

## Turkish Political Culture and Entertainment

### Türk Siyaset Kültürü ve Eğlence

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#### Abstract

Life and culture are the product and combination of creative interactions between fields and traditions. Culture and politics have continued to influence and shape each other since the earliest times. There are transformative and creative interactions between politics and culture. Politicians like historical actors have always paid special attention to culture and evaluated effectively it. On the other hand, cultural researchers have also accepted politics as an independent and attractive study field. Entertainment has been considered a multifunctional area since ancient times. Therefore, contemporary politicians continue to utilize effectively from these entertainments. The traditional festivals can be transformed easily by political activities by local and national politicians. This research aims to examine different dimensions of the interaction between politics and entertainment which is a main tradition of culture. The article is also supported by critiques which show the relationship between politics and entertainment after the establishment of the Republic of Turkey as well as by utilizing some prominent sources from the Ottoman Empire and the former Turkish states. In this study, historical celebrations such as potlaç and toy as well as contemporary entertainments are evaluated in the examination of the mentioned transformative relationship. Cultural patronage and cultural-political dimensions of the relationship also are included in this study. This study aims to point out that the effect of this relationship has increased in recent years. It is observed that virtual digital and smart technologies improve and strengthen the relations between entertainment and politics. In summary, that there is a crucial and powerful relationship between politics and entertainment is discussed with reference to effective data of Turkish cultural-political life in this article.

**Keywords:** Turkish folklore, Turkish political culture, traditional Turkish entertainment, cultural management

#### Öz

Yaşam ve kültür, alanlar ve gelenekler arasındaki yaratıcı etkileşimlerin ürünü ve bütünüdür. Kültür ve politika ilk çağlardan beri birbirlerini etkilemeye ve biçimlendirmeye devam etmektedir. Kültür ve siyaset arasında dönüştürücü ve yaratıcı bir etkileşim söz konudur. Diğer tarihsel aktörler gibi politikacılar da kültürü etkili biçimlerde değerlendirmişlerdir.

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Diğer taraftan kültür bilimciler de siyaseti bağımsız ve çekici bir araştırma alanı olarak kabul etmişlerdir. Eğlence tarihin ilk dönemlerinden beri çok işlevli bir alan olarak kabul edilmiştir. Bu nedenle günümüz politikacıları da eğlenceden etkili şekilde yararlanmaya devam etmektedirler. Geleneksel festivaller yerel ve ulusal politikacılar tarafından kolaylıkla siyasal etkinliklere dönüştürülebilmektedir. Bu makalenin temel amacını politika ile kültürün temel alanlarından biri olan eğlence arasındaki etkileşimin farklı boyutlarının çözülmesi oluşturmaktadır. Bu yayında Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin kuruluşundan sonra siyaset ve eğlence ilişkisini ele alan eleştirel çözümlemelerin yanı sıra Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve eski Türk devletleri ile ilgili temel kaynaklardan da yararlanılmaktadır. Söz konusu dönüştürücü ilişkinin incelenmesinde çağdaş eğlencelerin yanında potlaç ve toy gibi tarihi kutlamalardan da yararlanılmaktadır. Bu ilişkinin kültürel patronajlık ve kültürel diplomatik boyutları da bu araştırma kapsamında ele alınmaktadır. Bu çalışmada bahsedilen ilişkinin etkisinin son dönemde arttığına da dikkat çekilmektedir. Sanal dijital ve akıllı teknolojilerin eğlence ve politika arasındaki ilişkiyi geliştirdiği ve güçlendirdiği gözlenmektedir. Özetle bu makalede kültür ve siyaset arasındaki önemli ve güçlü ilişkinin varlığı Türk kültürel politik yaşamından etkili verilerle tartışılmaktadır.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Türk siyaset kültürü, eğlence, politika, kültür yönetimi, Türk kültürü, Türk folkloru.

## Introduction

Life and culture are the product and combination of creative interactions between fields. It can be asserted that there is a transformative and impressive interaction between culture and politics. Politics can be regarded as a crucial field of cultural studies and management. Many publications on political culture and party culture (Özdemir, 2002) have been published in the field of cultural studies and management. On the other hand, culture and entertainment have always had a political dimension (Özdemir, 2005: 317- 326).

