement of basic sciences by applied sciences:

The significance and the importance of the fundamental sciences are being decreased. (...) As you know, a faculty of arts and sciences was necessary for every university. Now, with this law, such necessity is being removed, and a considerable contribution is made for the realization of the macro-plan we have just mentioned, that is, providing a supply-demand balance and preventing graduates' unemployment. There is an excess in supply, an excess of graduates in some departments of arts and sciences faculties like physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics, some departments of technical education, and a set of engineering faculties. These specialized universities are going to help and contribute to making of the macro-plan, to reducing of such excess or spending of the resources more appropriately. (Plenary Minutes, 29 Jan. 2008)

Independent and opposition party MPs, although they seem to be supportive of the process in general, brought some criticisms regarding the rapid increase in the number of universities. One of the main lines of criticism has been the quality problems. Similarly, there are expressions on the lack of academic, physical, and social conditions of newly established universities which have been stressed with an emphasis on the higher education quality in Turkey. While there has been some considerable support in the period between 2002-2007 from parties such as ANAVATAN and RPP, after 2007 criticisms seem to proliferate while a principal supportive attitude continues. However, some opposition MPs also have been quite critical in many aspects of the process.

Idioms such as “signboard universities” (Tuskish: *Tabela üniversitesi*) appear to be used increasingly to refer to the infrastructure and quality problems. However, we should stress that especially infrastructure and higher education finance problems are not specific to the JDP era. İpek (2016, p. 387) states that initiatives by the government to establish new universities without a serious concern on the composition of faculty members and physical infra-structure can be taken as back as the 1946 reform. Although the problem does not seem to be specific to the JDP era, some researches on the universities established in 2002-2018 period provide indications that the problems of institutionalization, physical deficiencies and academic inabilities materialize in this period (Doğan, 2013; Acar, 2012). It is also possible to observe arguments which state that during the JDP period new universities have been established on the basis of political calculations and concerns of economic growth without taking scientific standards into consideration (Kavili Arap, 2010).

Despite problems of infrastructure, financing, academic incapacity, and criticisms of political exclusion, populism, high unemployment and low incomes among university graduates, JDP seem to be increasingly confident with regard to the merit of increasing the number of higher education institutions. Government and JDP discourses clearly show that they prioritize quantity over quality and that quality is an issue only after high reserves of quantity is achieved. It can be observed that the determinant ideas from JDP MPs and the governments do not to respond to concerns and reflect that the process will be continued in spite of the problems. Minister of National Education Hüseynin Çelik's words partly characterize such views:

Undoubtedly, we all wish to establish universities after all the infrastructure, all physical, technological, human resources, and other infrastructure elements are prepared. But, the cold facts of our Turkey are obvious and if we look at the applications from the beginning of the republic, if we look at the practices of all governmental periods before, actually, it is not Turkey's practice to establish the universities after they achieved a level of infrastructure at Western university levels, at American levels. In Turkey, universities find capability and resource after they are established, be it from the public or another source, they provide certain resources and in time they complete their development. Turkey was facing such a reality. We are a developing nation, not a developed one, so we have to institute our universities in a developing nation model. Of course, welfare state is an absolute must, as indicated by the Constitution. Without doubt, it is not possible to renounce welfare state. (Plenary Minutes, 29 Jan. 2008)

His stress on welfare state do actually give some hints about the phenomenon of massification. Despite the question marks about the origination and materialization of the discourse, the increase in the number of universities seem to be perceived as a social duty of the state that cannot be renounced. As a matter of fact, the limits of the opposition party criticisms usually seem to be drawn at that critical line.

In general, it can be said that another idiom "*kervan yolda düzülür/dizilir*" (which means that the needs confronted in the migration are/should be eliminated in the process of migration itself) begin to characterize the increase in the number of institutions of higher education, along with some other policy directions. While there have been some quality concerns in the 2002-2007 period, such discourses decrease. In time the idiom starts to be used by JDP members and the Minister. What it symbolizes is that when a decision is made (which corresponds to political party agenda of the JDP) it is important to set to work, formalities and details are unimportant and considerable only after the decision has been set to work. The idiom also seems to underlie the extent of mobilization of legislative branch together with the executive branch of the government.

4. 3. 3. Number of Academicians

Another quantitative change is the number of academics which, while going along with increasing student and institution numbers, also generating a tension to the expansion of the higher education. The shortage of academics has always been a problem in higher education in Turkey (Tosun, 2015, p. 363). In 2002-2018 period the increase in the number of academicians seem to be rather similar to that of earlier periods (Table 5). However, there are some aspects about the character of this increase that needs to be underlined.

First of all, the increase in the number of academicians appear to be inadequate especially in the context of the expansions in student and institution numbers. Not only that it is insufficient, but also it signifies a slight backward move. It can be observed that the number of students per academic and per faculty remain stable or slightly decrease (Günay & Günay, 2011, p. 16). In gross student numbers, number of students per academician numbers are doubled. In any case, it has been stated that Turkey needs some 91 thousand academicians to reach a level of 15 student per academician in face-to-face higher education (Gür, Çelik & Yurdakul, 2019, p. 25). These indicators provide evidence to the arguments that the expansion of higher education have been carried out without taking some academic quality considerations. In line with these, academic staff compositions also prove the point. For example, Tekneci (2016, p. 283) reports that the number of academic staff in upper secondary education have increased by %173 from 2004 to 2014 while academic staff in undergraduate programs rose %85, and that of academic staff in graduate schools and institutes rose only %11 in the same period. If we consider that the number of graduate students has increased about %350 in the same period of 2004-2014, the problems faced in graduate levels of education which should have symbolized an academic level quality, is obvious.

Moreover, the increase in the number of the academicians seem to be achieved by providing some facilitations for the process, rather than keeping a standard. The increase in the numbers of academicians in years 2008 and 2010 probably relate to two such policies that I will explain shortly.

Table 5: Ratios regarding the total number of students and the number of face-to-face students in higher education per academic personnel

	Total Student / Teacher Ratio in HE	Face-to-Face Student / Academic Personnel Ratio in HE
2001	23,68	15,29
2002	23,54	15,40
2003	25,21	15,77
2004	25,03	15,66
2005	25,66	16,02
2006	27,63	16,89
2007	27,47	16,62
2008	25,64	15,27
2009	29,10	16,02
2010	33,48	16,96
2011	34,24	16,68
2012	36,63	18,34
2013	38,08	18,81
2014	38,42	18,31
2015	40,72	19,54
2016	42,83	20,61
2017	47,44	23,47
2018	47,82	24,04
2019	46,57	23,39

Source: OECD Database on Education and The CoHE Information Management System

Also, although the increase in the number of academicians is generally taken as an objective by the governments, this seem to prove difficult to be put in practice. Nevertheless, the government still had some instruments fitting for the purpose. In 2008, independent MP Kamer Genç in his plenary session speech draw attention to a discourse by the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan:

Now, the other day, of course, Tayyip Erdoğan had a speech. He addressed the president of the CoHE and said “sir, opening universities is my job, but it is your job to raise academic personnel. So, if you don’t do it, let me do it for you.”¹⁶ (Plenary Minutes, 02 Jan. 2008)

I have already underlined that governments alliance with the CoHE has increased after 2007, and that government policies started to harmonize with the stand of the CoHE. After this

¹⁶ I used to have a news web page source for the original quotation. It is now removed.

date, there are some policies aiming to increase the number of academics by providing certain facilitations. They are sometimes explicit in policy justification texts, and sometimes rather implicit. For example, one of the purposes of the law no 5772 in 2008, is clearly making it easier to get to the title of associate professor as indicated by the justification section of the written bill, and also by plenary and committee discussions. With this law, requirements for the title of professor made easier. The requirement of serving two years as an associate professor has been removed. For professorship, the requirement which make appointment to a professor position necessary has been removed and rising to professor rank by appointment to professor positions made possible. Also, application periods for getting the associate professor title have been increased to from one to twice a year.

The law no 7100 in 2018 has brought other changes that facilitate the acquisition of academic ranks and positions. The appointment for the former assistant professor position is made easier by removing the written foreign language exam. Their duration of office is also extended to 4 years instead of 2-3, and the maximum duration of office at a university has been lifted while it was formerly 12 years. The acquisition of associate professor title is also made easier by removing the oral examination formerly made by an academic jury and also by reducing the minimum foreign language requirement from 65 to 55¹⁷.

Foreign language mastery makes up one of the most important facilitating changes. Propositions by opposition MPs to reduce the minimum foreign were given previously but rejected by the government. For example, a bill by NMP in 2008 suggest reducing it to 50 “to prevent academicians from consuming their energy on the foreign language”. While it had no support back then, the government seem to be convinced after 10 years. The promotion of this change is also interesting. The CoHE states that the new regulation gives individual universities rights to determine their own requirement of foreign language - implying increasing autonomy. This is misleading since such autonomy was already there in terms of appointment of academics to universities using requirements of foreign language defined by each university’s senate. Similarly, there were already foreign language examinations done by universities which were designed by universities and differ a lot in terms of their difficulties. The change is not on the variations of language mastery expectations, but on the minimum requirement in general. Many universities, especially ones

¹⁷ I must stress that the Turkish Central Foreign Language exams are very elementary and dimensionless. For official equivalence tables, 55 point in Turkish Central Foreign Language Exam corresponds to 66 TOEFL points.

with high reputation or ones whose education language is English, will make no change in their practices as they will keep their minimums high. However, since the minimum requirement will be declined to 55 from 65, universities which are willing can now offer positions to academics below 65 score. Therefore, it is quite clear that the change on minimum foreign language score aims to make possible the employment and promotion of academics with lower foreign language mastery. Removal of written foreign examinations is a similar action. The changes involve both associate and assistant professors. In brief, these changes summarize how quantity-based increase is the main aim of policies. Despite the fact that low foreign language mastery will surely result in lowering all kinds of interaction with international academic bodies and literature, the JDP's aspiration is not such interaction and lies somewhere else. It has been pointed out that while the opposite action is required, the government take the step to form a national discourse on academy (Bilim Akademisi, n.d.). The legitimization could be summarized by statements of a MP in the committee meeting who defends that foreign language mastery will not be an important problem when Turkey become a leading civilization of the world:

The issue of language... For god's sake we got stuck. Let me ask why are we learning English, French or why people study literature having to learn Farsi, Kurdish, Arabic? Because my friends, these are the language which constitute the civilization in these branches of science. (Committee Minutes, 2018b, p. 34)

As in the case of student and higher education institution numbers, opposition parties also partly agree with the need and necessity to increase the supply of academicians. However, it is not uncommon that they express criticisms over how to realize such goal. The issues of quality seem to be expressed increasingly, especially after 2008. An example can be provided with respect to an opposition MP speech in 2008:

The period of assistant professorship is directed towards appointment of young people who have completed their doctoral studies to the first rank of the faculty membership, immediately, like associate professors, to solve the shortage of lecturer. If you take that course of action, because of the scarcity of academic personnel, such course also prevents these young peoples' attainment. People with hastily done doctorate studies and lecturers with hast appointments to the academic positions arise. (...) Turkey takes this way since the development is in quantitative terms, raising faculty members rather than staff members is targeted. Hence, if we consider that the problem, our inadequacy in the university, is both in quantity and quality we have to be aware of the fact that we are going backwards in quality as long as we only emphasize quantity problems, if we ignore regulations regarding the quality. (Plenary Minutes, 18 June 2008)

4. 3. 4. Quantitative Assessment of Academic Productivity

Academic production appears to be another target of some policies. In general, an appeal to output in quantitative terms and a disregard to quality underlie the discourses and policies. An important policy with such orientation finds its reflection in the law no 6564 enacted in 2014. Briefly, it encourages quantitative increase in academia while increasing the wages of the academicians.

Made in 2014, the law no 6564 brought two grants named “higher education compensation” and “academic encouragement” for the academicians. the academic encouragement allowance is based on a system which calculates certain points for each academician on the basis of his/her project, research, publication, presentation, design, patent etc. and the number of references for the works. Then, on the basis of this point, an extra wage is being payed.

The wages of the academic staff are a subject which has been discussed from very early on. It can be observed that while the discussion continues, the JDP government do not take many steps. In fact, if the wage increase for the research assistants is ignored, there has been no rise for academic staff wages from 2002 to 2014. Before the law no 6564 all academic staff wages except that of professor fell behind the poverty line. Karahanoğulları & Zengin (2013, p. 175-9) shows that there has been no change in real wages between 2003-2013. Süngü (2013, p. 1203) states that on these years academic wages were so low both in national and international standards that the profession was not inviting. From early dates, wage increases have been proposed by some opposition MPs but rejected. Especially after 2011 bills by RPP and NMP projected reel increases in gross wages. However, the government seems to follow a different path. This is because the law no 6564 base the increase on some new registers rather than a direct increase. Similarly, the rise loses its use after retirement. Also, contracted lecturers are not affected by the rise.

In any case, the increase is connected to condition of academic productivity in quantitative terms. During the discussion on the law, some alterations on the law which suggested to give at least the half of the grant for those who could not gather enough point have been rejected by the government. To put it briefly, the aim was not only a wage increase, but also securing the activity of the academicians and increasing their output. We can observe that such concerns were the priorities as RPP MP Oğuz Oyan also emphasize:

It is possible that different scientific disciplines make different amounts of publications etc. Accordingly, inequalities will arise here too. (...) not only this academic encouragement allowance is not equal to everyone, but it might be something that cannot be used at all for some people. Some academic personnel do not even have time for reproductive reading for their own classes, let alone allocating time for research; some people lecture thirty-forty hours a week, this is a shame. (...) A third dimension of problem is about trying to supply employee personal rights based on performance based projects and activity -which is there in the 2nd article- in other words, evaluating teaching staff based on some indicators of the market such as competition, race, quality. Here creativity and scientific production should have been the criteria instead of private corporation performance criteria. (Plenary Minutes, 05 Nov. 2014)

In connection with that, the aims and discourses seem to be directed towards a quantitative measurement of academic productivity. Although academic indexes and world-ranking systems are taken as indicators of quality by Turkish politicians, they are used very vaguely. One example is the total number of publications rankings. In almost every appeal to politicians' and education specialists' assessment of the country's academic quality, this is the indicator which is used. However, the use is quite problematic. For example, with regard to the number of publications, Turkey is approximately in the 20th place out of 239 countries in the SJR ranking. However, this is nothing new since Turkey was approximately at the same rank since decades. In fact, this is hardly any achievement, as the ranking is very reflective of the population of countries. Additionally, there are also many countries in the ranking with less population but a better place than Turkey. Not only such indicators are used vaguely, but also some other indicators such as academic impact is almost always ignored except than the use in some opposition party criticisms. In fact, regarding citations per document measurements, Turkey ranks 171 out of 239 countries in the same SJR ranking. Similarly, there are findings which show that while the number of publications is increasing, the number of citations to these publications is decreasing (Tosun, 2015, p. 115-8). These also quantitative measures suggest that the publications in Turkey is many in quantity but less in effect. In any case, in the politics of higher education in Turkey, a competition with the world, and the assessment of academic productivity, seem to be reduced to the total mass of numbers in almost all discourse. An example can be seen below:

17. In universities, number of publications made by the staff is an indicator of both the quality of education and the potential of research. Since it has been estimated that the majority of the scientific research is made by academic teaching staff members, the number of publications per academic staff is used as an essential indicator while designating the research performances of the universities. We want our universities to be champions in the world arena. (Plenary Minutes, 18 June 2008)

In addition, journals originating in Turkey also score very low in the same ranking. Gür, Çelik & Yurdakul (2019, p. 27) states that journals of good quality and the citations based on these journals are very low when they are evaluated with respect to Web of Science and Scopus data.

There is still some criticism from opposition parties which point to qualitative falls in academic indexes and falls of Turkish universities in world-ranking. However, in general, indicators on academic productivity tend to be quantified and used for rivalry-based comparisons without context. Additionally, while there are some debates which harshly dwell upon the problem of increasing plagiarism and reports of academic papers sold for money none of these seem to awake a formal problematization from the government.

4. 4. National and Global Economic Development

This sub-section contains many aspects of the transformation of higher education in Turkey. These aspects could be conceptualized under different categorizations which might fall under different sub-categories. However, there seem to emerge an underlying drive common to all these aspects: a drive for national economic development. Such discourse is not only a tone, but it also defines the aims of almost all policies and political orientations in higher education. It is also important to emphasize the economic predominance in the understanding of the development. While some aspects slightly draw on a social conception of the development, the economic tone of the development is overwhelming. The tending towards economic development both in understanding and implementation of changes is so strong that it seems to be the major motive in the formation of all discourses.

4. 4. 1. Higher Education Finance and Privatization

The economic aspect of the transformation at the level of higher education institutions seem to involve two main concerns. First, there is a successful project of articulating private capital to higher education in Turkey. While discourses are already clear, the policies revolving around this objective make such goal even clearer. Second, the government financial resources devoted to higher education seem to rise very slightly in nominal values. However, further evaluations which look at the comparative rates, real prices and include

the growth of higher education seem to suggest that the financial support from the government remain stable or even decrease at institutional level. This fact is kept rather untold by the government.

The JDP announced that “private enterprise will be supported in all fields of education and their share will be increased” as early as 23 November 2002 when the first government program was being read. In all the following governments this intention has been repeated, both by MPs and ministers, in personal or institutional announcements. Some fundamental issues such as capacity problems and inadequacy of government budget have been explicitly stated as the legitimization behind this intention. However, the most used legitimization, by far, was an appeal to the ways of the economically developed countries, such as the Western countries.

In the 2002-2007 period, there appears to be a learning process and some different trials about how to accomplish these intentions. For example, government support to canalize successful students to private education and school voucher systems which are common in some Western countries have some reactions and mostly fail. Government incentive and supports to foundations to encourage to enlarge their educational investments appear to give better results and continue in the next governmental periods, at an increasing pace. One of the laws made with such intention is the law no 5002 in 2003. In 2014 the law no 6528 is another important law which includes a good amount of incentive from the side of the government. There are many others.

Since the day of the establishment of the Republic, Turkey has a constitutionally defined opposition towards for-profit higher education. This is why there are foundation universities, not private universities in Turkey. This tendency has kept going although some contra-proposals came in the period. For example, JDP MP Soner Aksoy proposed in a plenary speech that a constitutional change should be made for the corporations to be able to open universities. He proposed that this is a necessity for establishing a market-industry-university exchange, and for economic growth by competition (Plenary Minutes, 26 June 2003). Similarly, Motherland Party (Turkish: *ANAVATAN*) made a similar proposal by their CoHE reform bill in 2006 (Plenary Minutes, 21 June 2006). Nevertheless, there has been no such attempt from the side of the government. This is probably due to the de facto operation of the foundation universities. That is to say, foundation universities have almost no difference from the common no-profit private university model. Although the constitutional

arrangement indicates a principle, it does not hinder private capital from finding its own ways¹⁸. The foundation universities might have variations within their approach to higher education and it is rather difficult to assess how private capital is used. They are not charities, and the share of financial or otherwise profit is difficult to conceptualize. Additionally, there are many ways for a private enterprise to make profit from a higher education institution. The trends of marketization which will be dealt shortly suggest that private enterprises are being encouraged to use higher education as a useful tool to supply their “human resources”. All in all, especially after 2007 we see a boom of foundation universities. Along with their numbers, their financial share and student capacity in Turkish higher education increase rapidly. Percentage of enrolment in tertiary education in private institutions have risen to %8.3 in 2016 from %3.3 in 2002. In 2000 spending on tertiary education in Turkey was covered %95.4 by public funding and %4,6 by private. In 2011 it is %80.4 public, %19.2 private. In 2015, it is %74.8 public, %24.9 private (OECD, 2019b).

The JDP seem to believe in a balance between private and public share in higher education which has been tried to be achieved through certain arrangements. When we look at the public side of the story, one of the main arrangements is decreasing the support for public higher education. However, it is likely that such a goal has been projected without endangering the massification and production of academics which seem to be the strong sides of the public universities.

