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COMPARATIVE STUDY OF VALUES AMONG SCHOOL CHILDREN  
IN TURKEY AND THE UNITED STATES

BY

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

The present research project was designed to add to the knowledge of the value system of Turkey. Turkey is a country with which our own government is greatly concerned. Three and eight-tenths billion dollars of United States military and economic aid money had been spent there through 1962. Over one hundred fifty million dollars in AID development loans and technical cooperation grants went to Turkey in 1965 alone (U.S. State Dept., 1965:29). Over five hundred\* Peace Corps, Fulbright, and other educational personnel are working there, often with only spotty, informal, and unsystematic orientation, if any, regarding the particular set of values on the basis of which that concern, that aid, and that education are being received, interpreted, and put to use.

The problem of the present study is the identification of characteristically held Turkish value patterns and the determination whether significant differences between these and American values exist.

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\*Exact figures for 1964 based on inquiries made in personal correspondence were:

Peace Corps	340
Fulbright	25
missionaries	68
Robert College and	
assoc. institutions	76
Total	<u>509</u>

### Background and Rationale

When a traveler returning from a visit to other countries reports his experiences, among other things he is very likely to give considerable attention to the ways in which he has found the people of those countries to differ from himself and his friends. He is not likely to be so much concerned with appearance, however, as with behaviors which he finds unusual or hard to understand. He may be struck by what he calls the "laziness" of the people of one place, the "promptness and efficiency" of some other people. The further he travels beyond his own cultural group the more outlandish he finds those with whom he comes in contact and the stronger his comments about them are likely to become. He may describe the ability of one group of people to endure discomfort and pain as "fantastic bravery" and the sexual customs of another as "gross immorality." Different travelers may disagree in the qualities they attribute to the people who behave in these unfamiliar ways. (For example, the observations of the sophisticated traveler and those of the unsophisticated one may differ widely. Where the former enjoys cultivating a taste for snails and describes the locals as "gourmets," the latter may complain that he never got a decent meal the whole trip and characterize the local people as "uncivilized.") Most agree, however, that members of one group do seem to share certain qualities or characteristics and that those qualities and characteristics are not found to the same extent in members of other groups. Social scientists and

idealists, in reaction to the dangers of so stereotyping on the basis of group membership, have sometimes emphasized overriding similarities among men. Overly simplified, this is the "human nature is pretty much the same everywhere" position and it often assumes that all men agree on what is good and what is bad. This, too, however, can be carried to an extreme which glosses over real differences, differences which, if not taken seriously, may lead to misunderstanding. At a very simple level, for example, the word "business-like" intended as a compliment may sound belittling in another social context. A word which connotes soldierly qualities may be taken as high praise by some, derogation by others. "Efficiency" may carry no meaning at all to one in whose language this word is untranslatable since the concept is nonexistent.

The kind of real differences we are talking about, however, are not being accurately conveyed by the average traveler who chooses different adjectives for different peoples, for his judgments reflect certain characteristics of his own group as well as the behavior he has observed. As a matter of fact, both judgments and behaviors are closely related to the values of the different groups. When a visitor describes a group of people as "dirty" it would be more accurate to say that they don't hold the same standards of cleanliness that he does, for it is quite possible that they find his habits equally disgusting. When he characterizes the members of a particular group as "lazy" the fact may be that they hold other things more important than turning out a certain amount

of work in a certain amount of time. The people whom he criticizes as "immoral" by his standards of sexual behavior may be rigidly puritanical in the care with which they observe their own sexual taboos.

These are simple illustrations intended to make the point that differences among peoples and cultures though seen in individuals have their roots in values held by the group. Our traveler who uses different adjectives to describe the individual members of two groups is missing the point. It is not that the members of one group are dirtier or lazier or less moral, but that the values of the groups are different and behavior of members reflects these values.