It is nothing new to say that culture, and especially folk culture, are used to promote political and ideological goals. Since the implementation of quantitative management, cultural creations have been analyzed in this context. Any sort of management system, ranging from historical to contemporary, has a cultural dimension. This concept appears in many scientific research fields. In this article, however, this topic will be examined within the context of culture and science.

It is because of the nineteenth century's romantic nationalism that political tendencies in the twentieth century benefited from the appearance and development of folklore research, or that folklore research had been shaped according to ideological aims. European academics (the Grimm

brothers in Germany, Abs Jorgen and Moe in Norway, Lonrot and Krohns in Finland, Vud Karadžić in Serbia, Douglas Hyde in Ireland, etc.) following Johann G. von Herder, who drew attention to the folk poem's role as a determiner and defender of national character, were searching for the spirit of a people in their stories, in fairy-tales, and songs created by these peoples, and in historic works that contain elements of folklore research and celebrate the achievements of literary and national heroes.

Although it is acceptable that the research of traditions belonging to a people and that harmless national pride is awakened, this approach has brought forth applications which are subordinate to folklore research and indirectly serve traditional values and ideological dogmas. One example of an application of this kind would especially be Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, where folklore was joined together with fascist and communist ideologies and these ideologies were used as a propaganda tool in order to reach large groups of people (Dorson, 1972). The effect of these applications has been that folklore research has developed into an independent research field which has been discussed in academic society for a long time.

In the book "The Dynamics of Folklore" written by Barre Toelken, besides the topics such as "life in multicultural groups, racial relations, education, cultural correlations, etc." the writer also gives information about the applications in politics in the chapter about applied folklore. Many countries which have become independent after being under the control of other countries for many years have tried to show and continue their ethnic togetherness by transmitting some exercises of their folklore to their people and by arranging and preserving them. In this process, we can see that folklore has compared to other more effective nationalist costumes, dances, and songs with political hints. Toelken draws attention to the fact that this process can also have negative effects (spreading, different treatment of descents, etc.). (Toelken, 1996: 416-432).

## **1. Turkish political culture and entertainment**

As you can see from the information above, folklore can move people emotionally and actively. Such a power has been building the basic dynamics of several political movements, like for example, independence fights, efforts of identity formations, change and conversion of lots of people. In a nutshell, according to Toelken (1996: 425), "Folklore is not just an entertainment: It can be used as a political power". (About the tradition

of protest in Turkish folk literature, see, “Başgöz, 181-191; about the Macedonian application, see, Özdemir, 1996). But now it must be emphasized that folklore is because of its nature in general a dynamic of “uniting, completing, and forming and developing social peace.” Basically traditional culture creations have the goal to contact and to connect; briefly, it aims to create a specific unit out of rich diversity. Therefore the separatists do not accept the whole culture, choose certain cultural creations, especially performances which are adequate to their goals, and also use them in a distorted way. This approach originally perceives and analyses the culture, not as a whole but splits it up. In social life, uniting needs a larger field of idea and activity than dividing. The field of entertainment is one of the basic fields of uniting in Turkey and is therefore very important.

Entertainment that is recognized as an unserious area in socio-cultural life, has always existed in politics, religion, and business life. The relation between entertainment (it is amazing that nowadays entertainments are one of the most serious sectors) and those areas which are considered to be serious is continuously and more powerful as it is thought to be. It is astonishing that serious actors of social life in these fields have chosen entertainment as a fundamental acting field. Are unserious fields like entertainment a prerequisite for the existence of seriousness? The most repetitive invitation in Turkish society is frequently “the invitation to seriousness”. The fact that life is forced to an unreal division according to the measures of seriousness, the reason for the necessity of doing this, the uncertainty of the border between these two fields, its subjectivity, and its changeover are keywords which stimulate new analyses in this topic.