In Table 6 we can see that the total budget share reserved for CoHE and universities experienced only a slight increase through the 2002-2018 period. If we remind that the number of public higher education institutions have increased approximately 2.5 times, it actually indicates a decrease. In 2005 we can observe an increase in the share of higher education budget with respect to the total budget. However, this change is probably due to some changes regarding the budget registers. After the mid-2000s and in the following periods, some components regarding the Credits and Dormitories Institutions (Turkish: *Kredi Yurtlar Kurumu*), Assesment Selection and Placement Center (Turkish: *Öğrenci Seçme ve Yerleştirme Merkezi*) and some fund spending in connection to these have been added to higher education spending. If we consider that 15 new universities have been established in 2006, using some of these funds, the increase in the mid-2000s would at best

¹⁸ Such emphasis and criticisms are also carried to the plenary (Plenary Minutes, 30 July 2008, p. 340)

mean stability¹⁹. In general, if we consider the higher education expansion in these 16 years, these slight increases probably indicate a considerable amount of decrease at single university levels. We can see from many discourses that these calculations are in fact made in such exact fashion. An example is from JDP MP Nurettin Canikli in 2006:

We have to look at the share in the budget. That is to say, what was the share from the budget, and what is it now, is the main question. Because, friends, I repeat, the rate of increase of the gross national product is higher than the rate of increase of the budget. We want it to be this way. Because we want to allow source for the private enterprise to invest more. (Plenary Minutes, 25 Dec. 2006)

Table 6: Some rates on higher education spending.

	The CoHE + Universities / GDP (%)	The CoHE + Universities / Budget (%)	The CoHE + Universities / Ministry of Education Budget (%)
2001	0,56	2,82	33,73
2002	0,69	2,55	33,45
2003	0,73	2,32	33,48
2004	0,67	2,58	30,29
2005	0,77	3,34	35,07
2006	0,74	3,34	35,29
2007	0,75	3,21	30,84
2008	0,74	3,29	31,94
2009	0,88	3,35	31,96
2010	0,81	3,26	33,13
2011	0,82	3,68	33,72
2012	0,81	3,63	32,53
2013	0,84	3,77	32,06
2014	0,83	3,89	30,41
2015	0,79	3,91	29,83
2016	0,90	4,14	30,90
2017	0,82	3,97	30,12
2018	0,75	3,64	30,00

Source: Calculations were made using Ministry of Treasury and Finance, Ministry of National Education, and Turkish Statistical Institute, and checked on TR Presidency Strategy and Budget Office.

¹⁹ Although it is difficult to make exact calculations, the budget reserved for Credits and Dormitories Institutions is one third of the total sum of university budgets for example in 2007. In other words, their activity and impact should not be underestimated.

Another important indicator in Table 6 is the share of higher education budget with respect to total National Education Ministry budget. We can see that this rate stayed at around %30 if we disregard some little fluctuations. It also hints that the expansion of higher education is made without increasing its real financial share.

It can be observed that there are both some support and criticism by opposition parties towards privatizations in the 2002-2007 period. Some criticisms especially by the RPP and the PDP (HDP) also continue after 2007. Nevertheless, it is possible to state that fundamental criticisms based on some statist ideas diminish slowly after the 2002. Such ideas seem to be replaced by requests of balance, criticisms regarding the extremism of the JDP in privatizations, and issues relating to the question of how the privatization should be made. For example, RPP MP Oğuz Oyan says the following in 2008:

There is a report which came before us from the Committee on Planning and Budget of the Turkish parliament. When I read the commission report I got surprised that they are pretty positive about the foundation universities. They do not consider the quality differences across the foundation universities. The report is in tune with an understanding of “the more is the better”. However, indeed there are certain things that do not correspond to the facts. For example, the report says that “in many countries, more than half of the higher education institutions are run by the private sector”. Completely wrong. There is no such thing. It is a fiction. I mean the statement of “many countries” can be said for a very limited number. Also, it says while the number of the students in the world who studies in private universities is approximating to 30 percent, in our country it is still 6 percent. I mean, how do you explain the 30 percent in the world? If it is only reference point is America, say it is America. But when we put it as the world in general, which world is that? Is Asia, Africa included in that? Which country?. Is the Middle Eastern included? I mean look at Europe. Take a look at the continent of Europe. What kind of 30 percent you are talking about? University education exists there as a public service and as a duty of the state. Thus, it is very surprising for these rambling things to be involved in the commission report and it meets us as a highly biased way of drafting a report. (Plenary Minutes, 30 July 2008)

In general, it is possible to say that a private-public balance has been targeted and increasingly achieved. The legitimizations base themselves mostly on the models of some European countries. The implementations, on the other hand, have been made with respect to various policy steps including government incentive, support, and encouragements. Also, the government does not seem to take an extra financial burden and carried the expansion of higher education with a relatively stable budget.

4. 4. 2. Employment and Human Capital

The employment problem has been a subject for the JDP government as early as 2002 due to an environment of economic crisis. The subject first emerges as a concern for the social state, and as part of a populist political discourse. However, it is also important to see that high amounts of young population in the country and high unemployment rates was a good ground for the re-structuring. As a matter of fact, the first discourses on the re-structuring of education lean towards the promises making an educational arrangement that can ignite the economic growth. We can observe that by the observations of employment problems among higher education graduates and the problems of vocational training structure, higher education increasingly treated as a part of the educational arrangement of employment. In the long excerpt below JDP MP Yüksek Çavuşoğlu makes an average summary of such ideas in 2003:

Nowadays the humanity experiences a passage from industrial society to information society, we all know that the technological development prepares the ground for an unprecedented amount of changes. This situation increases the importance of the issue of ‘improving the human resources’ both at the macro and micro level. There is a dazzling competition going on in a world compressed into the size of a village. The most important condition to stand in this international competition is not only the activation of the economic resources but also the activation of the human capital. When the investments made for the human capital are turned into production The transformation of the investments in human capital into the production is seen as the most important factor in the augmentation of the individual and national income. It is required to generate new technologies, use the existent ones in the most effective way possible, and develop the quality of the labor force in order to produce knowledge. Departing from this point, it is obvious that we should support and promote the private education and educational institutions to increase the competition in education, and to raise the future’s leaders and creative, qualified youth. (Plenary Minutes, 31 July 2003)

It can be said that arrangements of education relating to the labor force have always been in the foreground, although some terminological changes are also apparent. In other words, the field we can call labor market seem to be quite influential in the restructuring of higher education. While some aspects relating to such labor market seem state-independent, it is also important to emphasize that it cannot be seen free from state interventions.

In general, it can be observed that the changes experienced with respect to higher education points out to a very rational planning made by the government. Higher education seems to be at the very center of an arrangement in the sense of a macro planning based on work and labor concerns. For example, we can observe that ministries other than National Education ministry is quite active in planning and arranging the changes. In the two excerpts below

from years 2007 and 2008, the Minister of Industry and Trade summarizes some aspects of the restructuring based on employment market concerns:

But at this point, I would like to add something: the CoHE should determine from which department people should be graduated, which departments' graduates are likelier to find a job, what does the market want, what is the supply demand. Today what appears as the problem of employment in Turkey is the non-correspondence of the supply and demand. This is the real problem. There is a structure which is having difficulties in finding qualified personnel. Also, we have millions of unqualified people who cannot respond to that search. This is what we will be working for. (Plenary Minutes, 10 Dec. 2007)

But today when our children are being graduated from that department, do the section of the industry and trade need them or not? This has never done until today and this is the underlying reason for the unemployed among university-graduates. Then, in this period and the next, the CoHE must be planning the universities, their departments, it must identify in which sectors Turkey is going to compete and in which issues Turkey is going to need qualified people, and they must work accordingly. If I may summarize the incentive policy at hand: There will be a total work to determine the employment, incentives, investments, the kinds of investments, labor force planning, what kinds of support and will be given to them etc. I hope, this will be the main element of this work, the main purpose. (Plenary Minutes, 08 Jan. 2008)

4. 4. 2. 1. Vocational Schools of Higher Education

One of the fundamental components of the aforementioned arrangement appears to revolve around what can be called the “upper secondary higher education”. In Turkey this corresponds mostly a 2-year degree granting (associate degree) higher education institutions including the vocational higher schools.

It appears that the upper secondary school which has been proliferated in the world after 80s with many different models, constitute a fundamental aspect of the transformation of higher education in Turkey after 2002. Essentially, the transformation relating to vocational higher education starts long before 2002. Tekeli (2010, p. 331) reports that between 1983-2002 both the number of institutions and students regarding the vocational schools have been multiplied by 10. Similarly, supports and projects from international organizations such as the World Bank goes before 2002. Nevertheless, they are always seen inadequate. Moreover, it is possible to observe some regression in vocational education just around the millennium. The JDP government, and indeed many political parties take the vocational training issue to the subject of their discussions especially in the 2002-2007 period. The

general view is that the share of vocational education should be increased. The emphasis on the need for semi-skilled workers is among the main concerns. In 2006 RPP MP Mustafa Öztürk says:

I think, our essential problem, the natural enlargement field in the system of higher education should be 2-year vocational higher education. The share of vocational higher education in formal education is %38, and the total share in all higher education is %11. This is a very low level. This rate is above %30 in most of the developed countries. For example, it is %59 in a country like Singapore, %55 in Taiwan, %47 in Switzerland, and %55 in the USA. (Plenary Minutes, 22 March 2006)

As it can be discerned from the above excerpt, the main guide in the process also appear to be some indicators and policies of economically developed nations. While some international organization driven standards such as ISCED97 and later ISCED11 are being taken as criterion for the arrangements, many projects have been implemented in order to reach the levels manifested by the European Union, The USA, China, and Japan. Two of the largest projects is the Advancement of the Vocational Education and Training System (Turkish: *MEGEP, Meslekî Eğitim ve Öğretim Sistemini Güçlendirme Projesi*) and the Modernization of Vocational Education and Training (Turkish: *MTEM, Meslekî ve Teknik Eğitimin Modernizasyonu Projesi*).

Some of the policies in the 2002-2018 period also aim for the proliferation of vocational education in foundation universities. The number of foundation vocational higher education institution were zero at the beginning of 2000s. Now there are 5 such institutions and their numbers are expected to increase. Such increase is also mainly due to government incentive, support and commercial privileges. Especially in 2008, a problem regarding the designated authority for these institutions have been resolved by carrying these institutions under CoHE and Council of Ministers authority. The purpose of the regulation is explained by the JDP MP Yüksel Özden in this way:

By the 7th article that I took the floor to speak on, we clear the way for the foundations to open vocational higher education institutions without establishing a university or an institute of technology. We do this for two reasons. Based on the studies made on the business world, we see that the human power need there is by far, around %75, for the associate degree holders. With such bill, we pave the way and facilitate this. (Plenary Minutes, 18 June 2008)

Financial support is also directed to students of such institutions. The law no 7033 in 2016 have brought education support on student basis from the CoHE budget for the institutions established inside the organized industrial zone. Also, with this law, a coordination council

in the CoHE for the vocational higher education institutions have been established. Minister of Science, Industry, and Technology Fikri Işık expresses that the incentives are directly based on the needs of the industry:

We encourage vocational high education schools to be established in organized industry zones. As you know, we have 66 such schools in organized industry zones. There, we give a payment to industry zone or school management, around 1.5 times of the government cost per student, for each student: “just raise the students in line with your own needs” (Plenary Minutes, 09 Feb. 2016)

However, the process which began by the discourse of catching the developed states, end up in a rather extreme end. According to CoHE President Saraç in 2017 vocational higher education graduates have reached to %39 of total higher education graduates and this is higher than the OECD average which is %17 (YÖK'ten..., 2018). As in the gross schooling rate at higher education level, Turkey is firmly pushing on to achieve the highest schooling rates at vocational higher education in the world. Indeed, the JDP governments have followed an extreme vocational higher education policy. As of 2019, the total number of the number of higher schools and vocational higher schools come close to number of faculties in the country (1822 faculty, 1458 HS+VHS).

Although these policies have some criticism regarding their content, they are also supported by opposition parties. However, with the involvement of Peace and Democracy Party (Turkish: *BDP*) in 2010, and the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP, Turkish: *HDP*) in 2015, some serious criticisms proliferated. For example, PDP MP Mahmut Celadet Gaydalı said the following regarding the law no 7033 in 2017:

When we look at the article, the target, is to give education allowance to such institutions for the students being educated at schools which are established in organized industry zones. All the changes regarding the vocational technic education field made in the period of JDP governments are organized for the interests of the capital. Relations of production and the system of exploitation created by these relations is being reproduced. The regulations regarding the vocational education planned by this law, will result in the deepening of the exploitation. (...) By this law that envisage vocational higher education institutions to be directed to industry zones, the students who are already only limitedly breath the atmosphere of the university, will be totally cut out of this atmosphere and turn into workers of the industry. The need for qualified intermediate staff cannot be solved by directing children to vocational higher education institutions established in the organized industry zones. The developed countries which solved this problem to a large extent, increasingly raise the age of orientating to vocational education, and act on the basis of the aspirations of the individuals. (Plenary Minutes, 21 July 2017)

In general, it is possible to say that these schools constituted an important aspect of the transformation of higher education orientations in Turkey. The total number of associate degree programs and vocational higher schooling is quickly surpassing many countries especially due to the young population in Turkey and the JDP's policies.

4. 4. 3. Research and Technology

Before 2000, research and technology initiatives in Turkey have been carried out partly by the TÜBİTAK and partly by some university-industry programs. However, these were rather undersized both in terms of subsidies and intensity of the activities. After 2000s, both by the initiatives of the TÜBİTAK, and the Techno-Zones emerged by law on Technology Centers in 2001, there has been an increase in such activities. Apart from these, there began to proliferate many foundations for research and technology programs after 2002.

Higher education institutions have always been important actors in research and technology development. Although their share in total activities would drop as we will emphasize later, there have been many incentive and support from the government to the higher education institutions to enable them to increase such activities. For example, by the “Law on Supporting the Research and Development Activities” (law no 5746) in 2008 research and development activities within higher education institutions have been supported by special discounts, exceptions, financial subsidies and some other incentives.

Especially after 2007 there are many laws which aim to build what we can be called a “research infrastructure”. In 2011 by the decree no 635 the Ministry of Industry and Commerce have been changed into the Ministry of Science, Industry, and Technology and more particularly concrete steps have been taken in the partnership of these three notions. Although the term science has been erased in 2018, many policies that fundamentally relate to higher education such as industry partnership issues, R&D and technology activities, and commercialization targets have been executed in relation to this ministry.

In the following period there have been a lot of policy action. The law no 6550 in 2014 “Law on Supporting Research Infrastructure” and the R&D reform package announced by Prime Minister Davutoğlu on January 2016 which turn into a law (law no 6676) in February were among these steps. Discounts, exceptions, support and incentive regarding these activities

have been added by many others. JDP MP Harun Karacan explains that the reform package which is partly accomplished by the law no 6676 have 6 purposes:

To support design activities, to stimulate R&D investment, to pass to a qualified production structure, to ensure the production of high added-value products, to increase the quality and employment of the R&D personnel, to commercialize R&D activities, to uncover technology companies and support them, to institutionalize and improve university-industry cooperation, to ensure effective coordination of R&D and innovation reinforcements and to strengthen such ecosystem. (Plenary Minutes, 09 Feb. 2016)

Finally, in 2017 higher education institutions have been allowed to establish technology transfer offices by the law no 7033. Although I have only provided a very brief summary, it can be said that at that point legal and infrastructure-based aspects of the transformation was accomplished to a large extent at least on paper.

4. 4. 3. 1. Institutional Arrangements

In addition to some legal arrangements mentioned above, one of the main arrangements encapsulating research and technology activities is based on the institutional structures. Among them, TÜBİTAK, which I have elaborated with respect to administrative policies earlier, stands out.

It has been stated that there have been some administrative changes in TÜBİTAK as early as 2003 and 2005, with respect to some strategies of governing. Although obstacles such as vetoes did also exist, informal governing strategies, decrees, and especially appointments made TÜBİTAK increasingly closer in administrative terms with the JDP government, causing it to lose its autonomy. Here, it is important to stress that these were not only some political struggles but also that they relate to the fact that TÜBİTAK has been seen as a key element for certain policy orientations. In fact, in the period between 2002-2018 TÜBİTAK's administrative, financial, and supervision power on research and technology activities seem to be increased by many laws. In 2008, with the words of JDP MP Reha Denemeç, we can see the parallelism between transformation of education and the arrangements relating institutions such as TÜBİTAK:

Now, as the JDP government, we know that policies that support technological development have an important role on the strategies of economic growth and we are exerting effort to do what is necessary. What do we do in that sense? Dear Prime Minister took this “technological

development” topic under his wings. There is a council named Science Technology High Council established in 1983 where the technological developments are made an agenda and discussed. Dear Prime Minister presides over this council once every six-months since September 2004, which normally had to gather once every six-months over the presidency of the President of the government. Now, why did I say that? I said that because, up to 10-years’ time until 2004, the council should have gathered 40 or 41 times. But we look, how many times it has gathered? Only 9 times. (...) We are making these meeting once every six-months’ time by the presidency of the Mr. Prime Minister. (Plenary Minutes, 07 Feb. 2008)

In that connection, we can see that TÜBİTAK’s impact is indeed increased rapidly. Such increase is also related to increasing finance with respect to increasing government funds, channeling of private funds, and some international organization projects and funds that Turkey gained access through partnerships and through the harmonization to the EU. In other words, international and private funds play an important role. This situation which can be observed in Table 7 is explained by JDP MP Reha Denemeç telling about the TÜBİTAK before the JDP:

We were in the TV program “Manşet” two days before with Mr. Mustafa Özyurt. He is also here. Mehmet Ali Brand also invited Mr. Cemil Arıkan. As you know Cemil Arıkan, together with Tosun Terzioğlu, are among the 12 members appointed to Science Council; he is a member appointed by Erdal İnönü. Cemil Arıkan said something very clear: “TÜBİTAK’s old structure was like playing in the sand” and “TÜBİTAK needed private sector to fund, canalize fund for the private sector; but it could not do that. We were able to make very good decisions among the Science Council thanks to TÜBİTAK’s autonomy from the political will; but it was not possible for us to actualize them in real life. (Plenary Minutes, 29 April 2005)

Arrangements relating to coordination and economic activities of TÜBİTAK can be seen as early as 2005 with the law no 5376. The law no 5798 in 2008 and the law no 6676 in 2016 also target many issues such as organizational and economic aspects of R&D activities, increase of the possibility of economic output by these activities, opening up commercialization possibilities, placing commercial exceptions for the institutions and many more along the line. Similarly, by decree no 635 in 2011 and the law no 6353 in 2012 TÜBİTAK is given authority and missions to support turning R&D activity outputs into economic value, establishing corporations/making corporal partnerships, providing support for patent and industrial property. Also, some authority is given with respect to support, donate, evaluate, and supervise university’s cooperation with corporations.

These institutional arrangements do not seem to be limited to TÜBİTAK. For example, there are some indicators which show that similar changes have been experienced in institutions such as Turkish Academy of Sciences (TAS, Turkish: *TÜBA*). A letter published in 2011 by

58 TAS members have announced their resignation for the increasing interventions to transform the institution, have been a subject in the plenary too. The letter seems to shed some light on the changes and plans regarding the institution:

It is essential that academies elect their members without the influence of governments, business world and all kinds of pressure groups, and without intervention from institutions outside the academy. We, as elected members of the Turkish Academy of Sciences and as scientists who embraced scientific method, academic merit, freedom and honesty, observe that the TAS is losing out its qualification as an academy by new arrangements regarding the appointment of members and the president by the government, the CoHE, and TÜBİTAK executed by decrees numbered 651 and 662. All the efforts and contacts we made could not change this situation. Many academies and associations of academy all over the world openly expressed, by the messages they sent to national authorities of our country and to the TAS, that institutions which cannot make their own elections cannot be taken as academies. For all these reasons, we regretfully announce that we are resigning from the TAS membership. (Plenary Minutes, 05 Nov. 2014)

Additionally, many new institutions arise in the period between 2002-2018 with respect to the changing environment of the higher education. For example, in the field of health sciences Health Institutes of Turkey (TÜSEB) has been established by government initiatives. It has a national and international scale for “turning knowledge into product based on university and industry cooperation models” in an “open competition” environment to support sustainable development.

4. 4. 3. 2. University-Industry-Corporation Relations

One of the subjects that the JDP governments and a good amount of opposition MPs seem to agree with is university’s relations with the industry and the business environment. In general, this is the main drive behind enlarging such relations appear to be the economic growth and labor force arrangements. This issue has been on the agenda since the 2002 and become increasingly implemented. It is possible to say that while first serious initiatives come after 1990s, concrete results and substantial expansion come after 2000s.

For example, with the law no 4691 in 2001 industry zones for higher education institutions have been officially framed and first techno-zones have been established. This development actually opens up some new ways for industry-university relations other than government incentive and universities’ own circulating capital. One of the first projects is the University Industry Interface Centers (USAM, Turkish: *Üniversite Sanayi Ortak Arayüz Merkezi*)

which has been deactivated in 2006 and reactivated in 2007 under the name University Industry Cooperation Centers Platform (USİMP, Turkish: *Üniversite Sanayi İşbirliği Merkezi Platformu*). These umbrella initiatives by the government have taken very important roles in building such relations. Today the number of techno-zones have exceeded 80 while there were only less than 5 in the early 2000s.