The study of anthropology has been devoted in large part to the observation and description of group characteristics, mostly of preliterate peoples, in regard to kinship, custom, artifacts, religious ceremonies, that "complex whole" that constitutes a culture. Culture is acknowledged to have its subjective aspects—values, beliefs, symbolic meanings—in primitive as well as modern secular societies, but the investigator's problem is different in the two settings. For the anthropologist studying preliterate people the visible aspects of the culture are sufficiently consistent and apparent and social control is characteristically so complete that a common perspective in values can be to a considerable extent assumed. In the study of complex modern societies such as our own, and to a considerable extent Turkey's, the study of the subjective aspects of a culture, including

values, becomes the more necessary because it provides one means to cut through surface modernity and diversity among individuals to group modalities. These modalities have been obscured by the permitted democratic "freedom" of the individual from many of the controls enforced in simpler societies and by the effects of commercialization, mobility, the mass media, and political ideology. At the same time, study of the subjective aspects of the culture becomes easier, for, due to the higher educational level of such populations, tools such as questionnaires and tests can be administered and the resulting data analyzed statistically. The kind of cross-cultural research exemplified herein may be said to be an extension of anthropological concepts and objectives into populations where traditional anthropological research techniques are not applicable.

If, then, there are real differences in values between different groups—social, national, cultural—of what importance would it be to demonstrate such differences and determine their nature? These are days of greatly increased interaction between nations. Technology, from jet transportation at tourist prices to Telstar and the "hot line," have greatly multiplied the possibilities of communication—and, by the same token, of misunderstanding. There also appear to be wide cleavages and severe conflicts among national interests. Technology in the form of new weapons has greatly increased the dangers of communication breakdown. We need to recognize that value orientations—standards of what is important and desirable—are the basis out of which these communications

between peoples arise and within which they are understood. Public opinion and interpretations of national interest reflect values and vary in particular questions accordingly.

Our government has become concerned with predicting and understanding the reactions of representatives of different countries to various ways of presenting an issue, for we frequently need to be able to count on their favorable response, for example in the United Nations. Even the military in its research operations recognizes the importance of such basic matters to the success of their very practical ventures, witness the investment in the collection, organization, and interpretation of anthropological data about Japan and other enemies and allies during World War II.

In another sphere, one of the major international efforts to which our nation has committed itself is an educational one, the effort to export, particularly to the underdeveloped countries, the knowledge and skills in which this country is especially advanced. There are many important questions of values involved here which are as yet only imperfectly understood. Is it necessary, in order to export skills and techniques, to export also the value systems with which they have been associated in this country? (This is not to ask "Is it wise?" or "Is it right?" but simply is it necessary in order to make it possible for the receiving country to make use of the techniques and skills.) For example, in order to operate efficiently a factory producing farm machinery, what kind of attitudes toward work are necessary on the part of employees? Can a work force who consider

manual labor demeaning and to be avoided when possible, support an industrial system without a change in these attitudes? What effect do variations in values between the exporting and receiving country have on the transfer of information and skills? Do they affect the understanding of the receiver as to content? Do they interfere with the application of that which has been learned? Almost certainly they do in some cases and one can draw from the files of the U.N. and of various American aid programs specific examples of how this has taken place.

One specific example, however, rarely enables us to predict to another, despite the frequency with which attempts are made. What we know thus far is that we must try to anticipate peripheral or "unplanned" consequences as a result of the clash of value systems and other cultural factors. Correctly anticipating the behavior of individuals and governments requires not only that we appreciate the importance of differences in values, however, but that we know what particular values exist and are likely to be operating in a specific situation. However our means of discovering these factors, and the theoretical orientation which would make possible prediction of their effects are as yet inadequate. The first question is "What differences in value patterns actually exist?" It is to this question that the present study is directed.

This introductory discussion has been intended to make the following points:



- (1) Observation indicates that members of a national or cultural group tend to resemble one another in certain ways and to differ in certain ways from the members of other groups.
- (2) These resemblances and differences underlie and are partly obscured by individual differences. They are visible in group differences and reflect the behavior which the group expects and approves as a result of the values held by the group.
- (3) These differences in values can affect understanding and thus relations between nations.
- (4) The United States, having invested economic, military, and educational personnel and funds in Turkey, needs to know and understand the values held there which are affecting the results of United States activity in that country.

#### A Theoretical Framework

Thus far in this chapter we have made much use of the word "values," assuming an everyday commonsense interpretation. It is necessary, however, to clarify our usage of the term and to place the concept of values in a framework of social science theory if we are to make more than a journalist's contribution to the understanding of Turkey.