An activity which is basically thought for entertainment can easily be used for different goals. Actually, entertainment doesn’t need the elements of other social areas in this context. Entertainment mostly takes place between serious and unserious fields of social life. In other words, it removes the borders. People who see life from a serious point of view call this situation as “reversed world”. Especially in some entertainment fields like festivals, celebrations, and ritual ceremonies, many attacks come from the actors who are members of other fields. Because of this fact, during the last years, in Turkey the unserious character of entertainment (its playful and relaxed nature; its characteristic of reversing the system) has been

abolishing through the mentioned attacks and interferences (official talks, reward ceremonies, shows with political or religious content, trade activities, etc.). Because of these efforts of reversing, the existence of entertainment is questioned. The easiest way to bring people together is to organize entertainment. Such an opportunity is carefully utilized by professionals in different fields.

Since prehistoric times, the administrators like khan also have benefited from the mentioned power of entertainment very often. If you scrutinize the history of Turkish culture you will realize that in common entertainment events which were organized under the names such as “şölen”, “potlaç”, and “sığır”, important governmental decisions were made. In other words these entertainment events had a political aspect. In Turkish life, the right to govern was achieved by making people replete in terms of their basic needs, such as by providing them with clothes, and by paying their debts. And all this was done in common entertainment events. The fact that the “Kök Turks” gave their ruler (=Hakan/Khan) the name “İlterez”, which means the person who protects their lives and who supports them with food, and the formulations about this period in the “Orhun” (Orkhon) inscription, such as “I wasn’t sent to a rich nation. Turkish population was few; I have it increased. They suffered hunger; I made them replete. They were naked; I have them dressed” are examples which support this idea. And again, one of the fundamental characteristics of the Turkish leaders is hospitality (Gökalp, 1995: 174-175.)

İbrahim Kafesoğlu gave information primarily about the assembly of state (Toy) when he explained the organization in Turkish country in his book, Turkish National Culture. The facts that will be listed below show that entertainment has contained political aspects among the Turkish people since the time before Christ, three different meetings had been organized in the first and fifth spring months and in autumn. One of these meetings which had a religious character took place in the palace of “Tanhu”. The other one in autumn was organized in order to determine the presence of state’s animals and the performance of people and soldiers, and in the meeting of spring which was the largest and the most important one there were made sacrifices for the ancestors and the powers of nature. Besides the organizations like horse racing and camel wrestling matches, there are passages in İbrahim Kafesoğlu’s book indicating that the reign was confirmed, the new “Tanhu” was elected, the legitimacy to execute was

given to the administration, if necessary, and the whole country problems were discussed and resolutions were made. To be absent in the meeting and in the feast given at the same time with this meeting which was under the leadership of “Tanhu” and where the “Yinçü” (Tanhu’s wife), the prince, the members of the government, all military and civilian official commanders-in-chief, people who have high authorities, the representatives of foreign groups, and also Hun tribes (boy) participated, was perceived as disobedience and uprising (Kafesoğlu, 1984: 246-250). It must be paid attention to the fact that this tradition and assumption have similarities to the applications told in the book of Dede Korkut later on. In addition to it, the term “toy” has lost its meaning as “state’s government” and has just got the meaning as “entertainment’s meeting and wedding celebration” that is a change to be emphasized.

Professor Çay (1991: 47) also gave information about the feasts of ancient Turks in his book titled as Türk Ergenekon Bayramı-Nevruz (Turkish Ergenekon Bairam- Nevruz). In this book, it is shown that the tradition of treble feast of Asian “Huns”, which were explained above, was continued by the “Kök Turks” and that the “Kağan”(Khan), in first place, and all people who have high status in the government were participating in these ceremonies and banquets.

While he was explaining the administrative structure of ancient Turks, Ziya Gökalp (1995: 171) emphasized that if one way to prevail was the war, then another way would be the “Potlaç/Yağma Şöleni” which means “pillage festival”. Owing to “potlaç” which is characterized to be a “boastful, showy, and rebellious banquet so that the opponents could offer no resistance”, the struggles for power between the Turkish tribes (boy) were easily solved. In the Book of Dede Korkut, it is related that the ruler of “Bayındır Khan” organized two types of Şölen (festivals, celebrations) and invited only rulers (bey/beg) of İç (interior) Oğuz which belonged to his tribe (boy) to the celebrations of the first type and also invited the interior (İç Oğuz) and exterior (Dış) Oğuz’s rulers to the celebrations of the second type (yağma şöleni, potlaç) together. And owing to these celebrations, it is said to be that sovereignty was provided, controlled, and enhanced. So the basic difficulty in the last story of the monument book, entitled İç Oğuz Taş Oğuz Asi Olup Beyrek Öldiği Boy, was caused by the fact that the foreign “Oğuz” rulers were not invited to the celebration of the Bayındır Khan (Gökalp, 1995: 171-174; Ergin, 1989: 243-251). In order to establish the