Especially around 2010, certain discourses, initiatives and policies increasingly proliferated such relations. We can observe that they have turned into the very norms of higher education after a certain point. In connection with this, the law no 6550 have provided legal status to “research infrastructures” which included institutional settings such as the techno-zones. By this law, the research infrastructures have been defined as:

... units categorized as advanced research laboratories, thematic research laboratories and central research laboratories where R&D activities are being carried out, which reside within the body of higher education institutions, and which possess qualified human power and machine, equipment, hardware and software modern technologies of the day (article 2 of the law no 6550)

It is important to stress that the incentives and structures concerned all actors of higher education in every level, including students, graduates, academics. The main orientation is to include these actors in industry and the corporation relations. The speech below RPP MP Ümit Özgümüş explains the importance of their participation to such relations:

... the program of university-industry cooperation model called ÜSİMP, which later turned into university-industry research center by ÜSAM model, was a very successful model. At the time we have established Adana ÜSAM in Adana, and it was a total success, we have supplied a university-industry cooperation. (...) Now, here, after research infrastructures have gained legal entity, it is being desired to employ university teachers both in ÜSAMs and research infrastructures. Dear friends, if we want them to work particularly in the industry, if we ensure that they work there, they need a motivation, or they must have a reason to work there. (Plenary Minutes, 02 July 2014)

A wide range of incentives and support have been provided by the legal instruments for these actors to participate. For example, the law no 6676 stipulated that if basic sciences graduates are employed in R&D centers, a share of their wages will be paid by the ministry for 2 years. Similarly, many arrangements are made for the academics. For example, the tax on their profit in those activities has been ignored, capital cutbacks have been limited, the share of profit for the academics have been increased.

Also, by the law no 6676 in 2016, post-doctoral position has been opened and added to higher education law. Later, by the law no 7033 in 2017 their employment status has been clarified with respect to R&D and other activities.

By law 7033 the CoHE have been also authorized until 2023 to make arrangements regarding students' activities with respect to industry and the business environment. According to this arrangement the CoHE:

... is authorized to obligate undergraduate level sciences and engineering students of higher education to complete their education with an applied education in private sector enterprises, techno-zones, research infrastructures, R&D centers, or industry establishments at the last year of their education. It is also authorized to determine the departments in which applied education is going to be obligated, and limit this application to certain higher education institutions, and/or certain faculties or departments and programs. (additional article 74 of the law no 7033)

4. 4. 3. 3. Specialization of Universities

An important step for achieving economic growth utilizing higher education is the subject that we can call “specialization of universities”. This subject is actually closely connected with the university-industry-corporation relations mentioned above. The discourse on the use of specialization of universities, and the establishment of specialized universities is actually as old as the first government program in 2002 where the following statement is made: Universities will be ensured to be specialized in some fields by taking the potentials of their regions into consideration. However, until 2008 this has not been more than a seldom repeated sentence. Starting with 2008 specialized universities has been more frequently mentioned and started to be realized little by little as in the examples such as Piri Reis University. The lifting of the law on the obligation of establishing a faculty of arts and sciences has been seen as one of the first step of realization of specialized universities:

It was in 2015 that the idea gained real substance by a project named “Regional Development-Based Mission Differentiation and Specialization of the Universities” in the partnership of the CoHE and ministry of development. 5 pilot universities chosen by the CoHE are given the task of specialization in subjects such as agriculture, geothermal, animal husbandry. In 2017 by the 13th article of the law no 7033 the CoHE has been given added the task of “making arrangement and giving decisions regarding the specialization of higher

education institutions”. On the basis that it is against the university autonomy, some opposition party MPs criticized this decision and proposed that the decision should be given by the universities themselves. However, these are rejected by the government. These decisions seem to be taken with contacts with the rectors.

In 2018 5 more universities have been added to the project. Choices are again made with respect to criterion such as the natural resources in the city and region, the commercial and industrial activities concentrating in that area, and with a target to utilize human resources in the area. The president of the CoHE explained these in that fashion:

I believe the operations regarding these 10 universities which have been chosen in that field will help local economic development and the sustainable development goals of the country. All these operations we mention are in fact described as a new transformation in global higher education and a new academic revolution. We should not drift apart from this process. (Sputnik, 2018)

A second project in connection to specialization initiatives is the project on research universities emerged in 2017. Among the interested universities, 10 grand universities and 5 back up universities have been chosen by some preliminary evaluations by the CoHE and rector interviews by a ministerial jury. The clarification of this arrangement in terms of its similarity and difference from world-wide research university models need a university-based research and therefore could not be properly observed. However, it is important to state that this step has been taken by the government and the involvement of the government in the election and implementation is very large. As a matter of fact, the main idea underlying such change is the government’s privilege towards these universities in their grants, activities and staff.

4. 4. 3. 4. R&D

Contemporary R&D constitute one of the important fields of internal and external activities of higher education institutions. In that context, it is possible to outline some trends after 2002s. One important change is the increasing attempts (and results) on carrying the R&D activities towards the private sector which was mostly carried out by the public universities. In 2005 the government predicted %50 share for the private sector by 2010 (Plenary Minutes, 16 Dec. 2005). In fact, this was achieved by some delay. In Table 7 we can observe the trend of increase of the private sector share in R&D activities.

In Table 7 we can also see the total expenditure and the share of R&D expenditure in GDP which are increasing. Also, it is important to stress that although its share is decreasing, the R&D activities in higher education also increase in total financial terms. In connection with that number of R&D personnel also increase almost steadily. The trend regarding private sector share in spending can be observed in terms of the research personnel. While the number of research personnel in higher education institutions was approximately 3 times more than private sector in 2002, private sector has 1,5 times more personnel than higher education institutions in 2017²⁰.

Table 7: R&D Expenditures (Source: Turkish Statistical Institute and TÜBİTAK National Science, Technology, and Innovation Statistics)

	Higher Education (%)	Private Sector (%)	R&D Expend. / GDP (%)	Total R&D Expenditure (Million TL)
2002	64,3%	28,7%	0,51%	1 843
2003	66,3%	23,2%	0,47%	2 197
2004	69,9%	24,2%	0,50%	2 898
2005	54,6%	33,8%	0,57%	3 835
2006	51,3%	37,0%	0,56%	4 400
2007	48,2%	41,3%	0,69%	6 091
2008	43,8%	44,2%	0,69%	6 893
2009	47,4%	40,0%	0,81%	8 087
2010	46,0%	42,5%	0,80%	9 268
2011	45,5%	43,2%	0,80%	11 154
2012	43,9%	45,1%	0,83%	13 062
2013	42,1%	47,5%	0,82%	14 807
2014	40,5%	49,8%	0,86%	17 598
2015	39,7%	50,0%	0,88%	20 615
2016	36,3%	54,2%	0,94%	24 641
2017	33,5%	56,9%	0,96%	29 855

Policies and government initiatives have a big share in this growth. Facilitation of R&D centers, university-industry cooperation (such as personnel quotas, incentives etc.), financial

²⁰ All numbers are given in terms of full time equivalent, not headcount. The trend is even more dramatic in headcount statistics. See: TUIK.

support for business in such context (such as discounts and exceptions on customs tax, trading tax, and estate tax etc.), and the exception and incentives towards the personnel that I have mentioned earlier, constitute some of the examples.

One of the main observations on R&D activities is that these activities are almost always approached with respect to a context of economic output. Although R&D is a field where immediate profit expectation is not fitting to its own logic, an economic approach at that extent is indeed interesting. For example, the speech made by the Minister of Science, Industry and Technology on the design activities which have been newly added to R&D activities demonstrate how such activities are considered:

Now, we also support design centers like R&D centers for the first time by this law. Dear friends, I have given an example: Today, if the Italian shirt is being sold for 98 dollars where Turkish shirt is being sold for 26 dollars, the only difference between them is the brand and the design. For this reason, we have brought a bill into the parliament to support design offices like R&D centers. This is a very serious reform. (Plenary Minutes, 09 Feb. 2016)

Such discourses based on economic output can be observed in many discussions and policies on R&D activities. Actually, the economic output seems to be signal the fundamental reason behind the appeal to R&D activities. The two main corner stones of the economic output relating the R&D activities are solving the problem of diminishing returns and increasing the economic volume by opening more ideas and activities to marketization. While R&D is actually quite risky in terms of direct profit, its results especially in terms of increasing the economic volume is rather precise. Altın & Kaya (2009) finds that even in 1990-2005 period when R&D investments are low, there is relation between R&D activities and long-term volume-based economic growth in Turkey. In the below excerpt such widespread perspective can be observed:

Dear member of parliament, the expenses spent for the R&D activities serve as an investment. When a decision is taken about this issue, the technical success of the R&D projects must be well estimated along with the future pay-off of the investment and the expenses. It is very well-known fact that the R&D activities have an impact on the development and the growth a country, and thereby on the profitability. This is why the increase in the investments of R&D must be considered as a strategy. When the technological information gained as a result of the R&D activities is implemented on the industrial sphere, the value of the product will increase, and this will give the upper hand in the product competition. This is why the prospective profit will be much higher than the investment made on the R&D. (Plenary Minutes, 31 July 2008)

Also, it can be observed that Turkey is not able to reach its targets in terms of R&D activities. For example, some goals such as increasing the share of R&D activities to %3 of the GDP is a target since the early 2000s. However, these levels are still not reached. There are many discourses even from the JDP and the government on the relative failure on growth and marketization of R&D activities including the calls for more effort. However, frustrations do not hinder the vision but seem to result in the explicit call for the fundamental problems behind the economic development by R&D. In the below excerpt JDP MP Nejat Koçer explains the required steps for the state. His words openly express some fundamentals of the R&D activities in the eyes of many politicians:

At the same time, we cannot deny that there are certain inadequacies in the administration, functioning and the personnel numbers of the established centers, and that the R&D activities being made there could not commercialize enough, and their contribution to economic and social progression of our country does remain limited. R&D activities are risky in the economic sense. Such risk also limits the R&D spending made by the private sector. For this reason, the public has to offer contribution to the process of production of knowledge and commercialization of it and take over some of the risks. For that, the public has to create a knowledge base for research activities, technology and innovation development, form national research infrastructures, provide finance for the R&D by project-based support, and develop an environment appropriate to commercialization. (Plenary Minutes, 02 July 2014)

4. 4. 3. 5. Capitalization and Commercialization of Knowledge

Within all these development-based re-structuring process, another important step is taken in relation to higher education. The phenomenon of capitalization and commercialization of knowledge is intrinsically related to aforementioned research activities. The concerns for capitalization and commercialization seem to be limited, or less spoken in the period between 2002-2007. In this period, it is shaped by the discourses on employment and need for economic growth. After 2007, capitalization and commercialization seem to become more discussable and specifically thrive after 2010s where we can observe serious materializations. In general, an orientation towards activities with palpable economic output rather than basic research is fundamental to such appeal. Concrete proposals made by RPP MP Ümit Özgümüş actually summarizes some of the fundamental orientations on this topic:

University teachers must write articles for academic career and publish them in scientific journals. As you are also aware of, a great deal of these are either plagiarism or works that run into the ground without any use. But we have proposed something for many years: When academics work in these centers, if they can build products or lower the cost of production

in Small or Medium Sized Enterprises [Turkish: *KOBİ*] or in industry, or if they can develop science, invention, then it should work as if they made a scientific publication, these should be a factor for their academic career. I think, with a change on the CoHE law, academics, instead of dealing with these obsolete and abandoned articles, can take part in the industry and the KOBİs, since they will be benefiting from there. (Plenary Minutes, 02 July 2014)

Especially after 2010s, not only the government and JDP MPs but also many MPs from opposition parties seem to agree more on the perspectives relating to commercialization. However, the opposition parties are in general seem more cautious and some criticisms do also flourish among them. Criticism around these policies and discourses do also rise particularly by the involvement of parties such as Peace and Democracy Party (Turkish: *BDP*) and Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP, Turkish: *HDP*) after 2010. The opening of a proposal for motion given by the BDP in 2012 provides an example:

It can be seen that neoliberal change and transformation in education policies gained speed with the JDP power in government. It is observed that commercialization and privatization are being widespread, flexible and precarious employment is increasing, public schools are being sold, private schools and universities are being supported by public funds, and curriculums are being re-made with a market-directed content. Education policies are being determined market-centered notions such as by commercialization, commodification, competition, efficiency, profitability which are within the agenda of the market. (Plenary Minutes, 28 June 2012)

Although criticisms continue, notions such as “turning into a knowledge society”, “creating an economy based on knowledge”, “commercializing and capitalizing knowledge” appear to be used quite normatively after 2010s. Here, I would like to stress that the increasing use of such terms appear to owe itself to influences by international organizations. Nevertheless, we can increasingly see bold and explicit discourses and clear quests on the problem of “how can research activities be commercialized”. In 2014 RPP MP Ümit Özgümüş states:

Now, research infrastructures... In general, this is a very positive bill on such topic. Because, nowhere in the world, like in countries such as South Korea which is taken as an example by the developed countries as a development model, if university is not included, there is no production of science and technology. However, I also have to say this: If the science and technology developed at the university is going to stay at the shelves of the university, it is also of no use, it also has to commercialize. (Plenary Minutes, 02 July 2014)

In 2012 TÜBİTAK actually starts to publish nationwide university rankings in which criterion such as “economic contribution and commercialization” are taken as fundamental criterion for the evaluation. It is important to stress that these rankings can be very effective with respect to designation of criterion. As a matter of fact, it is possible to observe that

discourse, support, activities and outputs become too widespread to be outlined here. As a matter of fact, the Minister of Science, Industry and Technology, already promised to pay an award of 1 million Turkish Liras for 10 years to universities achieving the top 10 rank in TÜBİTAK's rankings for them to increase the number of their patents (Girişimci ve Yenilikçi..., 2013).

The proliferation of patenting and licensing activities in Turkey is also an important process regarding the commercialization and the capitalization of knowledge. The increase in the numbers of patent registers can be seen in Table 8 as a good indication of the process. I have also added EPC (European Patent Convention) numbers to stress the share of the European Union connection in the trend of increase. Also, it is important to stress that a big deal of the patenting and licensing activities in Turkey are foreign originated.

Table 8: Number of patent registers (Source: Turkish Patent and Trademark Office)

Year	Domestic			Foreign			General Total
	PTC	EPC	Total	PTC	EPC	Total	
1998	0	0	31	403	0	743	774
1999	5	0	28	796	0	1097	1125
2000	6	0	23	846	0	1113	1136
2001	17	0	58	1814	0	2051	2109
2002	28	1	73	1351	11	1711	1784
2003	18	1	93	685	176	1087	1180
2004	16	0	68	686	957	1868	1936
2005	29	7	95	525	2342	3077	3172
2006	18	15	122	410	3631	4183	4305
2007	114	21	318	202	4140	4472	4790
2008	48	37	338	154	4281	4531	4869
2009	68	47	456	149	4912	5154	5610
2010	66	69	642	110	4675	4868	5510
2011	59	74	847	67	5569	5692	6539
2012	44	102	1025	53	6710	6791	7816
2013	33	143	1244	68	7570	7681	8925
2014	34	76	1251	66	7173	7279	8530
2015	96	163	1730	123	8214	8370	10100
2016	48	183	1794	91	9125	9280	11074
2017	44	207	1964	96	10317	10460	12424
2018	39	208	2805	88	10792	11077	13882

4. 4. 3. 6. High-Tech Dreams

We have already pointed out that high-tech growth, although presenting the very ideal case of physical and intellectual research and development activities, might go unsuccessful. In short, this seems to be the case for Turkey too. High-tech production and high-tech related profits of licensing and patenting is more an ideal orientation than a practical process. This is probably due to hasty expectations and concerns of quantity which took over quality. Actually, the emphasis on high-tech and high profit in policy discussion emerges very late, around 2010s. An appeal to high “added value” is increasingly a concern especially since then. A quotation from Minister of Science, Industry and Technology Fikri Işık summarizes such views in connection to a global competition frame which seem to be internal to an appeal to high-tech and high-profit activities:

Dear president, dear members of the parliament; we have discussed and finalized a very important law for our country. Indeed, there are stunning developments in the science and technology field throughout the world. At this point, the gap between the countries which have science and technology, and which do not have them is growing each passing day. The world is now running towards the fourth industry revolution at full speed. Turkey definitely needs to produce products with high added value, render its production structure qualified and continuous to not to break off from the race, not being stuck at the middle-income country trap anymore. In this respect, the necessary destination is R&D and innovation. Turkey is going to be a country which produces, develops and exports in science and technology, R&D and innovation, or a country which imports, uses, and consumes. As the JDP power, we want Turkey to be a producing, developing, and exporting country; all our policies up to today is in order to strengthening Turkey’s infrastructure at this juncture. (Plenary Minutes, 16 Feb. 2016)

However, it is difficult to assess the actual situation. In fact, it can be said that the emergence of such discourse is possibly due to a frustration in meeting the expectations related to research and technology activities. The way the governments tackle with the openly expressed frustrations suggest that there are little concrete steps taken toward achieving such dreams. Some criticisms show that a part of the problem is due to a negligence towards problems of skilled labor education and quality in higher education. There seem to be no or very little attention to the higher education content and quality in such discussions. The relevance of higher education to high-tech dreams are always discussed with respect to macroeconomic perspectives and in quantitative terms. The situation is almost a dead-end. As we outlined in the previous part, the research and technology activities do indeed work in terms of commercialization and gaining economic volume. This seem indispensable for the developmental goals of the nation. However, it also seems to contradict with the concerns

of high added value with respect to quality-quantity dilemma. In fact, it can be easily observed that concerns of quantity, and therefore gaining volume, is still make out the foundations of the discourses and policies. In the long excerpt below, RPP MP Mehmet Ali Susam summarizes the position of Turkey with respect to an evaluation based on global criterion:

Turkey earns 1.46 dollars from 1 kg of export. Well, what does the South Korea do? It earns 3 dollars. Japan earns 3.5 dollars, and Germany 4.1 dollars. That means our export worth little but weight heavy; distant from R&D, innovation, and high-tech. We export in fields which have been abandoned by the Europe, by the developed countries. As a matter of fact, if we look at the support we provide in R&D, when you do the math, R&D supports are mostly conveyed to automotive industry and a couple of more sector. Even the number of firms using the support for high technology is very low, and the share of the support at that point is low. (...) Besides these, of course, Turkey is also in a very bad position on labor power quality. On labor power quality we have the 130th place out of 148 countries. In global innovation ranking, we are at the 68th rank. In global competition power, we have the 44th place out of 148 countries. Where are the goals of first 10, where are the visions of 2023, where are the R&D targets? It is not possible for us to increase our level of development with such labor power quality. Why does it happen? Because our education quality is low, we have 7-years of average quality of education. In the PISA exams that 65 countries compete, we have the 44th place in mathematics, 43rd in sciences, 42nd in reading comprehension, 44th in English practice. That is to say, there is no way of improving our scientific and educational attributions without increasing the quality of education, without supplying universities with autonomous, free, and high quality scientists, without lifting political power pressure on the universities, without the rectors elected by the universities themselves rather than the ones appointed by the CoHE, and without making scientists active in designating university policies. For this reason, I would like underline: This bill is a rightminded one, for the integration of the activities made in the universities to the industry and transforming them into products to be able to turn into a country which sells high added value products to the world market, and increasing of the R&D support of the state. However, it is clear that such efforts are far from solving Turkey's problem both in terms of resource and vision, with respect to economic policies you use. (Plenary Minutes, 02 July 2014)

At that point, a question with respect to higher education and R&D re-emerges. In a public announcement in 2011 TÜBİTAK said that the basic sciences are meaningful and beneficial if and only if they compose a synergy for the applied and engineering sciences (Okçabol, 2014). In the context of transformation, there is indeed a decrease of emphasis on the practice of basic research. Applied research revolves around solving problems and producing a use. However, research and development in the most contemporary context differ from the applied research. In theory, R&D is defined as “research and experimental development” although the stress on experimental character is sometimes forgotten (OECD, 2002; OECD, 2015). The question is: what is the exact relation of these three different approaches to

scientific activity? In connection to the stress on quantity and volume, the stress on R&D in the context of higher education also appear to be purely economic. Therefore, the expectations from R&D do not seem to relate to an expectation of a breakthrough, or a fundamental leap etc. In other words, high-tech or high-R&D dreams are essentially high added value expectation and therefore experimental character is both under stressed and far from being fulfilled. If fundamental understanding is inseparable from a potential breakthrough in the modern sense, then one can say that Turkey is moving away from that dream.

