

## MINORITY AND FOREIGN SCHOOLS ON THE OTTOMAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

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### Abstract

This study investigates the effects of the minority and foreign schools on the education systems of the Ottomans. This study was carried out in order to investigate the historical development of those schools, which were founded to meet the educational needs of the minorities and foreigners living in the Ottoman Empire, and their effects on the Ottoman education system. The study is focused on a specific period and it is a descriptive one which employs the enquiry model with the fundamental aspects of research. The data are secondary data and were collected with direct and indirect techniques by searching through records and documents. First of all, they were subjected to a validity test to see if they were genuine or not, and then they were examined in terms of reliability. Finally, the sources were grouped according to their types and contributions and classified after being compared to equivalent sources. It may be said that the results and findings can be generalized in order to explain the western effect on the Ottoman education system and the changes it underwent. The minority schools were the Greek, Armenian and Jewish schools. The foreign schools were the other non-Muslim educational institutions. Literature focuses on their missionary activities. However, the primary concern should be their subsequent effects: the number of students in Ottoman society increased, girls began to receive education, vocational and technical education spread, the idea of compulsory and continuous education grew, student-based education was initiated and teaching became a profession. Therefore, they were significant for Turkey and the Ottoman-ruled countries.

**Key Words:** Education, minority schools, foreign schools, Ottoman state, educational history

### INTRODUCTION

The Ottoman Empire was a state consisting of many different ethnic groups and it survived for almost 600 years. Thanks to its geographical location and political perspective, all the ethnic and religious minorities retained their freedom in education and social life (Bilgiç, 2003). They freely spoke their own language, practised their own faith, developed their own culture, and had their own educational institutions (Uzunçarşılı, 1975). The state did not consider education to be a public service and it never controlled the followers of different religions and creeds regarding education. Therefore, all over the multi-faith and multinational empire, the educational institutions were different from one another and those belonging to different religious and ethnic groups were called minority and foreign schools (Akyüz, 2008). Related studies do not focus on the minority schools and they deal mainly with the missionary activities of the foreign schools. However, it is an undeniable fact that they played a significant role in the change process of the Ottoman education system. This study was carried out in order to investigate the historical development of those schools, which were

founded to meet the educational needs of the minorities and foreigners living in the Ottoman Empire, and their effects on the Ottoman education system. The study is focused on a specific period and it is a descriptive one which employs the enquiry model with the fundamental aspects of research. The data are secondary data and were collected with direct and indirect techniques by searching through records and documents. First of all, they were subjected to a validity test to see if they were genuine or not, and then they were examined in terms of reliability. Finally, the sources were grouped according to their types and contributions and classified after being compared to equivalent sources. It may be said that the results and findings can be generalized in order to explain the western effect on the Ottoman education system and the changes it underwent.

### THE OTTOMAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

The education system in the establishment period of the Ottoman state was the continuation and improved version of the Seljuk education system (Taşkın, 2008). It was based on Islamic principles and the educational methods comprised simply passing on information and encouraging memorization. Up until the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman state did not see education as a public service. It worked to educate only soldiers, civil servants and administrators, and education was provided mainly by the *waqfs* donated by philanthropic citizens. In this procedure, taken from the Seljuks and based on the *madrasah* education system, school buildings were built by *waqf* owners and books, syllabuses and teaching methods were all determined by *waqf* owners. The state never meddled in the policies and activities of the *waqfs* because of what they and their trust deeds meant to it (Vahapoğlu, 1992).

Until the 19th century, the Ottoman educational institutions consisted of the *madrasahs*, which served as the centres of higher education, the *Sibyan* schools, which were the institutions of elementary education, and the *Enderun* schools, controlled by the Court to educate administrators and civil servants (Tanilli, 1996). In addition, the *Ahi* associations, the *tekkes* and the mosques were also among the vocational (common) educational institutions (Akyüz, 2008). In the 19th century, the *Tanzimat* Decree (reorganization of the Ottoman State) and the state's inability to prevent the independence initiatives, which came with the French Revolution, of the nations under its administration, its failure to oppose the developing nationalist concepts and the necessity for it to put forward, as a counter to this, the ideology of "Ottomanism", the continuing losses of territory, and, in the field of commerce, the European states' acquisition of new rights, all reveal the condition in which the Ottoman political system found itself during this period, which can be considered as a time when the western values adopted with the *Tanzimat* reforms were applied in a radical way in the army, education, administrative and legislative systems (Trapper, 1993), and when higher education institutions were founded and the education system was reorganised in a "Western" secular way (Timur, 1998).

The most important event faced by the Ottoman state in the 20th century was the introduction of the ideological, political and economic system of thought which created, in a political sense, "modern-day Turkey", brought about by Abdul Hamid II's acceptance, on 24th July 1908, of the Basic Ottoman Law put forward by the Committee of Union and Progress.