sovereignty and legitimacy of the monarchy, it is necessary that the ruler had to invite rulers bound to him, make the starved people replete, support his people with clothes, help them by paying their debts, and let his large tent be pillaged. In this story, which contains the information that being absent in the plunder festival meant to be against the existing ruler/monarch, it is also mentioned that the plunder festival (Yağma Şöleni) was used for the acceptance of the sovereignty upon the opponent tribes through the war. And again through the festivals organized for various occasions among the former Turks, social justice and peace were introduced so that the administrative system worked easily.

One can realize that common entertainments were also used for political achievements in Ottoman Empire. Professor And says that most of the rites (such as the birth of a child of the monarch, the marriage of a person from the royal family, the circumcision of the monarch or of his son, the accession to the throne, and the ceremony of sword arming) and Ottoman festivals, which were organized for various occasions (after a victory or defeat, natural disaster, and fire), were propaganda for interior and foreign parts and he draws attention to the political function of these festivals. For several times, through these festivals, the feeling of national pride was awakened and unity within the country was obtained so that the ruler (sultan) was able to rule easily. Like in European countries at that time, also in the Ottoman Empire festivals' main political function was that social continuity, the power that rules this continuity, and the institutions which were a guarantee of the political system were blessed (And, 1982: 9). Religious, moral, customary, and political limitations and prohibitions which create pressure on individuals should be removed so that the system continues. This pressure vanished with the help of festivals where large banquets and gifts were given. Through such festivals daily life was stopped or turned on the contrary just for a moment (And, 1982: 8). These entertainment events as the safety valves ensure are the security of political order. Otherwise, rebellions would be inevitable. Again with the help of these festivals individuals could live harmoniously within the society. For this reason, creating a new suitable atmosphere assist to the future of political order.

Banquets, festivals and ceremonies in Ottoman Empire had symbolic functions. These entertainments were signs for the generosity, wealth, and splendor of the sultan, who was seen as the reflection of the god.



In contrast to the simplicity of daily feasts, banquets, which were organized when an ambassador was invited, were rich and showy. Traditionally in the Ottoman Empire ambassadors came just after the salary or after the meeting of the council of state. In the banquets, there were lots of meals and beverages. Table sets which were made from valuable stones and metals were used. So financial power and richness were shown to the foreign representatives (Bilgin, 2002: 44; And, 1993: 180).

Ottoman Empire had a complex social structure. Disagreements, tensions, and fights between individuals or social groups who had a different religion, ethnic origin, job, status, and executive committee, vanished in these festivals. In Ottoman Period, great festivals were organized after conquests and fights in Istanbul. Also with the help of these festivals social and individual hopelessness, pessimism that occurred because of the military failure, contagious diseases, catastrophes such as earthquakes, floods, and fire vanished, so that the political system was going on as before. In a word, festivals, which were active means of protecting lifestyle, were used consciously. Through the same way festivals were used to solve the problems in political relations between foreign empires (And, 1982: 7). Maybe the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire which lasted six centuries was basically due to the active usage of festivals. The method of using entertainment to ensure the political system, which is told in the book of Dede Korkut, covered an important part of the Ottoman Empire's politics. In other words, Ottoman sultans and other administrators like their ancestors used entertainment in its traditional function to form interior and foreign political relations and to administrate political order. This fact has become one of the basic traditions of Turkish political culture.

It is designated that a large part of the entertainment which took place in the period of the Turkish republic was also used for political aims. There are lots of examples and data that prove this situation. It will be enough to mention just some of them here.