In general, it can be said that the changes and policies regarding the research and technology in the period between 2002-2018 relate mostly to formation of an infrastructure rather than signifying a genuine leap. In connection with that, the infrastructure established in the hands of the government do not appear to be arranged in connection to high-end results. In 2016 PDP MP Mehmet Toğrul summarizes this view which is frequently stressed by the opposition parties:

The development of industry, technology, R&D and design in the world actually follows an evolutionary process. At the beginning of the evolutionary process, you need an environment to produce knowledge, you need to have an idea, and turn this idea into knowledge. Then, you need to support this idea by scientific findings and turn it into technology, and then, after the technology, you need to lead towards the R&D and design. However, when we look at the bill, the structure has no aspect of knowledge, no aspect to produce the technology, but we build the structure from above. How do we build a structure from above? Now, dear friends, scientific knowledge is produced by the universities in Turkey. And when you say 'science' in the universities, fundamental sciences come to mind. When you take a look at the fundamental sciences in Turkey, we are almost in a position of not being able to make any fundamental science. Especially in 2007 when the JDP captured the universities, the fundamental sciences have collapsed. When one says 'fundamental sciences' physics, chemistry, mathematics, biology come to mind; and engineering, medicine, and other fields ensure that the knowledge coming out of there turn into technology. Now, you design a R&D and design policy in a country where there is no scientific knowledge, where there is no production of scientific knowledge, no policy of science, and no industry policy after the science policy, and from there, no technology policy. (Plenary Minutes, 09 Feb. 2016)

The point actually reveals a result which is stressed with respect to massification aspect of the transformation. Rapid regulations and policies regarding the higher education-research setting do not seem to qualify for grand social consequences in qualitative terms. To put it as a question, how do we know that research and scientific activities in the contemporary context of Turkey do indeed gravitate towards genuine social virtue or technology in the sense of social benefit? As a matter of fact, discourses, policies, and concrete practices have

very little emphasis on such social benefits. The grand emphasis is on economic growth, economic development, and global competition as we will see in the next subsection. To put it in a different way, maybe the practices do not draw away from meeting the dreams; maybe merely the dreams are entirely different.

4. 4. 4 Visions for Global Rivalry: “2023”

An important observation regarding the policies and discourses around higher education come close to signifying a very fundamental idea behind the re-structuring of higher education. Up to this point, I have already illustrated that the remarks of JDP members and the governments show that the higher education has been conceptualized as a motor of economic development. In fact, I would like to add here that it was also possible to observe that the problems of higher education in Turkey have been argued to be resolvable with respect to economic development. While it was clear with respect to justifications of privatization, it was also illustrated symbolically and practically in policies regarding massification by the discourse “*Göç yolda düzülür*” which means that the needs confronted in migration should be eliminated in the process of migration. There are many instances in both committee and the plenary where JDP members and the ministers repeat this Turkish proverb. In general it denotes that when a decision is made (needless to say that the decision corresponds to political agenda of the JDP) it is important to set it to work, formalities and details are unimportant and considerable after the decision has been set to work. Behind such mobilization where the legislative and executive seem to work in “harmony” there appears some underlining targets which can be best summed by a future projection.

The contemporary Turkish government in connection to its dominant-party system seem to set its eye on a very important part of its agenda which can be symbolized by the discourse “The target is 2023!”. 2023 here symbolizes an economic development marked by a will to become one of the largest economies of the world and idealized by the JDP’s path of modernization. Although such appeal can be observed with clear manifestations in party and government programs, I would like to stress its relevance to ideas on higher education. While the discussions on the law no 7100 are being made in the parliamentary committee in 2018, JDP MP İsmet Uçma summarizes a point which constitute a common ground:

Now, friends, if you have a transformation of mentality appropriate to constituting a weight in the composition of civilizations, being ahead in the contest of world civilizations and of contemporary civilization, then the rest is detail, all is detail. (Committee Minutes, 2018b, p. 34)

However, the fundamental question is this: What kind of mentality is appropriate to constituting a weight in the composition of civilizations? I believe a general outline of the JDP's answer to such question can be made with respect to its appeal to economic liberalism. While there are indeed some changes of agendas and ideas within these 16 years, some of the fundamental tenets are more decisive.

In 2002-2007 period, it is possible to observe that there were some conflicting ideas in these early periods about the higher education. This is actually similar to the findings related to issues of quality and administration where some discourse and policy steps seem to be nullified in the later periods. However, the agenda for economic liberalism was no less in the foreground in comparison to later periods. For example, privatization has always been a point of emphasis. Although a call to "2023" has been popularized later, the global competition within a new arrangement of higher education was no less stressed. In a speech congratulating Erciyes University's industry and business initiatives, JDP MP Mustafa Elitaş illustrates some ideas in 2003:

Dear members of parliament, universities need to get rid of region university identity, in fact, from nation university identity, and transform into universal quality, and keep along with the changing conditions of the world in the process of globalization. A grand university is a university that is appropriate to universal science scale; because science is a universal concept. It is not possible for science to develop by a narrow and uniform perspective which stuck in a specific geographical area. It is an exigency to integrate with the world to do what is necessary. With such consciousness, in which science is in the foreground, universal standards dominate in every aspect, vocational knowledge, ability, and skills in line with nation and world standards, and with an aim to achieve world university... (Plenary Minutes, 03 Dec. 2003)

The stress here on the universal character of the science and university is actually interesting. Policies such as specialization of universities, national economic growth-based understanding of R&D activities, and increasing vocational training are almost contradictory to the universal idea of the university in its modern wake. The term universal is actually unfitting, while global or international would much more meaningful. The universal quality expected of the university here in this speech is not, in reality, the university. The universal here is a ground of economic growth and global competition which makes up the standards for the university. Nevertheless, I will return to this discussion in Chapter V.

In a speech made on December 2006 by Nazım Ekrem on behalf of the JDP group we can observe some of the other concerns such as the EU harmonization and stability. In fact, these two subjects are frequently stressed in the 2002-2007 period.

In this context, as Justice and Development Party, protecting the macro-economic stability, popularizing the use of technology, strengthening the social indicators, increasing economic frame investment rates and securing and sustaining political stability in the political system are going to be among our principal missions. On the matter of our vision, one of the fundamental indicators that we designate as vision for the incoming period, is a Turkey which is growing in stability, making a fair income distribution, having competition power in the global arena, turning into a knowledge society, and completing the EU membership process. What it means, that the desire and aspiration of reaching contemporary civilization is continuing, and ... (Plenary Minutes, 15 Dec. 2006)

I have already stressed that the use of the term “knowledge society” would be increased in the following years. The discourses on the added value from the knowledge is increasingly turn into a norm. Similarly, the arrangements relating to the “human capital” constituted another subject. Some frequently stressed direct relations between global competition, human capital and knowledge society can be summarized in the two excerpts below:

Dear members of parliament, in line with the necessities of our time, universities are institutions where higher education needs of our society, in which young generation constitute a weight, is met. They have a very important place in our country’s socio-economic development by the education they provide. In a world that is rapidly globalizing, where competition is increasing, and where especially the race regarding the technology and science is heating, it is possible to keep our country inside the race only with respect to human power raised in the university. (Plenary Minutes, 18 June 2008)

A knowledge-based economy that invests to science and technology, also providing an environment for commercialization of these, and that exists with humans and for humans, will carry our country into 2023 objectives. (Plenary Minutes, 09 Feb. 2016)

As illustrated in the second except, the discourse on “2023” becomes a focus of the tide, a terminus for the action increasingly after 2010. The emphasis on commercialization in science and technology activities do actually become very important after that point. Although I have already explained, I would like to share another excerpt on the importance of research and technology activities in reaching the target:

Why is the private sector important? It is important with respect to turning knowledge into added value. Essentially, this is the trick of the matter. As public we can sit and decide “let us spend our budget for research this year”. However, it will not create the benefit we expect. We absolutely need to increase the private sector share of spending. In European Union, as you know, the base criterion is two thirds private sector, one third public sector. It means,

the ideal figure is that two thirds of the spending come from private sector, one third comes from public sector. Only with such manner we can turn research into more added value and more benefit. Turkey is improving on such path, but we are not yet in the position we desire to be. The private sector came close to half, more or less. In the next planning period, in 2023 vision, we also want to raise the share of R&D spending to GDP to %1.8 by 2018. We want to elevate this number to %3 by 2023. Hence, we want to carry the share of the private sector to about two thirds. These are indeed assertive numbers, but if Turkey is to reach its specific macro objectives, we also need to actualize them. (Plenary Minutes, 02 July 2014)

To put it briefly, the arrangements around higher education seem to be made with respect to a vision specific to a certain mentality. This mentality is a marked with a global economic competition with the world with the models of capitalism and neoliberal policy making. Actually, the whole discourse on the national development cannot be separated from the global competition. This is because, although the development can come to mean a lot of thing, it is interpreted in a very specific fashion. Moreover, the mentality is thought to be quite normative with respect to the prevailing global discourses and conducts.

4. 5. The Religious Aspect

An observation made with respect to Turkey's higher education in the period of 2002-2018 corresponds to a religious aspect. While it does not seem to constitute an issue in most of the literature on the transformation of higher education, it stands as a subject to be mentioned in Turkey's case. First, some ambiguous indicators should be presented regarding the religious aspect.

4. 5. 1. Quantitative Observations

One indicator of the religious aspect can be seen with respect to nation-wide increase in student number, academic staff, publications, and programs related to religion and particularly Islam in higher education. Although it is difficult to reach direct statistics, the changes clearly suggest that some trends have started around 2002, others in 2007. For example, the number of students in Divinity and Religious Studies department of higher education were even decreasing prior to 2002. After some sudden increase starting in 2002, the number of students seem to be multiplied 40 times in 16 years (Table 9).

Table 9: Student in Divinity and Religious Studies Departments Source: The CoHE Statistics Database, and Aydın (2003).

	Total Student	Upper Secondary	Undergrad.	Master	Doctorate	Total Graduate
1997-1998	14320	-	-	-	-	-
1998-1999	14803	-	-	-	-	-
1999-2000	14428	-	-	-	-	-
2000-2001	13618	-	-	-	-	-
2001-2002	12182	-	-	-	-	-
2003-2004	9181	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2013-2014	216053	154572	52212	7100	2169	9269
2014-2015	266095	187284	67396	8841	2574	11415
2015-2016	308311	216547	78859	10065	2840	12905
2016-2017	333501	232071	86696	11769	2965	14734
2017-2018	362592	251251	95616	12598	3127	15725
2018-2019	389629	262963	111971	11460	3235	14695

In the increase of student numbers, two-year degree granting programs, secondary education programs, and distant education programs played an important role. For example, a distant learning program called Religious Studies Undergraduate Completion (ILITAM, Turkish: *İlahiyat Lisans Tamamlama Programı*) started in 2005 in Ankara University and spread to more than 10 universities in time. The main purpose was to educate the personnel of the Presidency of Religious Affairs (Turkish: *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*) who had upper secondary level education by helping them to complete their higher education study into an undergraduate degree in religious studies. Often this program has been argued to remedy 28 February 1997 process where a military memorandum resulted in closing of religious schools. Later in 2018 by a temporary article in the law no 7141 the government provided the right for all upper secondary level religious studies graduates to complete undergraduate degree in divinity without any test of passage. The government implemented this by directing most of these students to distant education resulting in more than 10.000 new registers only to ILITAM program in 2019. Also, it can be said that religion and Islam based disciplines now makes up most of the whole humanities in Turkey.

As it can be seen from Table 9, undergraduate and graduate level students also increased rapidly, although a trend of decrease might begin after 2018. In connection with that, there is also a tendency of increase in publications related to Islam and religion. For example, a

basic use of the search function in National Thesis Database shows that the number of theses written on the subject “religion” is 348 in 1996, 456 in 2002, 551 in 2013, and 1038 in 2018. If the increase continues in that way, in 5 years’ time total theses written with respect to subject of religion will exceed almost all other subjects and compete only with education, economy, business, and a few engineering fields. Even by now, the number of thesis written on the subject of religion seem to long exceed the total number of theses written on the subjects such as “political science” and “sociology”.

Similarly, number of higher education institutions with respect to religion have increased rapidly. Number of religious higher education faculties (Divinity and Religious/Islam Studies) was 22 between 1999-2006 without any change in number in those 7 years and their numbers dropped to 20 in 2007 (ILKE, 2012). However, after 2007 the numbers started to rise rapidly. In 2010 it was 35, and in 2018 their numbers have exceeded 100. Moreover, these faculties had increasingly more departments related to Islam and religion. A basic use of the search function of the CoHE statistics database shows that there are more than 350 departments designated to give religious education. Almost all of them were founded after 2007. Additionally, the number of academicians show similar trends although it is difficult to find proper data due to complexity of the classification schemas with respect to disciplinary areas.

In addition, although it is not related to higher education directly, similar trends can also be seen in religious high schools. While the number of students in those schools were decreasing before 2002 with around 65.000 students in 2002-2003 term, the trend has changed into the opposite. The number of students was 270.000 in 2011-2012 and 605.869 in 2018-2019 (MEB, 2019).

However, it might be likely that the trends of increase would not continue especially with respect to academic productivity and graduate level students, as well as number of academic staff. This is because some policies and discourses in the last few years suggest that the government considers altering some trends. For example, there is some appeal to direct the student in religion-based fields to distant education and upper secondary higher education. This is a general trend that begin in mid-2000s. Some divinity schools criticize such orientation because of decreasing quality in religion based higher education. Also, it can be easily observed with respect to decaying increase rate in graduate levels students which seem to start decreasing currently.

4. 5. 2. The Place of Religion in the Transformation

The religion in higher education is observed to be a subject of various discourse in the political field. In general, the debates revolve around the trends of increase and Islam's place within the structure of the society. The latter debate is particularly important for this analysis since the religious aspect do not seem to fit anywhere in the changes with respect to higher education. Spring (2014, p. 165) says that a formally Western education can be merged with religious consideration especially in the Islamic nations. Interestingly, questions and contemplation about how religion fits into the social arrangement seem to be an aspect of the very politics of higher education in the case of Turkey.

For example, Yusuf Ziya Özcan, who is the president of the CoHE between 2007-2011 asks if Islam is an obstacle to economic development in an article that he wrote during his academic duty in International Islamic University Malaysia. As it will be clear in the conclusion chapter, it is in fact interesting that, the first president of the CoHE appointed after the president Ahmet Necdet Sezer is replaced by Abdullah Gül, contemplates on such exact problem. Ozcan (1995) criticizes some theses which claim that there is a clash between economic development and Islam, and states that this is a very problematic question to answer. He (Ozcan, 1995, p. 19) also makes a very important conclusion and state that there might be a difference between the social practices of the Muslim societies and the ideal principles of Islam.

The gap between the practices and the ideals opens a point. Nalbantoğlu (2009, p. 30-1) states that the onto-theologic world is long gone and cannot be brought back by those who are not even able to mediate on the question of being, and that contemporary constructs without memory as modern religions cannot challenge the power of established power of the modern society. Indeed, there is no observation that the economic liberal beliefs are questioned by the government while the social practices relating to the Islam are being so. For example, in 2018 president Erdoğan made a speech about the naturality of making updates in Islam (without reforming it) and found support from prominent Divinity Faculties of some universities (İlahiyat Fakültelerinden..., 2018).

Although there are many different ideas about the question of religion and the social relations which also relate to the higher education, the discourses suggest that the problematizations always come to an adaptation the "new world". In a very good example in the below excerpt,

JDP MP Vedat Bilgin first argues that Turkish universities should be producing knowledge to lead the Turkish civilization. This somewhat modernist invite to an old-timer belief where knowledge production rather than economic relations is believed to determine the path of civilizations, then turns out to be the very destruction of the modern old-timers to be able to harmonize into the new paths of civilization:

Of course, if we examine all these, look critical, Turkish universities have serious problems. One of the serious problems of the universities relates to lack and limitations regarding the scientific studies which would guide Turkish modernization, which would lead Turkish modernization, which would deepen Turkish modernization and help it to develop further; these could not come to existence yet. I would like to underline two important factors on that issue. One of them is that, the tradition in the universities results in a perception of epistemic community, and the lifestyles belonging to this closed community are being presented virtually as the sacred of the science. This is a very serious problem. In this community that I talk about, there is a perception that prevents criticism and scientific progress. (...) Unfortunately, the specters created in the name of 'science' by the positivism that I just mentioned, still haunts on the Turkish universities. This idol, this icon, need to be shattered. For that, there is a need for an innovator perspective, but for the innovator perspective, we must possess a mentality that is open for the contemporary science problems, epistemology problems, and new methods. (Plenary Minutes, 20 Feb. 2018)

Moreover, the question regarding the religion versus integration to the global world has been a fundamental debate for the JDP itself, both with respect to its emergence and in the process of its political power. As a very broad subject, these debates exceed the field of higher education and stretches to both political and intellectual fields. Many of the different perspectives, and indeed the political agendas set by the JDP in some periods, seem to emphasize an articulation to the global order without causing a "clash of civilization". For example, an ex-JDP member, an ex-party leader, and the 26th Prime Minister of Turkey, Davutoğlu (2001) proposed in different ways that a Turkish-Islam synthesis might effectively articulate to the global political and economic relations. The way he defined the future of the alliance of civilization that Turkey can pursue, relates to a "dynamic axis" consisting of certain historical and cultural background taken as "culture". It has been interpreted that although Davutoğlu's appeal to a "strategic realism" revealed some conflicts of idea, the JDP's general position signify a peaking period of continuation of the global integration which, although gained pace in Turgut Özal period, slowed down in the coalition period before the JDP (Uzgel, 2010).

In short, within the confines of this study, it is observed that the religious aspect does not seem to constitute a fundamental contradiction to any of the other aspects underlined

throughout this chapter. On the other hand, it is possible to state that the religious aspect might have connect to other aspects. For example, it might articulate to a certain employment arrangement as many of the graduates of religion-based higher education institutions is directed to the institution of Religious Affairs Administration for employment as religion personnel. Similarly, the increase in the number of students, and the decrease in the years of education do articulate to the trends of massification aspect.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This thesis has provided three main analyses: First, the transformation of higher education as a global phenomenon has been discussed in conceptual terms in Chapter 2. Second, in Chapter 3, the conditions that contributed to the transformation of higher education in Turkey between 2002-2018 have been briefly discussed with respect to some national and global factors. Third, an extensive analysis of outstanding aspects of the changes in higher education in Turkey between 2002-2018 has been presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 had their own conclusion parts where the discussion within these chapters have been briefly summarized. However, the overall conclusions of this study will be provided here, and with reference to all previous chapters. The conclusion will be made with respect to understanding the phenomenon of the transformation of higher education in Turkey. Additionally, some observations regarding the global trend will be a part of the conclusion.

I would like to come up with a rough conceptualization of Turkey's transformation of higher education with respect to the definition provided in Chapter 2. To begin with, it has been stated that although the transformation of higher education is a global phenomenon, it has a manifold character particularly with respect to spatial and temporal differences. In the case of Turkey between 2002-2018, there are some aspects which stand out in parallelism with the global conceptualization of the phenomenon. However, some others are somewhat unfitting, and they create certain question marks rather than answers. To be specific, two main aspects of the changes outlined in the previous chapter seem to be quite relevant to the conceptualization under Chapter 2. These are the changes regarding the expansion and the changes regarding the economic arrangements surrounding higher education. The

administrative changes, however, is somewhat problematic and opens up some questions. Lastly, the religious aspect is difficult to conceptualize with respect to global conceptualizations of the phenomenon of transformation. Elaborations on these four aspects will be made with respect to their implications.

The changes regarding the massification indicate that there has been an expansion of the higher education to a degree that can be seen in Turkey's history only in some specific periods. The expansion is connected to the number of students, the number of higher education institutions, and to a lesser degree the number of academicians and the number of academic productions. Nevertheless, the whole expansion seems to come with a cost of quality. Without doubt, the interplay between quantity and quality is always an interesting subject that is sometimes too abstract to substantiate. However, the turn to quantity is explicit in almost all spheres of higher education. Not only there has been very little or no concrete focus on the issue of quality, but also both the expectations from and fruits of the higher education seem to be understood with respect to quantitative measures. It is possible to observe that a part of that quantification owes itself to the fact that the structuring of the higher education is made from above, as a macro-plan, and for the economic development of the nation. It is no surprise that, when looking from above, the delicacies are lost. It is truly amusing to observe that politicians keep talking with some too broad concepts and give the same statistics again and again. Even in parliamentary committees which are theoretically tasked with specialized attention, there is hardly any time to contemplate on anything. This is probably not only a national problem. How can it be possible to contemplate about the teaching quality of the students other than some crude measures such as the academician per student? The delicacies of the subject are overwhelming.