However, during this period, while a new lifestyle based on western values was being developed, the Islamic way of living was not disturbed in any way. As a result, a duality emerged, especially in the social institutions away from the rural areas. It may be said that this situation affected, above all, the educational institutions. The central paradox of the Ottoman state at that time may be said to be on the one hand, secular educational institutions established according to Western values and formed mainly from the minorities, and on the other, institutions like the *madrassahs* implementing programmes based on Islamic values (Akyüz, 2008).

During this period, this new dual religious-secular system of education aimed to make citizens out of people who had been merely vassals. For this reason, the new political setup always put emphasis on their being the citizens of a nation-state rather than the members of a religious community (Turan, 1993).

After the Advisory Board of Education was founded (Çetin, 1982) and the General Educational Charter was drawn up, the religious aspect of education was ignored and the process of secularization began. The General Educational Charter, which was promulgated in 1869 with 198 clauses, aimed to create individuals adaptable to the new circumstances and

1. provide compulsory education
2. determine the stages of education
3. reorganize educational and pedagogical techniques
4. train more competent teachers with higher salaries
5. build a central education system and form its provincial organizations
6. develop a rule-governed student-based philosophy
7. encourage the people to contribute towards education (Hayta and Ünal, 2008; Koçer, 1980).

## **THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF THE MINORITIES AND FOREIGNERS**

As was the case for the Muslim Turks, the Ottoman state gave the minorities freedom to open and manage their own educational institutions (Uzunçarşılı, 1975). For instance, the Greeks were completely free regarding their religion, language and traditions after the conquest of Istanbul. In time, the same rights were also given to the Armenian and Jewish minorities, and all non-Muslim people had the entitlement to found and manage their own educational and cultural institutions as they wished. Until the *Tanzimat* (reorganization of the empire) reform era and without the support and control of the state, those institutions existed together with the mosques and schools of the Muslims (Taşdemirci, 2001). The way the state considered education changed after the *Tanzimat* and it began to see it as a public service. However; the new schools, which were the products of the new understanding, could not be extended because of the reactions of the old ones, and they tried to coexist in a dual system. It was again during that period when a legal basis for educational activities was formed for the first time with laws and regulations (Vahapoğlu, 1992).

The Ottoman state always protected the right of the minorities to education and never discriminated against them (Akyüz, 2008). It may even be said that the minorities were given

some privileges that the Turks did not have (Vahapoğlu, 1992). The other group of non-Muslim schools was the foreign schools, which date from the time of the capitulations given to France. The commercial privileges conferred with the capitulations expanded in time and had social, political and religious content as well. Thanks to such rights and privileges granted to the European countries, Christian missionaries all around the empire founded many educational and cultural institutions (Tozlu, 1991).

### *The Minority Schools*

The minority schools were opened wherever they were considered to be sociologically and strategically necessary. They spread throughout Anatolia in a short time and took advantage of the opportunity provided by the state policy of not providing education as a public service. Their educational activities were focused on where they could enjoy their independence with the support given by western countries. Armenians gave weight to the Eastern part of Anatolia while Greeks worked in Istanbul and the Black Sea region and Jews placed importance on Istanbul, Beirut and Jerusalem. The needs of the schools were met by benefactors, non-governmental organizations, western countries and even the Ottoman state itself (Topçu, 2007).

The minority schools in the Ottoman Empire can be grouped into three as the Greek Schools, Armenian Schools and Jewish Schools:

*The Greek Schools:* The oldest Greek school in Istanbul was the Phanar Greek School, which is also called the Patriarchate School (Akyüz, 2008). It dated from the Byzantine period and was controlled and sponsored by the Patriarchate. As it was of higher quality than the ones founded later, it was also called the Greatest Greek School. Another important school was the Heybeliada School of Parsons. It was opened in the 9<sup>th</sup> century as a shrine under the name of "Ayatiriyada Monastery" and a school was added to it after the conquest of Istanbul. A later Greek school was Kuruçeşme University. The education was not religious there and it had the departments of Greek Language and Literature, Geometry, Mathematics and Medicine (Taşdemirci, 2001; Ergin, 1977).

*The Armenian Schools:* In the period between the conquest of Istanbul and the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, there were no Armenian schools in the empire (Ergin, 1977). The privileges accorded to the minorities by the state played the most important role in the establishment of the Armenian schools. Even though Armenian sources claim that there were some educational activities in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century in a monastery in Bitlis called "Amlorti" and its graduates founded schools in different places, the earliest schools in real terms were founded in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (Topçu, 2007). The first official Armenian school was opened in 1790 by Shnork Migirdic and Amira Miricanyan. The other school opened in the same period was called "Mesropyan". After that, religious community schools were founded in many different places in the empire and all the Armenian neighborhoods of Istanbul. On Patriarch Karabet's instructions in 1824, schools were established almost everywhere in the country. In 1858 and 1859, the Ottoman government became closely interested in the non-Muslim schools and made some Armenian scholars members of the General Educational Assembly. According to several Armenian sources, Patriarch Karabet summoned the Armenian notables in 1831 and

made them sign a bond so that they would help the Armenian schools that had spread to every part of the country. In time, graduates felt the need to have higher education institutions. On September 13<sup>th</sup>, 1838, the Cemeran School in Uskudar was built in order to provide higher education. According to the Patriarchate's data, there were 469 Armenian schools in Anatolia in 1834 (Kılıç, 2005).