"Atatürk's banquets" had an important function in the basic principles and revolutions of the Turkish Republic Government, while forming and improving plans and schedules. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk invited professionals to these banquets, encouraged them to produce new ideas and projects, and solved the problems of the country. The modern and contemporary qualities of the new Turkish government were emphasized



in these banquets and balls. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk used banquets as an effective way for the new structure of the government and basic principles which he wanted to become widespread and take root. Atatürk's applications have been still going on in Turkish political life.

A large part of ritual origin entertainments are not suitable for the usage for political aims. This is basically because of the fact that the power and effects of rituals have still been kept alive. Because of their structure and function, local ritual ceremonies and entertainments such as, "Saya Gezme", "Koç Katımı" and "Koyun Yüzü" (some shepherd festivals), "Çiğdem Pilavı" (crocus festival), "Çömçeli Gelin" (ritualistic rain ceremony), "Baca Pilavı", "Kış Yarısı", "Kolada Gecesi", "Ahir Çarbamba" (solstice/winter and spring ritualistic ceremonies) are not suitable for realizing. On the contrary, it is obvious that spring festivals like "Hıdırellez" and "Nevruz" (traditional spring festivals) have been transformed to debt and bankruptcy situations in recent years. Such kinds of activities have served to the politicians who regarded the meetings as the most effective political tools and contexts, as unimportant talking since the end of the 1980s. But here it must be remembered that elements of culture were used frequently by politicians especially since the Turkish political system was established in the period of many political parties in the 1940s. This usage was realized in classic political situations such as demonstrations, festivals, and general assemblies. After 1980, there was a new development such as utilizing the cultural elements on their contexts by political parties and movements. By making classical politics, appearing of lacking propaganda techniques, and moving the western methods of affecting various societies in Turkish politics from the 1980s, these cultural events were welcomed as effective political environments. Because of the fact that the voters had voted more and more consciously and because of their tendency to vote more realistically, one can realize that some politicians still use ineffective methods like making politics with a center of traditional culture. The developments in Turkish socio-cultural life show that politics centered with certain elements of traditional culture is inconvenient, ineffectual, and unreal. To this extent, it is often mentioned that culture belongs to everybody, but politics has to solve problems, bring the lifestyle to high standards, improve new methods, and carry them out. In a nutshell, the recent voting results and other symptoms sign that making politics with local and national culture components have been vanishing in Turkey.

It is obvious that the elements and data of folklore research which were derived from the romantic nationalism of the 19th century were used for the ideological aims in the 20th century and for realizing formations. National socialism and communism brought forth various applications of ideological folklore research. If this and such kinds of applications would be analyzed, one can see that celebrations and entertainments take an important place. The Olympics which include dramatic actions and many visual signs were seen by a large crowd of people in the 20th century brought forth ceremonies and entertainments which had political contents (Manning, 1992: 291-300). The bystanders and the audience which were in the center of such kinds of conferences and entertainments began to approve and defend the ideological system and the ideology that was transferred.

Ceremonies and entertainments in formal days and bairams, which are called as Turkish folklore entertainment, also have political functions. Formal bairams which are celebrated throughout the country (23 Nisan Ulusal Egemenlik ve Çocuk Bayramı/ National Sovereignty and Children's Day, 19 Mayıs Atatürk'ü Anma, Gençlik ve Spor Bayramı/ Commemoration of Atatürk, Youth and Sports Day, 30 Ağustos Zafer Bayramı/ Victory Day, 29 Ekim Cumhuriyet Bayramı/ Republic Day) provide the perception of historical events which took place during the foundation of Turkish Republic. On the other hand it assists the continuity of secular and democratic regimes. And again due to these celebrations and bairams, it is easy to transfer the messages which are wanted to be given to the whole community. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his friends took advantage of this kind of celebrations and entertainments while they were establishing the Government of the Turkish Republic and applying the revolutions.

Local formal celebrations and entertainments help the continuity of regime and political life and also the forming of the city and local identity. In recent years local celebrations and entertainments called "Victory and Conquest Days" which were scheduled many times by the municipality made Anatolia the fatherland with the basic ideology of Turkish Islam. It is especially aimed to attract attention to Ottoman Empire's history, its political system, and the politicians' speech. This is one of today's methods that are used by Turkish politicians and seen as common historical and cultural inheritance in the meaning of the political system.