The term massification has actually a meaningful connotation here. There is not only mass-production and mass-consumption; the content is also increasingly more resistant to alteration and revision. Terminologically, the mass is a property, and thus quality. How can quality be qualified other than a reference to itself? To the extent that higher education massificate, it turns into a quality of its own with less reference to other potential qualifying concerns. Indeed, such problem seems to be the case with every potential discourse on the subject of massification in higher education: they are always circular as self-defining goals and purposes. However, although it is increasingly more resistant, mass can be useful under proper leverage. In fact, this is where the quality called mass shines out. In a leverage system, massification does enrich the output force. The output which roughly corresponds to

economic development will be dealt later. Nevertheless, the biggest changes relating to the phenomenon of the massification relate to the problems such as what share of the students are in vocational schools, what share in private schools, what share are basic sciences, etc. There is no doubt that the massification in the period between 2002-2018 could be achieved gradually. If the minor concerns of the JDP on quality issues in 2003-2007 period could continue, the process could result in less expansion with better care to quality. However, what might be the logic behind such care? Let me also leave this question to the part on the economic aspect.

The logic of the expansion and quantification is not limited to the massification in terms of students and institutions. It also relates to the producers and products of higher education. In fact, it is possible that the most drastic change is being experienced with respect to such subject. This is because, the modern idea of the university which revolves around a rigorous occupation with the knowledge as a process, today is replaced by an appeal to pace and quantity which come to define the very earnings of the academicians instrumentally. With respect to academic productivity and virtue, the number of publications are almost the only subject brought into the arena of higher education discussions by the government. The slimness of the quality considerations seems to be a global phenomenon. Even some limited indicators such as student per academician numbers or academic impact indicators show that Turkey has some serious quality issues. The proliferation of distant learning, evening education, and two-year licenses in Turkey are also important as they seem to reach an extreme point.

The administrative changes illustrate that Turkey's higher education show some trends of centralization. Although some specific studies should be made on this subject, it is possible to observe that such centralization and loss of autonomy is fundamentally connected with the current dominant party rule. While Turkey's history also showed some serious tendencies of centralization, the current situation also appears to be extreme. Although it is possible that they were already ideological and political in character, the Turkish higher education was a scene to some dissociation. In many periods the universities, higher education institutions such as the CoHE and the government were in an organizational debate. Moreover, the government was also a scene to dissociation from time to time. Although there is a huge history behind such compositions, with various settings and complex relations, the contemporary political situation seems to wipe them all. This seems to be true at least in the central administrative organization with respect to the government,

the CoHE, and the rectors. In general, the period between 2003-2007 corresponds to a struggle between the newly emerged executive-legislative power of the JDP and the old institutions on the administration of higher education. It is also a period marked with record numbers of vetoes due to some political differences between the JDP government and other institutions and offices of the government such as the President of the Republic. Nevertheless, JDP government showed interest in the appointments and gradually were able to make the appointment of the institutions of the higher education. Especially after 2007, the JDP had enough power to re-arrange appointment regulations. After that period, the struggle between institutions of the higher education and the JDP government left its place to alliances. While the promises of democratization and increasing of university autonomy were not kept, tendencies of centralization increased even more after 2013. The elections of the rectors have been lifted. The appointment of the members of the chief institutions has been increasingly connected to a homogenous government more than ever. The centralized and hierarchical structure of higher education in Turkey become crystallized.

The administrative aspect proves to be a difficult issue in terms of the transformation of higher education. Although I have not made an analysis of the phenomenon on the global scale, the discourse was on the de-centralization and increased administrative and economic authority of the university. Turkey's case seems to differ. However, some of the concepts and observations from the global transformation of higher education also hinted that the government can work as a gate-opener for the process. In fact, there are more references around the world to state intervention and policymaking in the early phases of the transformation. In other words, while it is possible that the tendency of centralization in Turkey is in contrast with the global tendency of the transformation of higher education, it also possible that it actually in harmony to the degree that it opened the path of the transformation.

The changes with respect to an arrangement of economic development appear to be the most fundamental aspect of the transformation of higher education in Turkey. In general, some different set of arrangements toward economic growth in order to compete in the global arena seem to characterize those aspects. One of the arrangements is privatization. Private capital has been seen as a necessity for elimination of public deficiencies and increasing capitalization and commercialization. It corresponds not only to the increasing private-service of higher education but also many activities regarding research and technology are being privatized. The whole privatization process has been conducted by the policies,

supports and economic and otherwise incentives of the government which openly expressed such intention from early on. In connection with that, the economic support by the government for the public universities are either stable or decreasing despite the ample expansion.

In connection with the economic aspect, there has been an increasing orientation towards utilization of higher education in creating a workforce. The arrangements relating to the higher education show themselves as macro planning related to the employment settings. One of the most glittering aspects is the increase in vocational higher education. Also, associate degrees and non-face to face education with respect to fields that require semi-skilled workers are largely increased. In fact, in such fields, the increase in Turkey seems to surpass many economically developed nations that Turkey took as an example. As these employment arrangements are being made, the use of terms such as “human resource”, “knowledge society”, “market demands”, and “labor force planning” is also increased in discussions relating to the higher education. Additionally, it is possible to observe that the trends of massification and higher education finance are quite related to workforce planning. A good deal of the private investment towards higher education probably comes in direct relation to private corporation’s workforce expectations. The government seems to be aware and supportive of such phenomenon. In general, such arrangements of labor evoke questions regarding dilemma on the social demand and government supply of higher education. Although employment rates are not different from the early 2000s and it is difficult to assess the changes experienced with respect to indicators such as the purchasing power of the graduates. The most significant change seems to be experienced with respect to economic volume. In other words, it is difficult to assess whether the expectations of the people have been met while government’s goal to enlarge economic volume of the country is mostly met.

The activities around research and technology also constitute an important issue. While there is an increasing appeal to activities of research and development, the share of higher education in such activities decrease. Even in a higher education setting, such activities seem to be increasingly carried with respect to external relations with the industry and the corporations. Nevertheless, R&D activities appear to be essentially quantity-based and economically driven. The increasing of economic volume through commercialization of knowledge and knowledge related activities underlie the main drive for such an appeal. Similarly, the dreams of high-tech activities and applications appear to be driven by high added values rather than social use. These findings actually open up questions related to the

projected social use of higher education-related research activities. For example, do they target prosperity for society? If the main drive behind an appeal to application and use rather than basic research was actually public good, how can we explain the ongoing next phase which focuses on the marketability and economic development? Although this is a question for other studies, it is possible to state that the findings of this study hint that the main drive for higher education activity has been economic output with an unclear effect on other aspects of the development. This seems to be related to nature of the university-society relations at large. I have already stated that the university was never free of external relations with society. The contemporary change might not be fundamentally related to increased externalization, but an economization (in the narrow sense) of the external relations.

In that sense, one of the best examples is the specialization of universities. The specialization initiatives which have been seen as part of the global transformation of higher education and as an academic revolution, indeed give some clues about the university's changing social meaning and place. The very roots of the term university in the form of *Universitas* signified an orientation towards the knowledge in a universal character as excellence. The specialization of universities, on the other hand, channel a local, specific and restricted orientation towards economic growth. Indeed, one can sense here a conflict between the universal and the global character. The specialization shows that while the transformation is a process of globalization in terms of a global development goal or a national development goal in global competition, it does not correspond to an orientation towards a universality. That said, this is unless economization and economic competition have become the very universal of contemporary society. Specialization was indeed a term used to understand the global social change starting from the turn of 19th century. Specialization in terms of work and science have been among important issues of changing university environment back then. The emergence of specialized university in Turkey summarizes a very fundamental point about this extensive process of specialization. It is an arrangement of effective profit drive through capitalization and commercialization of potential human activity. The economic outcome of the capitalization works as a development promise where development further arranges social relations into capitalization and more profit. The specialized university is a mining facility where the miner is the unmoulded student as human capital, the mine is a quantified knowledge application, and the processed product is financial volume and profit. In other words, the object of the pursuit in higher education seem to transform from a modernist belief in the universal character and applicability of the

knowledge which was also valid for the early republic periods in Turkey, to an economic liberalism where the term globe characterize a plane of competition for the drives of national economic growth.

In line with these, the economic development aspect of the transformation of higher education in Turkey seems to fundamentally link itself to a global competition symbolized by the discourse “2023”. It is interesting to observe that the promised vision of 2023 is currently being delayed by a couple years while other dates such as 2053 and 2071 are increasingly pronounced.

For the religious aspect, it is not possible to make adequate elaboration. In fact, this aspect seems to only evoke some further questions within the scope of this study. One of the question marks is about the trends of increase and decrease in institutions, students, academicians, programs and academic level productivity. Although some partial findings point out to an augmentation, still it is difficult to conceptualize. Since there has been no such observation or conception regarding the global phenomenon, it can be said that there was no such religion-based augmentation at least in many Western countries within their process of the transformation of higher education. Spring (2015, p. 160) states that “religious and Indigenous knowledges are often different from the concept of knowledge embodied in human capital and progressive models of education”. He argues that although religion is often forgotten, a religious element in a fundamental sense can result in contrast as to a level of “clash of civilizations” (Spring, 2015, p. 161). In general, it is observed that such questions were already internal to the JDP and the administration of higher education. The answers given do not seem to point out to a clash, at least for now. In other words, there appears a conformity with economic liberal tendencies. However, it is also observed that such conformity might be seen as a strategy to gain enough (economic) power to introduce some fundamental changes to the constituencies of an order. Tuğal (2009) argues that the social transformation after the JDP party is a passive revolution where social relations and political fabric have been arranged in way to absorb the modes of radicalism, which resulted in a harmonization into the capitalist social relations. Although I observe that in the process between 2002-2018 the harmonization and those specific arrangements appear to have some tides, on the whole, this study concludes the same. Within the scope of this study, I simply believe that there are some certain kinds of harmony-disharmony between the religion-based higher education and the economically driven higher education transformation. As it has been stressed in the analysis, a religion stressed higher education might fit into the

transformation as long as the relations prove to be in harmony with the main tenets of the relations designating the transformation. What I can add is that the arrangement of higher education proves that an economic liberal belief, no matter how strategic it was, and no matter what specific form of interpretation it takes, is fundamentally determinant in shaping the social relations. Time will tell what will happen to the reserve of Islamic ideas and religious higher education.

In line with those four aspects, I would like to make my first conceptualization of the transformation of higher education specific to Turkey between 2002-2018. In this context, the transformation of higher education is a certain process where some tendencies of administrative centralization along with a substantial massification have been subsumed under some economic arrangements regarding higher education. These economic arrangements revolve around a tendency of privatization, an arrangement of human capital especially with respect to semi-skilled labor force, forcing of higher education institutions into direct economic relations with different environments such as the industry and the corporations, and providing economic volume and profit from productive activities of the higher education including the R&D activities. Also, it is important to state that while some of these trends seem to be frequently conceptualized with respect to different observations throughout the world, a religious aspect seem to be problematic.

Nevertheless, the definition above is rather descriptive of the situation and lack a proper conceptual frame. In the rough definition provided in Chapter II, I have stated that the transformation of higher education relates to an extensive range of socio-historical phenomenon. In other words, here at this point, some elaboration is needed with respect to a larger frame of conceptualization.

To be more specific, this study suggests that a rational planning of the government -which cannot be separated from the global ground of making sense, is behind the transformation of higher education. The rational planning here can be taken as a specific conceptualization of the term neoliberalism. Although neoliberalism is a controversial concept, I would like to emphasize a certain conception of it which is briefly summarized by Brown (2015):

“Neoliberalism, (...) is best understood (...) as a governing rationality that disseminates market values and metrics to every sphere of life and construes the human itself exclusively as homo oeconomicus. Neoliberalism thus does not merely privatize—turn over to the market for individual production and consumption—what was formerly publicly supported

and valued. Rather, it formulates everything, everywhere, in terms of capital investment and appreciation, including and especially humans themselves.” (p. 176)

Although Brown stresses that such definition moves the term neoliberalism away from its conception as a set of economic policies to comply with the markets (Brown, 2015, p. 28), I have no need to make such separation in this study. In fact, neoliberal rationality and neoliberal policymaking seem to be complementary to each other both with respect to global inclinations of the government and national policies. In connection with that, although it might be possible to carry such arguments to the context of other nations and to global levels with respect to other research, this study limits it to the context of the Turkish governments after 2002. This is due to a desire to accomplish precision in the use of the concept. In other words, in my use of the concept neoliberalism, I only wish to stress the governing rationality and the materialization of such rationality mostly through policies.

The findings of the study and the summaries above have already provided the demonstration of the neoliberalism as rational project. Here I would like to stress that rationality should not be seen as a “best plan”. In fact, I have already hinted that it only animates just another belief. Some discourses on subjects such as the massification and economic development almost take a teleological character. Both massification and economic development are justified with reference to themselves. In almost all discourses, they are both the goals (*telos*) and their own justification (*explanans*). There is no other reference rather than some crude populist discourse. They all end up with respect to national economic targets. The massification, as have mentioned earlier, is the increasing emphasis on higher education as a mass; the increasing qualification of the society as a mass. Mass, as a quality, is believed to be a leverage for economic development.

The rational arrangement in terms of a governmental, or better say, a political party plan, is also observable with respect to the specific form it takes. The conditions of the transformation not only suggest that the political party JDP with a more-or-less economic liberal agenda was a key factor but also, they suggest the importance of articulation to the world economic system. In fact, we have to underline that especially the EU process and the JDP’s rule articulate in a more or less similar period, the period after 2000s. We can observe that some concepts and policies come from EU frames, and other international organization’s economic, policy-based, or discursive influence. Turkey seems to take them as face values with a desire to instrumentalize them for national economic growth, rather than improving, harmonizing and caring quality issues in the implementation.

In that connection, one of the last findings of this research is that the transformation of higher education is contingent in the common sense of the word, upon the national governmental conditions. This study demonstrated that a political party with liberal economic agendas which had the power to structure the higher education was key to the speeding up of the transformation. Although it can be observed that some political parties seem to agree on some fundamental tenets of the transformation, a different political power could utilize a very different schema. Similarly, a different and mixed composition of the government might alter the implementations. Although I make no allegation that the state organization is a key factor everywhere and every time, in Turkey between 2002-2018, the transformation of higher education appears to revolve around an economic growth based liberal economic competition with the world which owes itself to an homogenous state mobility. Here, I would like to stress that the political agenda was not utterly an unchanged master plan made in 2002 or 2007. In fact, we can observe a process of change, absorption, and learning. With every changing government there emerges different concepts, orientations. However, I hold that all these consecutive governments connect to each other by a more-or-less unchanged drive of global competition based economic development planning. This fundamental drive in the sense of a rational arrangement is the contingent base that could alter under different conditions.

From a larger political perspective, all these discussions also bring the issue to a frame that is very similar to theories like that of political economist Schumpeter. Freeman (2009, p. 146) defines the central point of Schumpeter's whole life work is that capitalism can only be understood as an evolutionary process of continuous innovation and 'creative destruction'. The JDP's rule draws a road of modernization in Turkey to an extent that economic development is a prior goal in which policymaking in specific fields and re-arranging of governing, in general, is an issue of mobilization to achieve such goal. Interestingly, Schumpeter also criticizes idealizations of democracy on the basis of representation and argues that the democracy is a system legitimized by popular periodical elections for competition between political entrepreneurs where they execute their own agendas (Schumpeter, 1942, p. 252). In line with already mentioned dominant party rule the JDP seem to secure its rational governance in line with a target of economic growth. This is a path marked fundamentally by competition with the world with the models of capitalism and neoliberal policymaking, but also by a superficial appeal to nationalistic-Islamic culture.

In fact, it is possible to state that Turkey's appeal to the global in the policies and the politics of higher education is multifaceted. It corresponds to an interpretation and should not be seen as direct gravitation towards a so-called global rationality in the sense of the best way of conduct. For example, as it has been already hinted from some of the excerpts, the governmental discourse shows itself very openly in two main ways. First, there is a strong but superficial appeal to the way that "the economically developed countries" do it. This discourse might sometimes reveal with respect to an exemplary case which is almost in all cases the USA, a developed European nation or some developing nations such as China. In other words, countries which are mostly some steps ahead of the economic development are superficially taken as good examples and suggested as models within various practices and structures of higher education. Secondly, and in connection with that, the discourse takes the form of a global race especially in terms of economic aspect of the development. It is possible to state that these appeals oscillate between indicating some persistent culture of a Turkish-Islamic civilization and a populist political discourse to secure the smooth continuity of the rational arrangement of economic competition. Since the latter necessitates a governmental power, the former comes in handy. The confusion, questioning, and interchange between these two are best illustrated in the religious aspect of the transformation.

However, it all comes to the second sense of the term contingent: some conditions could work out differently, but would it make a fundamental difference? In other words, although it is certain that we should not take the transformation of higher education as a neutral phenomenon as the observation that it bases itself on a political party agenda and some consecutive government arrangements prove, would it actually go differently under a different condition? How can a so-called global transformation be contingent? In fact, what is a national level if we are talking about a global phenomenon? These are difficult questions which also cannot be limited to a national context and fundamentally relate to the global context. I have already stated that this study cannot question the conditions of possibility of the transformation. However, there are some indicators from this study that can help us question the contingency of the transformation in the theoretical sense of the term. Some problematization of the organizational character of the transformation of higher education in Turkey, and some question marks related to the process of marketization show that alterations are possible, but not determinant.

While it is certain that a disengagement from statist ideas is a key factor, the relation between the government and the higher education present a different picture from the one conceptually focused on the global context. The focus on the literature about the transformation of higher education to the managerialism and entrepreneurialism proves somehow contradictory in Turkey's case. At least in the way concepts guide us, the entrepreneurialism suggests administrative and economic autonomy. The university should be an organizational center with its own entrepreneurial managers having the freedom of how to achieve the output. In Turkey, the government appears to be an administrator in the "outdated" sense which uses a system of hierarchy consisting of institutions such as the CoHE, and the rectors in an administrative environment of regulations and policies. However, as I have hinted above, a less likely possibility is that the government might be administering the very transformation towards a new entrepreneurial higher education. In fact, it is also possible that as some critiques of the managerialism and entrepreneurialism demonstrate, new governance procedures need further questioning. Although the theory and practice behind these procedures exceed the scope of this study, Turkey's case still evokes certain questions relating to state-market relations.

On such questions revolves around the finding that although Turkish higher education is a scene to a centralization implemented in the guidance of the state, it also produces and be a product of relations in the ground of economic liberalism and capitalism. One can ask, for example, what prevents the state from being another entrepreneur? Is there any obstacle for the state to act as a corporation with some rational planning to increase its share and profit with respect to global competition, using everything in its grasp including the people and the powerful instruments of the state organization? It is interesting that such discussion brought us to a debate on the scale of entrepreneurialism. Presumably, the entrepreneurial university is an economically free environment with some organizational control to secure the liberal and profitable character of the relations inside it. If we build on an absolute economic liberalism based on rational and methodological individualism, why would an entrepreneur university need administration? Although there is no need to elaborate on such debates relating the liberal theory and administration, the main point is something else. The organizational factor is still cannot be abandoned no matter the "administration" is replaced by a "governance". An observation from this study is that the organizational task, as long as it could be steered with respect to proliferation and ensuring of economic liberalism, can be as centralized and hierarchical as Turkey's higher education in its articulation to the global

trends of capitalism. Of course, this depressing observation is dependent on the validity of the findings. However, it certainly serves to stress the potential of a conflict between social liberal and economic liberal tendencies of the global world and premises of the liberal theory.

Similar discussions are also valid with respect to question marks around the marketization. Marketization, as it has been stated, have been conceptualized with direct reference to a free-market economy. However, the likely political and ideological atmosphere in the heyday of the dominant party rule hints some limits. In addition to the contradictory tendency of centralization, it is possible that there are indeed some political alliances underpinning the relations inside the higher education market. Although different studies are needed to elaborate on such relations, this study indeed suggests that the trends of marketization in the transformation were limited in Turkey. Concepts such as crony capitalism might actually underpin the problem. Cengiz states that (2018) “despite the fact that neopatrimonialism cannot be argued as a pathological deviation from modern-legal domination, (...) a tension exists between the crony capitalism-based economic model of neopatrimonialism and Turkey’s decades-long market-based capitalism”. If the market-based capitalism after 1980s could continue and even proliferate in the contemporary context of centralized administration of higher education, it might mean that the marketization is less related to a liberalization than it is to proliferation of social relations underpinned by capitalism. Indeed, the marketization aspect seems to base itself on some legal and regulative infrastructural preparation, rather than a full transformation. In other words, although if we take the parlance of the liberals who support the transformation of higher education, Turkey might be scene to a limited marketization. However, it might also be true that the extent of these political regulations and the crony capitalism were adequate for the intensification transformation of higher education. In any case, the deviations do not seem to alter the result. Whether it is a limited marketization or crony-capitalism, and whether the organization of these relations is centralized and hierarchical or not, the contemporary trend in Turkish higher education epitomizes the global transformation of higher education that is elicited by the production of social relations on a specific ground.