#### The State of the Theory

However, social science theory in the area of values leaves something to be desired. Lundberg (1950:103-4) says: "It is a curious and interesting fact that up until the present time the direct empirical investigation of the values

of men in different cultures has somehow seemed beyond the proper province of scientific inquiry . . . by an overwhelming majority of social scientists . . ." He quotes Linton as saying, "One of the most obvious and important ways in which societies may be, ought to be, and indeed are, compared with one another is in terms of . . . value systems. Attempts to refine, to make more precise and less intuitive, and to standardize the operations of descriptions of such systems are not only legitimate but necessary." Yet Linton himself may have offered a partial explanation for the lack of scientific attention to this matter in his famous comment about culture being to the man what water is to the fish. Most men, including many social scientists, take for granted the values of the culture in which they live.

Evidence of the theoretical neglect of this area can be seen in the short shrift which the subject of values receives in many new introductory textbooks in psychology, sociology, and anthropology. One recent psychology text contains, as its sole reference to values, a half page description of the Allport-Vernon-Lindzey instrument; there is no theoretical discussion whatsoever. (Specific bibliographic references are being omitted here as the criticism is directed not to particular authors but to their teachers and the fields they represent.) A 1965 text in educational psychology offers the following circular definition: "A value is a preference based on a conception of what is desirable." The page and a half discussion that follows adds the notion that

a value has something to do with good and bad. Many anthropology texts fail to mention values at all as a general topic, treating them rather as specific to the various cultures much like physical artifacts.

Such an attitude is the result of a natural swing of the pendulum. The science of sociology is still struggling to dissociate itself from the moralistic and philosophical approach out of which it came. Anthropologists remain sensitive about the evaluative judgments proclaimed by nineteenth century members of their discipline and are quick to criticize their fellows who fail—or seem to fail—to maintain a strict stance of cultural relativism. Most psychologists are also still much involved in making secure and unassailable their "scientific" reputation, tend to restrict themselves to matters which can be confirmed in the laboratory and deplore the subject of values as unsuitable or even hopeless of analysis.\*

The "safest" line of action for all is to avoid the

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\*Concerning the other extreme, Dukes (1955:25) has an interesting discussion which summarizes the points of view of a few psychologists in whose work he has discovered a willingness not only to study values but to evaluate. "Snygg is of the opinion that psychology should furnish the information for specifying what is good for people. Cattell considers the social psychologist 'better fitted than any other specialist to inherit from the philosopher the task of developing a science of ethics . . .'. Hartmann sees no reason why psychologists cannot say of goals, as well as of means, that one is better than another. Extreme relativism in values is questioned by Murphy, Murphy, and Newcomb, who remind that to the individual at a given time a particular value is absolute." The present author agrees with the majority that to go so far is to become scientifically vulnerable.

area and thus avoid the taint of an "unscientific" concern. Needless to say, the few brave individuals who have attacked the question of values—and not lost their scientific objectivity and become vulnerable to the criticism of their peers—have not yet been able to construct a complete theoretical framework within which a study such as the present one can be neatly placed.

### Areas of Agreement

In spite of the uncertain state of theory in the field of values, there are certain areas in which social scientists are in agreement. One of these is the way in which values are acquired by the individual. They are not inborn inclinations as the naive observer often assumes, but are learned by processes of conditioning well understood by psychologists, at least in their simple form. From the time the child is able to understand—even before—parents, siblings, and others are interacting with him in terms of these values. Certain objects and behaviors are associated with positive feeling tones. Objects possessing certain qualities are praised and the child is rewarded for approaching them. Other objects are associated with negative feeling tones. They are derogated and the child is punished for approaching them, rewarded for avoiding them. Certain kinds of behavior are rewarded, other kinds punished. The child learns, for example, not only this is clean and that is dirty, but clean is good and dirty is bad, and eventually he internalizes the ideas of good and bad so that what he once

gleefully popped into his mouth becomes revolting to him.