Through the meetings and entertainments such as concerts, demonstrations, general assemblies, circumcision feasts, fairs, festivals, banquets, picnics, campings which are held for political aims by political parties, associations, charitable foundations, and other organizations entertained the audience. The parties take pains to political meetings to be in an attractive atmosphere. Festivals begin to take the place of simple and serious political meetings, which include hot political speeches of the past. Especially after 1990, popular arabesque and pop singers replaced the artists which had been popular because of their political views in the 1970s. In this context, it should also be reminded that there are many folk songs that have been changed for political-ideological reasons (Dinç, 2020). These singers, who gained their popularity only through one song, performed at the demonstrations and general assemblies of the parties. The songs of such singers which were composed for the political parties or were transformed from other songs were performed at such meetings. Political parties began not to use the entertainment ambiance of traditional culture where they had tried to be artificially and they began to create their own entertainment activities. In fact, all this and the developments explained above can be interpreted as a result of the fact that the political system began to be arabesque in the first period of Turkish politics, but after that it was affected by pop music and its culture. Maybe because of this change, the usage of traditional cultural values is not used anymore as their natural structures. On the contrary, benefitting from traditional cultural values as a resource and creating popular products and atmosphere is a reality.

It is obvious that Nevruz, which is one of the ritual bairams and consequently a common cultural value of Turkish people since the 80s is used in politics. Nevruz seems an effective, combining cultural element in establishing multifunctional relations such as economics, education, and politics in the Republic of Turkey and the Turkish world. Moreover, that Unesco the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage has inscribed Nevruz on the Representative List of ICH of Humanity upon the proposal of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, India, Iran, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in 2016 shows the cultural diplomatic and politic dimension of this spring celebration. In this context, it should be emphasized that international organizations as UNESCO also disseminate the cultural, diplomatic and political dimensions of culture.

The members of the protocol and their speeches are the first political elements of local festivals, merriments, and similar things. For instance, at the festival in Yesilyuva “Ayakkabicilik Festival” (Shoemaking Festival in Denizli) which was carried out for the third time in 2001, the governor and president of the municipality of Denizli, the presidents of Yesilyuva’s, Civril’s, and Akkale’s municipality, deputies of Denizli (Anavatan Political Party, Dogru Yol Political Party), the group of the presidents of the administrative province of Dogru Yol Party and Anavatan Party in Denizli did a festival walk with Janissary band of musicians in the center of the district. And then the president of Yesilyuva’s municipality and the deputies of Denizli that attended the meeting spoke from the podium outside of the town (Duran, 2001: 7). With this example, it can be understood that especially in the periods when The Grand National Assembly of Turkey is on holiday, the main places of the meeting and negotiation of politicians and people are festivals and merriments. The time of the festivals and merriments and the time of politician’s propagandas intersect with each other. For politicians, autumn and winter are the months for making and carrying out laws, spring and summer which are the seasons of festivals are the times for local propaganda and for meeting with voters. In such kinds of activities mostly local administrators (governor, chief of province’s police, kaimakam, etc.) accompany the politicians. The political preferences of the local voters also designate the politicians who come to the neighbourhood. Nevertheless, local people have an opportunity to transfer their problems and wishes to their administrators by inviting them to the festivals and merriments they arrange. For instance, in Denizli-Kaledavaz organized on 17-19 August 2001, it was clarified that the people at Kale wanted politicians to complete unfinished hospital and police station in 7. Yagli Pehlivan Güresleri” (oil wrestlings) and 3. Biber festival (Peper Festival) and they also took a word from politicians (Duran, 2001: 6). Aiming the increase of local interests, various politicians were awarded with plaques, plaquettes, and glories as a fellowman for their services in local festivals and entertainments. One can realize that the secret function of relations between folk and politicians is rather important than the visible function. On 3 July 2000, for instance, when the fourth of “Ulusal Dörtdivan Yayla Festivali (National Dörtdivan Highland Festival) was organized, nearly 30 politicians and researchers who served their region were awarded with plaques (Er, 2000: 285-289).