In the end, the contingent character of the transformation of higher education in the sense of a question related to historical necessity is unanswered. In other words, alterations prove possible, but they do not seem to end up in transformations within different paths. A global making sense of the world proves to be binding. In that connection, this study cannot also determine if the global making sense of the world is essentially economic liberalism which

exposes higher education to an increasing economization in the narrow sense. It cannot answer if higher education in Turkey is one step closer to higher education in the age of liberal belief. This study can only argue that such understanding was key to the Turkish state in the last 16 years. Consecutive governments fundamentally took such an interpretation of the global making sense of the world, though unclear, still fundamentally related to determination of social relations with respect to an instrumentalization of higher education in a ground of economic development. This resulted in an intensification and speeding up of social change in the fabric of higher education of the country which, taken from a larger historical context, might take the form of transformation. However, this study can still hint that a specific way of rationality in the sense of a certain comparison or calculation (*ratio*) of some state constitutions could be effective in material arrangements around the higher education. If we assume that the *ratio* belongs to the human subject (whether as individual, as society, or as state) in the way some liberal theories posit, then it might be possible that the transformation of higher education is indeed contingent in the theoretical sense of the word. After all, this is the premise behind a global governance of higher education or an international arrangement of it. However, other possibilities arise if this *ratio* is only a residue of the social relations rather than being a belonging of the subject. Then, maybe, it would be best to go back to some fundamental questions about the subject and the knowledge that the endeavors of science in higher education today does not ask much.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: A LIST OF SOME IMPORTANT LAWS ON HIGHER EDUCATION IN 2002-2018

Law No	Date	ORIGINAL TITLE OF THE LAW (TURKISH)
5001 Veto	12.11.2003	TÜRKİYE BİLİMSEL VE TEKNİK ARAŞTIRMA KURUMU KURULMASI HAKKINDA KANUNA BİR GEÇİCİ MADDE EKLENMESİ HAKKINDA KANUN
5002	12.11.2003	İLKÖĞRETİM VE EĞİTİM KANUNU İLE ÖZEL ÖĞRETİM KURUMLARI KANUNUNDA DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASINA İLİŞKİN KANUN
5016	10.12.2003	TÜRKİYE BİLİMSEL VE TEKNİK ARAŞTIRMA KURUMU KURULMASI HAKKINDA KANUNA BİR GEÇİCİ MADDE EKLENMESİ HAKKINDA KANUN
5171 Veto	13.05.2004	YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM KANUNU VE YÜKSEK ÖĞRETİM PERSONEL KANUNUNDA DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASI HAKKINDA KANUN
5344 Veto	4.05.2005	TÜRKİYE BİLİMSEL VE TEKNİK ARAŞTIRMA KURUMU KURULMASI HAKKINDA KANUNDA DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASINA DAİR KANUN
5463	23.02.2006	AVRUPA BÖLGESİNDE YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM İLE İLGİLİ BELGELERİN TANINMASINA İLİŞKİN SÖZLEŞMENİN ONAYLANMASININ UYGUN BULUNDUĞUNA DAİR KANUN
5467	1.03.2006	YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM KURUMLARI TEŞKİLATI KANUNU, YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM KANUNU, KAMU MALİ YÖNETİMİ VE KONTROL KANUNU, TELSİZ KANUNU İLE 78 VE 190 SAYILI KANUN HÜKMÜNDE KARARNAMELERDE DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASI HAKKINDA KANUN
5376	29.06.2005	TÜRKİYE BİLİMSEL VE TEKNİK ARAŞTIRMA KURUMU KURULMASI HAKKINDA KANUNDA DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASINA DAİR KANUN
5544	21.09.2006	MESLEKİ YETERLİLİK KURUMU KANUNU
5545 Veto	26.09.2006	ÖZEL ÖĞRETİM KURUMLARI KANUNU
5556 Veto	15.11.2006	YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM KURUMLARI TEŞKİLATI KANUNU, YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM KANUNU, KAMU MALİ YÖNETİMİ VE KONTROL KANUNU, TELSİZ KANUNU İLE 78 VE 190 SAYILI KANUN HÜKMÜNDE KARARNAMELERDE DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASI HAKKINDA KANUNDA DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASINA DAİR KANUN
5573	11.01.2007	YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM KURUMLARI TEŞKİLATI KANUNU, YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM KANUNU, KAMU MALİ YÖNETİMİ VE KONTROL KANUNU, TELSİZ KANUNU İLE 78 ve 190 SAYILI KANUN HÜKMÜNDE KARARNAMELERDE DEĞİŞİKLİK

		YAPILMASI HAKKINDA KANUNDA DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASINA DAİR KANUN
5580	8.02.2007	ÖZEL ÖĞRETİM KURUMLARI KANUNU
5746	28.02.2008	ARAŞTIRMA VE GELİŞTİRME FAALİYETLERİNİN DESTEKLENMESİ HAKKINDA KANUN
5772	18.06.2008	YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM KANUNUNDA DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASINA DAİR KANUN
5798	31.07.2008	TÜRKİYE BİLİMSEL VE TEKNOLOJİK ARAŞTIRMA KURUMU KURULMASI HAKKINDA KANUNDA DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASINA DAİR KANUN
6002	1.07.2010	DİYANET İŞLERİ BAŞKANLIĞI KURULUŞ VE GÖREVLERİ HAKKINDA KANUN İLE BAZI KANUNLARDA DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASINA DAİR KANUN
6114	17.02.2011	ÖLÇME, SEÇME VE YERLEŞTİRME MERKEZİ BAŞKANLIĞININ TEŞKİLAT VE GÖREVLERİ HAKKINDA KANUN
6287	30.03.2012	İLKÖĞRETİM VE EĞİTİM KANUNU İLE BAZI KANUNLARDA DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASINA DAİR KANUN
6353	4.07.2012	BAZI KANUN VE KANUN HÜKMÜNDE KARARNAMELERDE DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASINA DAİR KANUN
6528	1.03.2014	MİLLÎ EĞİTİM TEMEL KANUNU İLE BAZI KANUN VE KANUN HÜKMÜNDE KARARNAMELERDE DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASINA DAİR KANUN
6550	3.07.2014	ARAŞTIRMA ALTYAPILARININ DESTEKLENMESİNE DAİR KANUN
6564	5.11.2014	YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM PERSONEL KANUNUNDA DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASINA DAİR KANUN
6676	16.02.2016	ARAŞTIRMA VE GELİŞTİRME FAALİYETLERİNİN DESTEKLENMESİ HAKKINDA KANUN İLE BAZI KANUN VE KANUN HÜKMÜNDE KARARNAMELERDE DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASINA DAİR KANUN
6721	17.06.2016	TÜRKİYE MAARİF VAKFI KANUNU
6764	2.12.2016	MİLLÎ EĞİTİM BAKANLIĞININ TEŞKİLAT VE GÖREVLERİ HAKKINDA KANUN HÜKMÜNDE KARARNAME İLE BAZI KANUN VE KANUN HÜKMÜNDE KARARNAMELERDE DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASINA DAİR KANUN
7033	18.06.2017	SANAYİNİN GELİŞTİRİLMESİ VE ÜRETİMİN DESTEKLENMESİ AMACIYLA BAZI KANUN VE KANUN HÜKMÜNDE KARARNAMELERDE DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASINA DAİR KANUN
7100	22.02.2018	YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM KANUNU İLE BAZI KANUN VE KANUN HÜKMÜNDE KARARNAMELERDE DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASI HAKKINDA KANUN
7141	9.05.2018	YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM KANUNU İLE BAZI KANUN VE KANUN HÜKMÜNDE KARARNAMELERDE DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASINA DAİR KANUN

**APPENDIX B: A LIST OF LAWS REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF UNIVERSITIES 2002-2018**

Sütun1	Type	Date	City	University	Law / Decree
1	Foundation	2003	Ankara	TOBB Ekonomi ve Teknoloji University	4909
2	Public	2006	Adıyaman	Adıyaman University	5467
3	Public	2006	Aksaray	Aksaray University	5467
4	Public	2006	Amasya	Amasya University	5467
5	Public	2006	Burdur	Mehmet Akif Ersoy University	5467
6	Public	2006	Çorum	Hitit University	5467
7	Public	2006	Düzce	Düzce University	5467
8	Public	2006	Erzincan	Erzincan University	5467
9	Public	2006	Giresun	Giresun University	5467
10	Public	2006	Kastamonu	Kastamonu University	5467
11	Public	2006	Kırşehir	Ahi Evran University	5467
12	Public	2006	Ordu	Ordu University	5467
13	Public	2006	Rize	Recep Teyyip Erdoğan University	5467
14	Public	2006	Tekirdağ	Namık Kemal University	5467
15	Public	2006	Uşak	Uşak University	5467
16	Public	2006	Yozgat	Bozok University	5467
17	Foundation	2006	İstanbul	Demiroğlu Bilim University	5475
18	Public	2007	Ağrı	Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University	5662
19	Public	2007	Artvin	Artvin Çoruh University	5662
20	Public	2007	Batman	Batman University	5662
21	Public	2007	Bilecik	Bilecik Şeyh Edebali University	5662
22	Public	2007	Bingöl	Bingöl University	5662
23	Public	2007	Bitlis	Bitlis Eren University	5662
24	Public	2007	Çankırı	Çankırı Karatekin University	5662
25	Public	2007	Karabük	Karabük University	5662
26	Public	2007	Karaman	Karamanoğlu Mehmet Bey University	5662
27	Public	2007	Kırklareli	Kırklareli University	5662
28	Public	2007	Kilis	Kilis 7 Aralık University	5662
29	Public	2007	Mardin	Mardin Artuklu University	5662
30	Public	2007	Muş	Muş Alparslan University	5662
31	Public	2007	Nevşehir	Nevşehir Hacı Bektaşî Veli University	5662
32	Public	2007	Osmaniye	Osmaniye Korkut Ata University	5662
33	Public	2007	Siirt	Siirt University	5662
34	Public	2007	Sinop	Sinop University	5662
35	Foundation	2007	İstanbul	Acıbadem Mehmet Ali Aydınlar University	5656

36	Foundation	2007	İstanbul	İstanbul Arel University	5656
37	Foundation	2007	İstanbul	İstanbul Aydın University	5656
38	Foundation	2007	İstanbul	Özyeğin University	5656
39*	Foundation	2007	İzmir	İzmir University	5656
40	Public	2008	Ardahan	Ardahan University	5765
41	Public	2008	Bartın	Bartın University	5765
42	Public	2008	Bayburt	Bayburt University	5765
43	Public	2008	Gümüşhane	Gümüşhane University	5765
44	Public	2008	Hakkari	Hakkari University	5765
45	Public	2008	Iğdır	Iğdır University	5765
46	Public	2008	fırnak	fırnak University	5765
47	Public	2008	Tunceli	Munzur University	5765
48	Public	2008	Yalova	Yalova University	5765
49	Foundation	2008	İstanbul	Piri Reis University	5733
50	Foundation	2008	İstanbul	Altınbaş University	5765
51	Foundation	2008	İstanbul	İstanbul Şehir University	5765
52*	Foundation	2008	İzmir	Gediz University	5796
53	Foundation	2008	Gaziantep	Hasan Kalyoncu University	5796
54*	Foundation	2008	Kayseri	Melikşah University	5799
55*	Foundation	2009	Gaziantep	Zirve University	5839
56	Foundation	2009	İstanbul	İstanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University	5839
57	Foundation	2009	Mersin	Toros University	5913
58	Foundation	2009	İstanbul	İstanbul Medipol University	5913
59	Foundation	2009	Konya	KTO Karatay University	5913
60*	Foundation	2009	Konya	Mevlana University	5913
61	Foundation	2009	Kayseri	Nuh Naci Yazgan University	5913
62*	Foundation	2009	Ankara	Turgut Özal University	5913
63	Foundation	2009	Ankara	TED University	5913
64	Public	2010	İstanbul	Türk-Alman University	5979
65	Public	2010	Ankara	Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University	6005
66	Public	2010	Bursa	Bursa Teknik University	6005
67	Public	2010	İstanbul	İstanbul Medeniyet University	6005
68	Public	2010	İzmir	İzmir Katip Çelebi University	6005
69	Public	2010	Konya	Necmettin Erbakan University	6005
70	Public	2010	Erzurum	Erzurum Teknik University	6005
71	Public	2010	Kayseri	Abdullah Gül University	6005
72	Foundation	2010	İstanbul	Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University	5981
73	Foundation	2010	İstanbul	İstanbul 29 Mayıs University	5981
74*	Foundation	2010	İstanbul	Süleyman Şah University	5981
75	Foundation	2010	İstanbul	İstanbul Sabahattin Zaim University	5981
76	Foundation	2010	İstanbul	Bezmialem Vakıf University	5981
77*	Foundation	2010	Samsun	Canik Başarı University	5981
78	Foundation	2010	Antalya	Antalya Bilim University	6005
79*	Foundation	2010	İzmir	Şifa University	6082
80	Foundation	2010	Trabzon	Avrasya University	6082

81	Public	2011	Adana	Adana Bilim ve Teknoloji University	6218
82	Foundation	2011	İstanbul	İstanbul Gelişim University	6114
83	Foundation	2011	İstanbul	Üsküdar University	6114
84	Foundation	2011	İstanbul	İstanbul Gedik University	6114
85*	Foundation	2011	Bursa	Bursa Orhangazi University	6114
86	Foundation	2011	Antalya	Alanya Hamdullah Emin Paşa University	6114
87	Foundation	2011	Ankara	Türk Hava Kurumu University	6114
88	Foundation	2011	Ankara	Yüksek İhtisas University	6114
89*	Foundation	2011	Ankara	İpek University	6114
90	Foundation	2012	İstanbul	MEF University	6296
91	Foundation	2012	İstanbul	Nişantaşı University	6307
92*	Foundation	2012	İstanbul	Murat Hüdavendigar University	6307
93*	Public	2013	Ankara	Ankara Sosyal Bilimler University	6410
94*	Foundation	2013	Diyarbakır	Selahattin Eyyubi University	6414
95	Foundation	2013	Ankara	Anka Teknoloji University	6492
96	Foundation	2013	İstanbul	İstanbul Esenyurt University	6492
97*	Foundation	2013	Adana	Kanuni University	6492
98	Foundation	2013	Konya	Konya Gıda ve Tarım University	6492
99	Foundation	2013	Gaziantep	SANKO University	6492
100	Foundation	2014	İstanbul	Biruni University	6525
101	Public	2015	İstanbul	Sağlık Bilimleri University	6639
102	Public	2015	Balıkesir	Bandırma Onyeddi Eylül University	6640
103	Public	2015	Hatay	İskenderun Teknik University	6640
104	Public	2015	Antalya	Alanya Alaaddim Keykubat University	6640
105	Public	2015	İstanbul	Türkiye Uluslararası İslam Bilim ve Teknoloji University	6641
106	Foundation	2015	Antalya	Antalya AKEV University	6640
107	Foundation	2015	İstanbul	İstanbul Rumeli University	6640
108	Foundation	2015	İstanbul	İbn Haldun University	6641
109	Foundation	2015	İstanbul	İstinye University	6641
110	Public	2016	İzmir	İzmir Bakırçay University	6745
111	Public	2016	İzmir	İzmir Demokrasi University	6746
112	Public	2016	İstanbul	Milli Savunma University	669 decree
113	Foundation	2016	İstanbul	İstanbul Kent University	6745
114	Foundation	2016	İstanbul	Beykoz University	6745
115	Foundation	2016	İstanbul	İstanbul Ayvansaray University	6761
116	Foundation	2016	İstanbul	Fenerbahçe University	6761
117	Public	2017	İstanbul	Türk-Japon Bilim ve Teknoloji University	7034
118	Public	2017	Ankara	Ankara Güzel Sanatlar University	7033
119	Foundation	2017	Nevşehir	Kapadokya University	7033
120	Foundation	2017	Ankara	Ostim Teknik University	7033
121	Foundation	2017	Ankara	Lokman Hekim University	7063

122	Public	2018	Gaziantep	Gaziantep Bilim ve Teknoloji University	7141
123	Public	2018	Konya	Konya Teknik University	7141
124	Public	2018	Kütahya	Kütahya Sağlık Bilimleri University	7141
125	Public	2018	Malatya	Malatya Turgut Özal University	7141
126	Public	2018	İstanbul	İstanbul University-Cerrahpaşa	7141
127	Public	2018	Ankara	Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University	7141
128	Public	2018	Sakarya	Sakarya Uygulamalı Bilimler University	7141
129	Public	2018	Samsun	Samsun University	7141
130	Public	2018	Mersin	Tarsus University	7141
131	Public	2018	Trabzon	Trabzon University	7141
132	Public	2018	Kayseri	Kayseri University	7141
133	Public	2018	Kahramanmaraş	Kahramanmaraş İstiklal University	7141
134	Foundation	2018	İstanbul	İstanbul Atlas University	7141
135	Foundation	2018	İzmir	İzmir Tınaztepe University	7141
136	Public	2018	Eskişehir	Eskişehir Teknik University	7141
137	Public	2018	Isparta	Isparta Uygulamalı Bilimler University	7141
138	Public	2018	Afyonkarahisar	Afyonkarahisar Sağlık Bilimleri University	7141
139	Foundation	2018	İstanbul	Semerkand Bilim ve Medeniyet University	7141
140	Foundation	2018	Ankara	Ankara Medipol University	7141

APPENDIX C: TURKISH SUMMARY: TÜRKÇE ÖZET

YÜKSEKÖĞRETİMİN DÖNÜŞÜMÜ BAĞLAMINDA TÜRKİYE’DE 2002-2018 DÖNEMİ YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM POLİTİKALARININ BİR ANALİZİ

Bu çalışma yükseköğretimin dönüşümünü kavramsal ve tarihsel bir yaklaşımla inceleyerek, Türkiye yükseköğretiminin 2000 sonrası dönemde geçirdiği değişikliklerin bu bağlamda siyasal ve politikalara yönelik bir değerlendirmesini sunar. Bu amaçla gömülü kuram (grounded theory) adı verilen bir metodolojik yaklaşımı benimseyerek geniş bir veriyi analiz eder ve bazı kavramsal ve teorik sonuçlara ulaşmayı amaçlar. Türkiye’de yükseköğretimin dönüşümünün 2002-2018 dönemine hapsediği argüman edilmez, nitekim dönüşüm bu tarihten daha öncesinde başlayıp hala devam etmekte olan ve ulusal sınırlara indirgenemeyecek global bir süreçtir. Fakat özellikle yükseköğretimin dönüşümüne dair bazı kavramsal çerçeve ve göstergeler ışığında, 2002-2018 döneminin Türkiye’nin yükseköğretim dönüşümünde bir yoğunlaşma ve hızlanmayı temsil eden önemli bir dönem olduğu argümanı yapılır. Daha önemlisi, yükseköğretimin dönüşümü kavramsal çerçevelerini kullanarak Türkiye yükseköğretiminde 2002-2018 döneminde gerçekleşen değişimlerin, bütünsel bir harmanı da içeren bir sunuşunu yapılmaktadır. Nitekim bu çalışmada da anlaşıldığı gibi yükseköğretimin dönüşümü kavramı sosyal bilimlerden kabul görmüş bir tanıma sahip olmanın tam aksine, oldukça farklı bağlam ve parçalardan yakalanarak kullanılan bir soyutlamadan başka bir şey değildir. Bu açıdan bu çalışma farklı bağlam ve kavramsallaştırma çabalarını sunarak ve operasyonelleştirerek, belirli bir mekân/zaman içindeki değişiklikleri bir bağlama oturtmaya çalışır.

Bu çalışmadaki veri genel olarak 3 temel birincil kaynak ile bazı ikincil kaynaklardan oluşur. Birincil kaynaklardan ilki, 2002-2018 yılları arasında Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Genel Kurul’u içerisinde yapılmış yükseköğretime dair bütün tartışmalardan oluşur. Bu döneme ait yaklaşık 2.000 dökümanlık resmi tutanak arşivleri “eğitim”, “öğretim”, “yök”, “üniversite” anahtar kelimeleri kullanılarak taranır, okunur ve analiz edilir. Bu verinin analizi “Atlas.ti”

adında bir yazılım kullanılarak, tamamen nitel bir şekilde yapılır. Nitekim program sadece verinin organizasyonu, rahat okumayı sağlama, gelişmiş arama motoru işlevinin kullanımı, kodlama ve kaydetme özellikleri bakımından kullanılır. Bu yöntemle küçük bir kaçırma payıyla meclis bazındaki tüm yükseköğretim tartışma ve söylemlerine ulaşılır. Bunlar okunarak temsil edicilik ve ayırt edicilik açısından önemli bulunanlar kavramsal kategoriler içerisinde tarihlerine göre kaydedilir. Bu şekilde yaklaşık 100 kategoriye (kod) ulaşılmış, 2.000 alıntı kaydedilmiş, bunlar Türkiye yükseköğretiminin bu süreçte geçirdiği değişimleri kavramsallaştırmak için dönüşlü bir süreç içerisinde değerlendirilmiştir.