This sequence of conditioning and internalization that results in learning what is clean and what is dirty and learning attitudes of valuing cleanliness and disapproving dirt provides a pattern which can be applied, at least along general lines, to the acquisition of any value. Murphy (1947:285) describes the formation of values as "a process of conditioning and canalization." Rosen (1962) presents the same picture briefly in describing the development of achievement motivation. This is not to say we understand exactly how internalization takes place or that we can always predict when value training will "take" or unfailingly produce certain values in the individual, but we do understand in general terms of learning theory what is taking place.

Less clear is the question of where the values of the culture come from. Historians, of course, can clarify the development of a pattern of values in a culture, tracing a religious tradition or finding ties to earlier societies. Sometimes technological changes give rise to changes in value patterns by processes which can be described by sociologists if they cannot yet be completely understood or controlled. Occasionally a charismatic individual appears to introduce something completely new in the way of values though again the various social sciences among themselves can usually find psychological factors in the leader, social and economic conditions of readiness in his followers, and anticipation of his ideas in history so that his innovations can be

demonstrated not to be "out of the blue." Organismic sociologists or anthropologists sometimes find the source of values in the society's struggle for survival. Sumner (1906:2) said "ways of doing things were selected which were expedient . . . There was concurrence toward that which proved to be expedient . . . Hence the ways turned into customs and became mass phenomena . . . the mores, the folkways, including the philosophical and ethical generalizations as to social welfare." Woods (1956:8) says: "Among all cultural groups attitudes prevail toward the systems or institutions developed to regulate and standardize behavior in matters upon which group welfare and survival depend. Once tested and accepted these important needs and the means of meeting them become values and tend to be regarded as the natural and even the right way of doing things." F. Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961:2) bring together the personal and cultural aspects of value, giving more weight to the cultural when they say: "Each personality gives to this philosophy an idiosyncratic coloring . . . however . . . the underlying principles arise out of or are limited by the givens of biological human nature and the universalities of social interaction. The specific formulation is ordinarily a cultural product."

### Definitions of Values

Definitions of values are not always very helpful in a consideration of the subject, particularly to one approaching it from the cultural point of view as in the

present study. Most definitions take an individual approach as in Olive's (1962) definition: "Reactions to objects, conditions, ideas, or activities which one sees as satisfying his needs in a way which maintains wholeness and integrity for him." Murphy (1947:285) goes so far as to say it is "difficult to find any essential differences between values and attitudes." In other instances definitions of value are of too broad a nature, such as the two quoted by C. Kluckhohn (1952:390) by Perry, "Any object of any interest" and Morris "The science of preferential behavior."

There are a number of definitions which are excellent in the sense that they convey to the reader the quality of phenomena in which the student of values is interested, but their weakness is that they are difficult of translation into any kind of operational terms with which an investigator may come to grips. For example, Williams (1959:373) says a value is "Any aspect of a situation, event, or object that is invested with a preferential interest;" Woodruff (1952:97), "Any object, condition, or activity which the individual feels has an effect on his well-being;" and Vaughan (1959) "A value is an experimentally derived norm against which an individual judges a given object, event, condition, or proposition to be either desirable or undesirable." Each of these has an element of the circulatory of the textbook definition quoted earlier.

There are three aspects of a definition of values which we would consider necessary for a definition adequate

to serve our purposes. First, of course, is emphasis on the cultural or social, the shared aspect of values. Woods' definition emphasizes this aspect when she says, "Values . . . are the group-approved attitudes toward basic needs and the means devised for meeting them." Several other definitions including Kluckhohn (1952:395) and Rose (1956) include the phrase "individual or group" in order at least to recognize this aspect.

The second element we wish to emphasize is what Rose (1965:88ff) calls the "coercive" aspect of values, the "should or ought" quality. This is the generally recognized quality of values which is reflected in many definitions by the use of words like "acceptable" or "proper." Kluckhohn (1952:390) concludes his discussion of the definitions of others by pointing out that "The only general agreement is that values somehow have to do with normative as opposed to existential propositions."

The third element, closely related to the second, and central in importance to any student of values, is the motivations aspect, the recognition that values have importance for the choice-making of individuals. This element is pointed out by Woodruff (1952:101) in his discussion of his own definition when he says: "The evaluative aspect of behavior . . . consists of perceiving, understanding, and choosing . . . produces concepts from experience and uses concepts in choosing subsequent paths." Tisdale (1961) is very explicit about this in his definition: "Values are