Festivals and entertainments are consciously organized at the same time with the days of festivals and entertainments. For instance, during the third festival of “Yeşilyuva Ayakkabıcılık” (Shoemaking Festival) in 2001, the opening of asphalt way also took place with many politicians attending the event (Duran, 2001: 1, 5). This situation is also a good example for Toelken’s evaluation that folklore events can correlate at the same time with the other events (Toelken, 1996: 163-164).

The participants of festivals interact initially with each other in spite of beginning with their music, dance, and play. In other words, entertainments are political elements that help to form political tendencies and identities. Politicians make effective use of these local celebrations. Many times these local traditional festivities can be turned into political activities.

A large part of the entertainments that take place in city were supported by municipalities especially in large cities like Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Adana) and/or by local administrations. Especially after 1990s, some municipalities wanted festivals which were forgotten during the past few years to refresh even if it seems clumsy. People often show great interest in such free festivals.

In the light of the facts mentioned above, it is obvious that besides the political functions of entertainment, various elements which are placed in the entertainment system have political functions for their own. Epics, for instance, are one of the most important products of Turkish traditional literature. They have political functions such as continuing the existing order besides the functions such as education and entertaining (About political functions in Dede Korkut Epics, see Başgöz, 1997: 23-36).

Internationally organized activities like festivals, celebrations, banquets, competitions, and fairs are effectively used to form a relation between people. Not participating in an invitation is also a form of protest which is used in foreign relations. National meetings and entertainments have sometimes the same function. One goal of the festival in Hopa, “Deniz, Kültür ve Sanat Festivali” (Sea, Culture and Art Festival), for instance, was to improve the relations between Hopa’s and Batum’s people because of the mutual ferry travels (Sarp Kafkas Haber, 2000: 1).

The usage of entertainment for political aims can sometimes cause the dissolving of the Turkish entertainment system. Muzaffer Kutsal, for example, attracts attention to Şabanözü (Çankırı) traditional Yaren meetings which are not organized anymore because of political reasons (Kutsal, 1961: 2411-2412). This situation shows the fact that the old gathering function of entertainment meetings does not carry on in new social life.

Politicians have been at the center of the cultural patronage system since ancient times. For this reason, culture, like other areas, is under the influence of this patronage. The relations between administrators and cultural actors are quite strong and complex. For example, shaman, ozan-baksı and ashik and khan, bey and sultans have been in a relationship within the scope of the cultural patronage system (Özdemir, 2021a). It can be argued that the effect of this relationship although it diversifies, continues today in terms of other fields of traditional culture. In summary, the entertainment activities that bring cultural actors and politicians together can be considered as the indicators and operating contexts of the cultural patronage system.

In the last quarter-century, culture, like life, has been transformed by virtual-digital and smart technologies (Özdemir 2021b). Therefore, the power and influence of the relationship between entertainment and politics is increasing in the age of smart technologies. It is observed that virtual digital technologies improve and strengthen the relations between entertainment and politics. Differentiating entertainment and lifestyle of digital domestic electronic generations such as Z and Alpha generations (Özdemir, 2021b) also change political systems and actors. Politicians have begun to explore social media and virtual-digital entertainment contexts in order to achieve their goals. On the other hand, social media and virtual digital entertainment environments are transforming into new policy-making and dissemination contexts of the 21st century. As a result, it can be argued that the partnership of entertainment and politics will become more complex in the age of smart technologies.

## Conclusion

As a result, in this article, it has been revealed that there are strong ties and interactions between political life, the system and entertainment. Contrary to the general opinion on this subject, it has been emphasized that the

relationship mentioned in this study has shaped politics and culture since the first periods of history. The sample area of this research consisted of Turkish cultural and political life. Above, the formative and transformative impacts of the cooperation of entertainment and politics since the BC era have been explained by using some significant historical data. In summary, as in the past, life and culture continue to be the whole and the product of creative interactions between fields and traditions. For this reason, studies within the scope of cultural science and management should be carried out on the basis of contemporary interdisciplinary creative approaches and theories.

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