Birincil kaynaklardan ikincisi, 2002-2018 tarihleri arasında yükseköğretimi ilgilendiren tüm politikalarıdır. Bunlar ilk kaynağın izlenmesi sürecinden ve resmi kanun veri tabanlarında yapılan aramalarla elde edilir. Üniversite isimlerindeki değişiklikler, milli eğitime odaklanıp yükseköğretime etkisi küçük olan politikalar, öğrenci afları, burs ve yurtlarla ilgili değişiklikler gibi bazı görece daha önemsiz konular üzerindeki politikalar ihmal edilmiş, fakat yaklaşık 30 adet önemli kanun ve veto edilmiş yasa tasarısı madde madde okunarak ve yükseköğretim üzerindeki etkilerine dair değerlendirmeler yapılarak analiz edilmiştir.

Birincil kaynaklardan üçüncüsü, aynı tarihler arasındaki TBMM'nin eğitimle ilgili konularının ayrıntılı olarak görüşüldüğü Milli Eğitim, Kültür, Gençlik ve Spor Komitesi raporlarından oluşur. Bu raporlar çerçeveli bir şekilde tüketilerek değerlendirilmemiş, meclis tartışmaları ve politikalara dair analizlerin yapılmasında ek kaynak ve referans olarak kullanılmıştır.

Bu birincil kaynaklara ek olarak, özellikle meclis tartışmaları ve politikaların değerlendirilmesi sürecinde yükseköğretimin 2002-2018 sürecinde geçirdiği değişiklikleri daha iyi anlamlandırabilmek için sürekli olarak istatistikler, siyasal parti programları, kalkınma ve hükümet programları, uluslararası organizasyonların ajanda ve raporları ve yazılı haber kaynaklarına da başvurulmuş, bunlar ikincil kaynaklar olarak kullanılmıştır.

Gömülü kuram yaklaşımı genel olarak araştırmacının eldeki veriyi prosedürel ve dönüşlü bir süreç içerisinde dikkatli bir şekilde analiz etmesini gerektirir. Bu anlamda birincil kaynaklar ve ikincil kaynaklar harmanlanarak, dönemlere ayrılmış şekilde kavramsallaştırma süreci izlenerek tüm bulgular yükseköğretimin dönüşümüne dair kavramsal çerçeveler ışığında sunulmuştur.

Bölüm 2’de, önce dönüşüm kavramı ve sonra da asıl olarak yükseköğretimin dönüşü kavramı üzerine bir analiz yapılır. Dönüşüm kavramının bir yapıdan bir başka yapıya, ya da bir yapı içindeki bir formdan başka bir forma geçiş bağlamında ele alınacağı belirtilir.

Yükseköğretimin dönüşümüne yönelik analiz ise, gömülü kuram yaklaşımına sadık kalmak açısından tekil teorilerin kabul edilip izlenmesi şeklinde gerçekleşmez. Onun yerine, önce, yükseköğretimin dönüşümü kavramını anlamlandırmaya aday olabilecek literatür çizgilerinin bir sunumunu yapar. Buna göre yükseköğretimin dönüşümü fenomenini açıklayan veya açıklamaya aday olmuş 3 literatür hattına ulaşılır.

Bunlardan biri, yükseköğretimin dönüşümü argümanları için çoğunlukla belkemiği olan *yükseköğretimin genişlemesi* üzerine odaklanan çalışmalardır. Bu çalışmalar hem tarihsel hem mekânsal olarak değişen şekillerde yükseköğretimi ilgilendiren öğrenci sayıları, kurum sayıları ve akademisyen sayıları gibi konularda gözlemlenebilen değişim (genellikle artış) trendlerini kullanarak yükseköğretimin dönüştüğüne dair tezler ortaya koymaktadır. Sanayi devrimi ve 2. Dünya Savaşı gibi geniş çaplı tarihsel demografik ve ekonomik konularla oldukça ilişkilenen bu gözlem ve tezler, kitleselleşme fenomeninin nitelik-nicelik, demokratikleşme, uzmanlaşma, ekonomik kalkınma, ihtisaslaşma gibi bir dizi başka önemli tartışma ile doğrudan ilgili olduğunu da gösterir.

İkinci literatür hattı, yükseköğretimin dönüşümünü *bilgi üretimi-bilimsel aktivite* süreçlerindeki tarihsel dönüşümlere odaklanarak açıklamaya aday olur. Özellikle modern üniversite kavramının ortaya çıktığı 19. Yüzyıl başlarına tekabül eden tarihsel bağlamda bilginin ve yükseköğretimin bilgi uğraşlarının kendi içerisinde değerli bir süreç olarak ele alındığı modern anlayıştan kopuşun bir resmini sunar. Bu hattaki incelemeler her ne kadar pay ve etkileri günümüzde azalıyor olsa da geniş tarihsel süreçleri ve konuları içine alan meta-teoriler üreten bir niteliğe de sahip olmuş, bu anlamda yükseköğretimin dönüşümünü anlamak açısından oldukça önemli kavramsal çerçeveler üretmiştir. Bilgi üretimini ilgilendiren toplumsal ilişkiselliklerin bir zeminden ötekine geçişi şeklinde de değerlendirilebilecek olan tarihsel süreçler içerisinde özellikle insanın doğayla olan ilişkileri açısından önemli değişimleri ifade eden kapitalizmin ve tekno-bilimsel gelişmelerin vurgusu yapılır. Tüm bu süreçlerin, onunla birlikte değişen, var olanı anlamlandırmaya dair toplumsal pozisyon alışı da atlamaması gerektiği, bu anlamda özellikle nicelleşen ve market ilişkileri zemininde araçsallaşan yükseköğretimin bu dönüşümü derinden hissettiği ifade edilir.

Üçüncü literatür hattı ise, tüm bu dönüşüm süreci içerisinde yükseköğretimi *organizasyon ve yönetim* bağlamında kurumsal, ulusal ve uluslararası düzenlemelerin bir konusu olarak ele almaya meyillidir. Günümüzde giderek daha fazla yaygınlaşan bu hattaki çalışmalar içerisinde özellikle ulus üzeri yönetim ve düzenleme mekanizmalarının artan önemi ile yükseköğretimin kurumsal olarak yaşadığı değişimler yer yer işlevsel adaptasyon yer yer ise eleştirel perspektiflerle ele alınır. Organizasyon ve yönetim konularının özellikle girişimcilik gibi yeni kamu yönetimi anlayışları, insan sermayesi yönetimi gibi tasavvurlar ve bilgi ekonomisi gibi kavramsallaştırmalarla artan bir şekilde kapitalizm ve market liberalizmi çerçevesinde şekillenen bir yükseköğretimin ortaya çıktığı doğrulanır. Bu olgulara karşı da birbirinden oldukça farklı ve hatta çatışan fikirler vardır.

Daha sonra, yine Bölüm 2’de, çalışmanın geri kalanında işlevselleştirmek ve olguları daha iyi kavramsallaştırabilmek için birtakım kavramların basit ve geniş bazı tanımları verilir. Bunlardan bazıları piyasalaşma, ticarileşme, özelleşme, kalkınma, küreselleşme, uluslararasılaşma, kitleselleşme, bilgi çağı, bilgi ekonomisi, Ar-Ge, sanayi-yükseköğretim ilişkileri, eğitim-araştırma ayrışması gibi kavramlardır.

Genel olarak Bölüm 2, yükseköğretimin dönüşümünün kendini türlü şekilde gösteren, fakat yeterli geniş tarihsellikte bakıldığında kendini oldukça açığa vuran bir fenomen olduğu tespit edilir. Bir takım demografik, epistemolojik ve organizasyon bazlı yönlerin, yükseköğretimin dönüşümü fenomenine içsel olduğu gözlemlenir. Bu yönlerin özellikle bazı aktör ve eyleyenlerin geniş anlamıyla bir ilişkiler ekonomisine girerek, dönüşümü hem etkilediği hem de ondan etkilendiği söylenebilir.

Bölüm 3, Türkiye’deki yükseköğretimin dönüşümü sürecinde Türkiye bağlamında göz önünde bulunan bir takım önemli koşulları anlamaya çalışır. Her ne kadar yükseköğretimin dönüşümünün nedensellikler bağlamında anlaşılmasına çalışmanın oldukça yetersiz olacağı, olanaklıkların koşullarına (conditions of possibility) dayalı analizlerin gerektiği belirtilse de çalışmanın ampirik sınırları bakımından sadece koşullar (conditions) ele alınır. Yer yer nedensellik düzlemine oldukça yaklaşıyor olsalar da bu koşullar, mümkün olduğunca dönüşümün içerisinde hali hazırda bulunan, göz önünde ve öne çıkan aktörleri ve bunların dönüşüm sürecine nasıl katıldıklarını açıklamaya çalışır. Bu anlamda neden ve etmen gibi kelimeler yerine koşul kelimesi tercih edilmiştir. Fakat koşullar bağlamdaki bir bakışın çalışmanın kaçınılmaz bir sınırlılığı olduğunu da burada hatırlatmakta fayda var.

Uluslararası ve ulusal bazı koşullar sunulurken özellikle Türkiye’de yükseköğretimin yakın tarihsel arka planına ve 2002-2018 yılları arasındaki politik ortama dikkat çekilir. Uluslararası koşullar içerisinde özellikle incelenen veride kendini gösteren ve Türkiye’deki dönüşümle doğrudan ilişkilendiği gözlemlenen Avrupa Birliği, Dünya Bankası, OECD, Birleşmiş Milletler gibi uluslararası organizasyonların ekonomik ilişkilenmeler, yardım ve karlı ortaklıklar, politika düzenleme, izleme ve denetlemeleri ve açık veya görece üstü kapalı söylem, çağrı ve telkinlerle dönüşüm içerisine aktif olarak katıldığı belirtilir. Ayrıca genel olarak, uluslararası organizasyonların etki ve niyetleri bir tarafta, devletlerin kapasite ve niyetleri diğer tarafta olmak üzere bu ilişkilenme içerisinde bir karşılıklı etkileşim ve belirli saptamalara olanak veren açıklıklar olduğunun altı çizilir.

Ulusal bağlamda ise özellikle 2 konuya dikkat çekilir. Bunlardan birisi Türkiye’nin 2000lere ulaşan yükseköğretim mirası olarak adlandırılabilir. Bu miras özellikle YÖK’ün kurulduğu dönem olan 1980 darbesi sonrası için devlet, üniversiteler ve YÖK çerçevesinde şekillenen ve yükseköğretim paydaşları ile siyasetçilerin içinde bulunduğu bir politik ilişkiler ağına da işaret eder. Burada özellikle YÖK’ün kurulmasından sonraki dönemin, üniversitelerin özerkliğinde örneğin 1960 sonraki döneme nazaran bir azalmaya tekabül etmesiyle beraber, özellikle bir takım denge ve denetleme mekanizmalarının sonucu olarak üniversite dışındaki unsurların da değişen karşılaşmalar içerisinde olduğu belirtilir. Örneğin YÖK, bir devlet kurumu olmasına karşın devleti oluşturan kompozisyonlara karşı bir politik duruş gösterebilir ve etkili bir kurum olabilir. Aynı şekilde devlet yapısının YÖK dışındaki yükseköğretim üzerindeki önemi büyük olan cumhurbaşkanı ve kendi içinde de politik farklılıklara olanak veren hükümet yapısına dahil bazı aktörlerinin değişen kompozisyonları ile beraber düşünülmesi gerektiği gözlemlenir. Buna göre 1980’den sonra ortaya yavaş yavaş bir aktör olarak çıkmaya başlayan piyasanın, güç ve özerklikleri görece azalmış üniversitelerin, değişen kompozisyonları ile farklı odaklara sahip olabilen yasama-yürütme güçlerinin, bunlardan ayrıca ayrışabilen veya yakınlaşabilen cumhurbaşkanlığı ofisinin ve tüm bu farklı odaklarla ortak-karşıt ilişkilere girebilen YÖK kurumunun karşılıklı etkileşimleri bağlamında oluşan bir yükseköğretim dokusu betimlenir.

2002’den sonra ise yüksek bir meclis oranı ile tek başına iktidar olan AKP’nin, bu çatışmalı güç ilişkilerini giderek homojenleştiren bir baskın parti gücü elde etmeye başladığı gözlemlenir. Popüler seçimler ile beraber yüksek seçim barajı gibi bir takım yapısal etkilerin de ortaya çıkmasına sebebiyet verdiği baskın parti veya baskın parti sistemi, yasama ve yürütmede birçok anlamda kendini göstermektedir. Özellikle 2007 döneminde

cumhurbaşkanlığı mevkiine Ahmet Necdet Sezer'in yerine Abdullah Gül'ün gelmesi devlet içi homojenleşmenin önemli bir adımı olmuştur. Nitekim 2002-2007 periyodundaki yükseköğretimi de içeren politika yapma süreçleri adeta bir veto rekoru dönemine tekabül etmişken, 2007 sonrasında zorlu politika değişikliklerinin dahi yasama ve yürütmedeki büyük güç ile oldukça hızlı ve kolay süreçlerle yapılabildiği gözlemlenir. Yine aynı yıl Abdullah Gül tarafından YÖK üye ve başkanlıklarına dair atamaların yapılabilmesi, 2002-2007 döneminde oldukça çatışma içinde olan YÖK ile hükümetin sonrasında giderek ortaklaşması şeklinde kendisini gösterir. Ayrıca torba kanunlar, kanun hükmünde kararname gibi yasa yapma teknikleri açısından, yasama-yürütme çekişmelerinin yerini sıkı ilişkilere bırakması, yüksek parti disiplini ile liderin ön planda olduğu bir politik yapı oluşumu bakımından ve formal-informal olma sınırında bir takım yönetim stratejileriyle 2002 ve özellikle 2007 sonrası siyasal ortamın özelliklerinin de yükseköğretiminin dönüşümü ile birlikte kendini gösteren koşullardan olduğu belirtilir.

Özetle, devletin büyük bir paya sahip olmasına rağmen karmaşık ilişkilere sahne olan yükseköğretim dokusunun, 2000ler sonrasında yerini giderek homojenleşmiş bir güç içerisinde bir politik parti programının devlet tarafından hayata geçirilmesi bağlamına bıraktığı tespit edilir. Burada özellikle Avrupa Birliği katılım ve uyum süreçlerinde yeni adımlara geçilmesi ile 2000ler sonrasında uluslararası kuruluşlarla olan etkileşimlerin artışı ve 2000 sonrası ulusal siyasal koşulların birbirine yaklaşık olarak tarihsel anlamda denk düştüğünün de altı çizilir.

Bölüm 4 ise 2002-2018 yılında Türkiye yükseköğretiminde meydana gelen değişikliklerin bir sunumunu içerir. Analiz konuları bakımından 4 farklı çerçeveye ayrılmıştır. Bunlar idari anlamda meydana gelen değişimler, kitleselleşme ve nicelleşme bağlamındaki değişimler, ekonomik kalkınma bağlamında meydana gelen değişimler ve din boyutunda meydana gelen değişimlerdir.

İdari anlamda, 2000ler sonrası siyasal koşullarla bağlantılı bir takım önemli değişiklikler yaşanmıştır. Özellikle 2003-2007 döneminde AKP'nin statükonun yıkılması ve köklü yeniden yapılandırma istekleri gibi söylemlerle yükseköğretime dair bir takım siyasi mücadelelere girdiği gözlemlenir. Burada üniversitelerin özerkleştirilmesine ve YÖK gibi baskıcı ve yükseköğretim otonomisinin karşısında durduğu ifade edilen bir kurumun kaldırılmasına/etkinliğinin azaltılmasına dair birtakım sözler ve çalışmalar karşımıza çıkar. Fakat AKP tarafından başlatılan dev yasa taslağı çalışmalarının yine AKP tarafından giderek

geri çekildiği ve sonuç olarak bu tarz bir idari reformun ertelendiği görülür. Nitekim 2007 sonrasında başlayan 2013 sonrasında hız kazanan trendlerle bu ilk söylemlerinin aksine yükseköğretimde daha merkezi ve daha hiyerarşik bir yapılanmaya doğru yol alındığı, YÖK kurumunun neredeyse daha önce hiç sahip olmadığı kadar çok yetki ve güçle donatıldığı görülür. Bu trendler yükseköğretimin tüm kurumlarından gözlemlenebilmektedir. Örneğin TÜBİTAK kurumu 2003-2007 yılları arasında birtakım çatışmalara, atama ve atama prosedürlerine dair yapılandırma ve bunlara karşı duran vetolar ile siyasi mücadelelere sahne olur. Bir takım yönetim stratejileri, formal atamalar ve artan yürütme gücü ile TÜBİTAK'ın özerkliğinin devlet ve AK Parti lehinde azaldığı gözlemlenir. Benzer merkezileşme ve özerklik kaybetme eğilimlerinin TÜBA ve ÜAK gibi kurumlarda da yaşandığına dair göstergeler vardır. Yine üniversitelerin, özellikle rektör atamaları ve atama prosedürlerine dair değişikliklerle yönetsel olarak giderek özerklik kaybettiği, AKP politik zemininin etkisinde şekillenmeye başladığı gözlemlenir. Tüm bunlar genel olarak, önceleri verilen sözlere rağmen giderek artan bir merkezi-hiyerarşik yapının günümüzde oldukça kristalleştiği bir yükseköğretim dokusunun ortaya çıktığını göstermektedir.

Yükseköğretimin büyümesi ve nicelleşme bağlamında, 2002-2018 döneminin Türkiye tarihinde sadece bazı dönemlerle kıyaslanabilecek kadar büyük bir genişlemeye sahne olduğu gözlemlenir. Öğrenci sayıları, öğrenci kabul oranları, üniversite ve diğer yükseköğretim kurum ve birim sayılarında meydana gelen değişimler büyük bir kitleselleşmeye denk gelmektedir. Bu kitleselleşme içerisinde kaliteye karşı kaygıların oldukça azaldığı, bu anlamda önemli geriye gidişlerle karşı karşıya olunduğuna dair göstergelerin olduğu ifade edilir.

Kitleselleşmede özellikle 2007'den sonra YÖK'le hükümet arasında kurulan ilişkiler bağlamında kendini gösteren politika ve stratejilerin önemi büyüktür. Nitekim kontenjan artırma kararları, öncesinde altyapı ve kalite kaygıları dolayısıyla temkinli olunan üniversite kurma politikalarının bu kaygılardan arınmışçasına giderek hızlanması, üniversite kurulurken fen-edebiyat fakültesi açma zorunluluğunun kaldırılması gibi pozisyon alışlarla genişlemenin önemli adımları atılır. Genişlemede açık öğretim ve iki yıllık öğretim programlarının önemli bir paya sahip olduğu, bunların 2000ler öncesinde yükseköğretimin sadece bir parçasını oluşturmasına rağmen günümüzde çoğunluğunu kapladığı belirtilir. Aynı şekilde yükseköğretim kurum sayılarında büyük artışlar olmuş, 2003'te sayıları 53 olan devlet üniversitelerinin sayısı 2018'den sonra 129 olmuş, aynı dönemde vakıf üniversiteleri sayıları ise yaklaşık 3 kat artarak 23'ten 73'e çıkmıştır. Bu konuda 2003-2007 döneminde

az da olsa AKP Milletvekilleri tarafından dile getirilen bazı kalite kaygıları varken, 2007'den itibaren AKP tarafından bu tarz söylemlerin yok denecek kadar azaldığı gözlemlenir. Buna karşı bazı muhalefet parti ve milletvekilleri süreci prensipte desteklemekle beraber sürecin nasıl gerçekleştirildiğine dair giderek artan şekilde eleştiriler yapmaya başlamıştır.

Yükseköğretimin genişlemesi süreci içinde bulunan fakat aynı zamanda ona karşı bir gerilim yaratan bir konu da akademisyen sayılarıdır. Akademisyen yetersizlikleri Türkiye yükseköğretimi için her zaman bir problem olmuşken 2000ler sonrasında sorunun giderek derinleştiği görülür. Üstelik bu sorunun aşılması için akademisyen sayılarını artırmaya yönelik akademik ünvan ve pozisyonların elde edilmesine dair kolaylaştırmalar ve düzenlemeler yapılmıştır. Bunlar özellikle lisans ve lisansüstü seviyelerde artan akademisyen yetersizliklerinin yanında akademisyen kalitesine dair de ciddi soru işaretleri oluşturmaktadır. Benzer bir şekilde özellikle yayın sayısına bağlı akademik üretim faaliyetlerinin nitel kaygıların oldukça azaldığı ve nicel bir rekabetin şişirildiği bir bağlamda ele alındığı ve teşvik edildiği görülür. Akademisyen maaşlarının dahi aktivitelerin nicel olarak ölçülmesine bağlı olarak değerlendirildiği bir aşamaya geçilmiştir. Bununla bağlantılı olarak, siyasi bağlamda ve politika yapma süreçlerinde sürekli bahsi geçen SCI ve SSCI gibi indekslerin neredeyse her zaman yayın sayısına bağlı ve aslında ülkelerin popülasyonları ile oldukça bağlantılı sıralamalara yüzeysel referanslarla ele alındığı görülür. Çalışma başına alıntı gibi kaliteye daha iyi referans olabilecek ölçümlerde Türkiye'nin zaten oldukça başarısız bir pozisyonda iken, bu anlamda son yıllarda daha da gerilediği görülür. Oldukça kısıtlı birkaç nicel gösterge bir yana, kalitenin giderek söylem ve eylemlerin bir odağı olmaktan çıktığına dair gözlemler yapılır.

Yükseköğretimin ekonomik kalkınma bağlamında ele alınmasına ve bu bağlamda yaşanan değişimlere dair bulgular ise Bölüm 4'teki analizin en geniş kısmını oluşturur. Nitekim 2002-2018 döneminde Türkiye'de yükseköğretime dair değişimlerin en temel yönelim ve ereklerinden birinin ekonomik kalkınma ve bunu sağlamaya dair düzenlemeler yapmak bağlamında geliştiği ortaya çıkar. Bu düzenlemeler kendini birkaç bağlamda gösterir. Yükseköğretim bütçesine dair düzenlemelerde genel olarak özelleştirme teşvik, destek ve adımlarının ön plana çıktığı görülür. Özelleştirmenin yükseköğretim sorunlarını çözmek için bir çözüm yolu olarak sunulduğu ve ekonomik olarak gelişmiş bazı ülkelerin yüzeysel söylemlerle örnek alınıp bunların özelleştirme politikalarında meşrulaştırma amacıyla kullanıldığı görülür. Tüm bu özelleştirme süreci özel üniversitelerin ve özel üniversitelerde okuyan öğrencilerin payında büyük artışlara yol açarken aynı zamanda devlet

üniversitelerine dair finansal yardımların giderek azaldığı görülür. Yapılan bazı hesaplar 2002'den itibaren yükseköğretime ayrılan bütçenin yaklaşık olarak sabit kaldığı, bunun özellikle üniversite, birim ve öğrenci sayılarındaki patlama göz önüne alındığında aslında bir düşüşe tekabül ettiği belirtilir.

Ekonomik bağlamda özellikle devlet eliyle gelen düzenlemelerle ortaya çıkan bir başka değişim de bir tür insan sermayesi yönetimi ve planlanmasının yükseköğretim aracılığı ile gerçekleştirilmesi bağlamında ortaya çıkar. Yükseköğretim, önceleri bir işsizlik sorunu gündemi ile, sonraları ise giderek daha çok insan sermayesi yönetimi bağlamında, kitleselleşme ile birlikte ve Türkiye toplumundaki genç nüfusun fazlalığının da yardımıyla sanayi ve iş dünyasına bağlı bir işgücü piyasası düzenlemesi için enstrümantal olur. Bu bağlamda özellikle mesleki yükseköğretim kurumlarının oldukça yaygınlaştığı ve öğrenci sayılarının arttığı görülür. Bir ara eleman ihtiyacı/arzusunu ve iş-sanayi dünyası ortaklıkları ile yine uluslararası örgütler ve Batı söylemleri kılavuzluğunda yola çıkılan bu düzenlemelerde Türkiye oldukça ileri gitmiş, mesleki eğitimde çok yüksek okullaşma oranlarına ve öğrenci sayılarına ulaşmaya başlamıştır.

Ekonomik bağlamda en önemli konulardan biri ise araştırma ve teknolojiye dair aktivitelerdir. Özellikle 2000lerin başında hızla araçsallaştırılan TÜBİTAK ve başka bağlamlarda gerçekleştirilen kurumsal düzenlemeler bu bağlamda önem kazanır. Birçok proje ve yasal düzenlemelerle artırılan üniversite-sanayi-iş ortaklıkları, bu aktivitelerin özellikle öğrenci, akademisyen ve araştırmacılarının üniversite ortamından sanayi ve iş ortamına kanallanmasına dair düzenleme, teşvik ve yardımlarla da sağlanmıştır. Bununla bağlantılı olarak üniversitelerin evrensel bilgi üretme idealinden giderek uzaklaştırılarak ihtisaslaşma gibi yöntemlerle bölge ve ülke kalkınması bağlamında işlevsel hale getirildiği gözlemlenmiştir.

Ar-ge çalışmalarına yapılan yatırımda büyük artışlar öngörülmesine rağmen, beklendiği seviyelere ulaşamamıştır. Fakat yine de bütçeden ar-ge harcamalarına ayrılan pay 2002'den itibaren giderek artmıştır. Ayrıca bu harcamaların 2002'de %64,3 oranında yükseköğretim kurumları tarafından, %28,7 oranında özel sektör tarafından yapılmasına karşın 2017'de yükseköğretimin payı %33,5'e inmiş, özel sektörün payı %56,9'a çıkmıştır. Büyük oranda özel sektöre yönelik teşvik, destek ve istisna uygulamaları gibi politikalarla elde edilen bu trendin bir benzeri de ar-ge personeli sayılarında olmuştur.

Genel olarak ar-ge harcamalarına dair söylemlerin ekonomik kalkınmadaki kilit rolü, ekonomik hacmin artması ve karlılıktaki karma değer seviyelerinin artmasına yönelik olarak kavramsallaştırılmıştır. Bununla bağlantılı olarak, bilginin sermayeleşmesi ve ticarileşmesine yönelik söylemleri siyasi arena da özellikle 2010’larla beraber giderek açıkça ifade edilmeye başlanmış, bu konudaki legal ve fiziki altyapı yine büyük oranda politika yapma süreçleri ile sağlanmıştır. Bilgi toplumuna dönüşmek, bilgi bazlı bir ekonomi yaratmak gibi uluslararası arenada yaygınlaşan söylemlerle bilginin bilgi olarak değil sermaye olarak değer kazanması gerektiği, bunun için ticarileşmenin bir şart olduğu düşüncesi bazı muhalefet partilerinde de giderek artan şekilde görülmeye başlar. Fakat HDP gibi bazı partilerin bu tarz politikalara karşı daha eleştirel olduğunu gözlemlemek de mümkündür. Çok büyük oranda Türkiye dışı merkezli olsa da patent ve lisans sayılarında büyük artışlar görülürken bunların yine uluslararası süreçlere katılma, hatta belki de uluslararası arena için bir market haline gelme niteliği bağlamındaki gözlemler göze çarpar.

Fakat tüm bu ar-ge yönelimleri ile ilgili önemli bir bulgu, ülkede yüksek teknolojiye yönelik çalışma ve başarının oldukça kısıtlı olduğudur. Nitekim söylemde bir gaye olarak yer bulmasına rağmen bunların somut olarak nasıl adımların konusu olduğunu belirsizdir. Yüksek teknoloji ya da teknoloji/araştırma bağlamında büyük atılımları, insanlık açısından çağdaş seviyelere taşımaya yönelik bir çaba görmek pek mümkün olmadığı gibi bunların da sosyal fayda/insanlığa katkı gibi bağlamlarda değil ancak katma değer yükseltme bağlamında ele alındığı gözlemlenmektedir. Yine ar-ge çalışmalarının deneysel doğasını ortaya çıkaracak yapılanmaların aksine, dünya ile ekonomik rekabet bağlamında en çok karlılığın yaratılabileceği teknoloji seviyelerinin ve bazı teknoloji alanlarının dar anlamda bir ekonomik ilişkiler ağı içerisinde ele alınmasına dair yönelimler Türkiye’deki ar-ge aktivitelerini belirleyici gözükmektedir. Sosyal fayda ve bilimsel fazilete dair ilgisizliğin ar-ge aktivitelerinin neredeyse tümünde tamamen araçsallaştığı, ekonomik hacim genişlemesine dayalı ekonomik kalkınma fikri bağlamında somutlaştığı, aslında yüksek teknoloji veya çağdaş atılımların giderek daha da fazla hayal olduğuna yönelik gözlemler yapılır. Nitekim temel bilimlerin önemsizleştirildiğini ve nitelikli bilim insanlarının ar-ge süreçlerine entelektüel anlamda katılımının yerini nitelikliliğin ara-eleman çıktısı ve ar-ge personeli olma bağlamında, ticari yönelimli ve beklentili katılımına bırakıyor olduğu söylenebilir.

Tüm bu ekonomik kalkınma temelli düzenlemelerin altında “Hedef 2023” gibi söylemlerle karşılığını bulan bir uluslararası ekonomik rekabet anlayışının yeri de dikkat çeker. Ülke

çapında sosyal kalkınmaya dair düşünce ve girişimlerin ikinci plana atılarak ekonomik kalkınmaya yönelik bir mobilizasyon anlayışının ve temelde piyasa odaklı süreçlerle dünyada söz geçirebilecek bir ekonomik güce ulaşma fikrinin belirleyiciliği birçok farklı bağlamda gözlemlenmiştir. Bu terimleri kullanmadan, fakat aslında onlar tarafından belirlenen ilişkisel zeminleri oldukça normatif şekillerde sunarak kapitalizm modeline ve neoliberal politikalara yönelik, küresel söylem ve rekabetten ayrı düşünülemez bir ekonomik kalkınma fikri ile beraber gelir.

Bölüm 4'ün son hattı olan din boyutunda ise, Türkiye yükseköğretiminde 2002'den itibaren yaşanan değişimler içerisinde yükseköğretimde dini ilgilendiren alanlardaki öğrenci sayılarında, kurum/birim sayılarında, akademik üretim ve benzeri konularda meydana gelen bazı değişiklikler ele alınır. Bu konunun kendine ait bir başlıkta ele alınmasının en önemli nedeni, 2002-2018 döneminde Türkiye yükseköğretiminde meydana gelen değişiklikler içerisinde dinle ilişkili yükseköğretim alanlarında yaşanan göz ardı edilemez değişiklikler olması ve bunların küresel yükseköğretimin dönüşümü fenomeni içerisinde pek bir yere düşmüyor olmasıdır. Niceliksel bazı gözlemler, İlahiyat ve Din Çalışmaları gibi programlar ve bunların öğrenci sayılarında, 2002 öncesinde düşüş trenleri dahi varken 2002 sonrasında çok büyük artışlar meydana geldiğini, bunların lisansüstü düzeylerde de üretilen tez konuları gibi konularda kendini gösterecek şekilde karşılığını bulduğuna yöneliktir. Yine de burada bazı dalgalanmalar ve özellikle 2010'ların ortasından itibaren düşüş trendleri, İlahiyat fakülteleri tarafından da eleştirilen açık öğretime yönlendirme gibi politikalar da göze çarpar. Bazı Orta Doğu ve İslam ülkeleri dışında yükseköğretimi dönüşümüne konu olmayan yükseköğretimin dinle ilişkili bağlamlardaki değişiklikleri bu anlamda din konusunun yükseköğretim veya onun dönüşümü bağlamındaki yerine dair bazı sorgulamalar bağlamında ele almak gerektiği ifade edilir. Nitekim Türkiye'de genel olarak özellikle İslam'ın ekonomik kalkınmadaki yeri, dinin çağdaş medeniyetler ilişkileri bakımından konumu gibi soruların hem önde gelen politikacılar hem de yükseköğretimin önemli idarecileri tarafından sorgulandığına dair örnekler verilir. Bu örneklerin amacı temelde, bu sorulara ilişkin olarak AKP'nin hem kendisinden öncesindeki İslam temelli yönelimleri olan siyasi partilerden belli açılarda bazı farklı yorumlarda bulunduğu ve bunları uygulama adımları attığı, hem de 2002'den sonraki iktidarı süresinde kendi içinde dönemlere ve kişilere göre farklılaşan yorum ve uygulama farklılıklarına sahne olduğunu göstermektir.

Sonuç bölümünde de kısaca ele alındığı üzere yükseköğretimin dokusunda din bağlamında yaşanan değişikliklerin aslında diğer değişimlerle çatışmıyor olduğu, bir “medeniyetler

çatışması” durumundan çok kapitalist üretim biçimi ve piyasa odaklı global ekonomik süreçlere eklenme içerisinde işgücü yapılandırması ve popülist milliyetçi-din temelli siyasi söylemler bağlamında düşünülebileceği belirtilir. Nitekim bu bağlamda asıl soru İslam’ın ontolojik ve fenomenolojik temelleri açısından toplumsal ilişkileri ne keskinlikte etkilediğidir. 1980’lerde somutlaşmaya 2000 sonrasında güçlenmeye başlayan bir trendle toplumsal ilişkilerin belirlenmesinde giderek bir zemin olarak alınan kapitalist ilişkilerin, dine dayalı fikirleri işlevsiz olduğu bağlamda ikincil plana atılabildiği gözlemlenip, dolayısıyla din ve İslam çerçevesindeki fikir ve somut karşılıkların toplumsal ilişkiler bağlamında nasıl işlevselleşeceği ve neye dönüşeceğinin zaman içerisinde görülmesi gerektiği belirtilir.

Bölüm 5 özellikle Bölüm 4’teki bulguların çalışmanın tüm bölümleri ve temel problemleri bağlamında değerlendirilerek sonuçlanmasına yönelik bir sonuç bölümüdür. Burada Türkiye yükseköğretiminin 2002-2018 döneminde geçirdiği değişikliklerin yükseköğretimin dönüşümü kavramıyla yan yana değerlendirilmesi bağlamında ortaya çıkan karmaşık resim sunulur ve bunları bir arada düşünmeyi mümkün kılmayı sağlayacak bir teorik çerçeve ortaya koymaya çalışılır. Kısaca özetlemek gerekirse;

Kitleselleşmenin sadece kitlesel-üretim ve kitlesel-tüketim bağlamında değil, ayrıca kitleselliğin bir nitelik/sıfat halini alarak giderek yükseköğretimin üzerindeki belirleyiciliğin arttığı gözlemlenir. Kitle, ya da İngilizce’den doğrudan çevirisi ile kütle, sirküler ve teleolojik sayılabilecek bir şekilde kendi ereği ve hedefi olarak algılanmaya veya sadece yine kendi ereği ve hedefi olan ekonomik kalkınmaya bağlanmakta, dolayısı ile de diğer nitelikleme kaygılarının değerini kaybettiği bir öncül nitelik olarak yükseköğretimi temsil etmeye başlamaktadır. Nitekim bir yandan sayısız insan ve toplumsal ilişkiyi ilgilendiren bir konuya dair yapılan yüzeysel değerlendirmeler ve yukarıdan makro planlarla inceliklerin elden kaçtığı, diğer yandan ise kitle ya da kütlenin ancak kendine has yoğunluğu ile ekonomik kalkınmaya yönelik bir kaldıraç sistemi içinde işlevselleştiği tespit edilir. Bu durum sadece kütlenin içerdikleri bağlamında değil, yükseköğretimi ilgilendiren her şeyin kitle olarak değerlendirilmesi sonucu üretim ve yeniden üretim faaliyetlerini belirlemesi anlamında da bir kütleselleşmeyi ifade eder.

Yükseköğretimin idaresinde yaşanan ve merkezileşme eğilimlerinin artması şeklinde özetlenebilecek değişimler, genel olarak devletin yükseköğretimle ve onun dönüşümüyle olan ilişkisine dair bazı sonuç ve soru işaretleri yaratmaktadır. Bir soru işareti bu

merkezleşmenin yükseköğretimin dönüşümü fenomeni ile bir çatışma içinde mi olduğu yoksa devletin dönüşüm süreci için bir kapı açıcı rolü üstlenmek üzere mi merkezleşme ve hiyerarşik yönetim eğilimleri gösterdiği sorusu bağlamında ortaya çıkar. Bu bağlamda devletin bir tür girişimci/işletmeci yaklaşımı benimseyip benimseyemeyeceğine, girişimci/işletmeci yaklaşımların bazı teorik iddialarda söylendiği kadar özerklik yanlısı ve özgürlükçü olup olmadığına dair sorular da açılır. Bir yükseköğretim organizasyonunun ekonomik liberalizmin yayılımını ve teminini sağladığı sürece, küresel kapitalizm süreçlerine katılımda Türkiye'ninki kadar merkezleşebileceği bulgusu ortaya konulur. Bu anlamda Türkiye yükseköğretimi örneğinin, liberalizmin sosyal ve ekonomik iddiaları arasında aslında bir çatışma olabileceğine dair ipuçları verdiği de belirtilir.

Ekonomik bağlamla ilişkili değişiklikler ise Türkiye yükseköğretiminde yaşanan dönüşümlerin en önemli temelini oluşturmaktadır. Bunlar genel olarak ekonomik hacim artırmaya yönelik ekonomik kalkınma fikrinin yükseköğretimin bu amaçlar için araçsallaşması ve yapılandırılması bağlamında ortaya çıkar. Bu bağlamdaki yapılandırmalar özelleştirme eğilimleri, özellikle ara eleman kaynaklı insan sermayesi düzenlemeleri, yükseköğretimin endüstri ve şirketlerle doğrudan ekonomik ilişkilere zorlanması, teknoloji ve araştırma aktivitelerinde yükseköğretimin payı azaltılırken sahip olduğu payın ekonomik hacim ve karlılık bağlamında ele alındığı, dolayısıyla sermayeleşme ve ticarileşme eğilimleriyle beraber takip eden bir süreç olarak özetlenebilir.

Bu bağlamda yükseköğretimin dönüşümü fenomeninin 2002-2018 döneminde Türkiye bağlamındaki karşılığı, yukarıda kısaca değinilen din bağlamı bir kenara bırakılırsa, yükseköğretimi ilgilendiren birçok farklı alanda ekonomik kalkınma temeline dayanan bir takım düzenleme ve yapılandırmaların oldukça büyük bir kitleleşme ve merkezleşme eğilimleri altında ikame ettirilmesi olarak özetlenebilir. Bu değişimler, küresel sosyal ilişkiler zemininden zaten ayrılamaz olsalar da Türkiye'de devletin bir tür rasyonel planlama fikri ile belirli yorumlamalar eşliğinde bu zemine eklenmekte olduğunun bir göstergesi olarak karşımıza çıkar. Bu rasyonalitenin bir şeyi yapmanın en iyi yolu gibi algılanmaması gerektiği, aksine kendi içinde oldukça teleolojik bir karakteri olan bir yorumsama/inanç merkezinde, market değer ve ölçütlerinin hükmünün ve her şeyin sermaye yatırımları bağlamında ele aldığı bir zeminin üretimi olduğu belirtilir.

Bu anlamda bir tartışma da Türkiye'deki yükseköğretimin dönüşümünün özellikle 2000ler sonrasındaki hızlanışında bir hükümet ve siyasi partinin yorumlayışı bağlamında olumsal

(contingent) düşünülüp düşünilemeyeceđi bağlamında ortaya çıkar. Bu bağlamda AKP hükümetinin yüzeysel ve popülist bir şekilde yöneldiđi milliyet/din eksenindeki siyasal söylemler de dahil yükseköğretim yapılandırmasının aslında kapitalizmin modelleri ve neoliberal politikalarla ekonomik kalkınma temelinde gerçekleştiđi, bu anlamdaki bazı sapmaların küresel sosyal ilişkiler zemininden ve yükseköğretimin küresel dönüşümünden temelde ayrışmadıđı ifade edilir. Bu anlamdaki bir olumsuzluk-zorunluluk sorgulamasının ancak yorumlarının tarihin akışına, küresel veya bölgesel, ne şekilde ve nasıl eklenilebileceđine dair sorular açılarak devam ettirilebileceđinin tespiti yapılır.

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TEZ İZİN FORMU / THESIS PERMISSION FORM

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TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (İngilizce / English) : THE TRANSFORMATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN TURKEY BETWEEN 2002-2018: AN ANALYSIS OF POLICIES AND POLITICS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE: **Yüksek Lisans / Master** **Doktora / PhD**

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