*The Jewish Schools:* From the establishment of the state to the conquest of Istanbul, a considerable Jewish population did not exist in the Ottoman lands except for a small group living in Bursa in Orhan Ghazi's time (Haydaroğlu, 1990). The earliest migrant Jews in the empire were those brought by Bayezid II in 1492 together with the Beni Ahmer Muslims who took refuge in the Ottoman state after fleeing from Spain (Taşdemirci, 2001; Kılıç, 2005). The Ottoman Jews were different from the other non-Muslim people in the empire in that they lived as a closed society, because of which they were late to benefit from the privileges granted by the state to the minorities (Ergin, 1977) This came to an end when the Alliance Israelite Association, set up in France in 1860, encouraged Jews to learn and speak French. Under the influence of French language and culture, the Association undertook the educational activities of Jews (Akyüz, 2008). They also opened a school in Istanbul and educated the community without using Turkish in any way. The Jewish schools were different from the other minority schools in that they focused not only on good manners and language teaching but also on vocational training (Topçu, 2007).

#### *The Management of the Minority Schools:*

The minority schools were opened wherever they were seen as sociologically and strategically important. The state did not provide education as a public service and never considered this as a weakness. Taking advantage of that fact, the minority schools spread to the furthest points of the country and provided education with the support of the western countries focusing on the places where they could have independence. The Armenian schools were mainly in the Eastern parts of Anatolia while most of the Greeks' and Jews' schools were in Istanbul and the Black Sea region and in Istanbul, Beirut and Jerusalem respectively.

Giving special rights to the minorities began with the privileges granted by Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror to the Greeks and continued with the ones given to the other Christian minorities and Jews. The state followed the policy of not meddling in the educational activities and other internal affairs of the non-Muslim peoples. The minority schools were controlled by the related non-Muslim communities. The churches and rabbinate opened and managed schools themselves or through sub-organizations such as Sillog completely outside the control of the Ottoman state (Vahapoğlu, 1992). The spiritual leaders were equipped with absolute authority and they were the real directors of those organizations. The schools were managed independently through the patriarchates and rabbinate controlling them. Those opened by the churches were generally elementary schools and managed by local communities. The secondary and higher schools were directly related to the patriarchates and rabbinate. Just like in the Turkish-Islamic educational institutions, every church used one of its rooms as a school. Besides benefactors, western countries, non-governmental organizations and the state itself, the sponsors of the schools included some Ottoman statesmen and even

the Sultans (Akyüz, 2008). For instance, Mahmud II made some personal donations to the schools in Istanbul (Topçu, 2007). Donations are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. How much Mahmut II donated personally

Schools	Amount of Donation
Greek Schools:	20.000 <i>kurush</i>
Armenian Schools:	7.500 <i>kurush</i>
Jewish Schools:	7.500 <i>kurush</i>
Catholic Schools:	5.000 <i>kurush</i>

The supervision of the minority schools was neglected for a long time. It began only after the schools proved how strong and influential they were in the empire. Starting from 1838, the reports on education included supervision issues as well. However, the goals of supervision were not merely directed towards the minority schools. The reports did not elaborate on the objectives and activities of the schools and evaluated only what was seen superficially, which meant that the minority schools were never under full control (Kansu, 1930). As there were no rules that governed the way the minority schools were supposed to work, they were independent as regards employing teachers as well. The teachers were mostly the priests of the churches controlling the schools. There were also some missionaries who worked as teachers. After the edict of reformation in 1856 (*Islahat Fermani*), the selection of teachers for the minority schools was left to a commission supervised by the state. However, this could not be achieved in the way it was intended (Vahapoğlu, 1992).

### ***The Foreign Schools***

The foreign schools were opened to meet the educational needs of the citizens of the western countries living in the Ottoman lands. Through missionaries, they served the countries controlling them. Taking advantage of the rights and privileges granted by the state for a short time, they declared an educational mobilization and made every place of worship a centre of education at the same time (Akyüz, 2008). Beyond educating the citizens of the western countries, they served some completely different purposes as well. Their aims included teaching people about Christianity to persuade them to become Christians, looking after the interests of the countries controlling them and meeting the need for raw material for European and American industry (Topçu, 2007).

The strength and prevalence of the foreign schools stemmed not only from the privileges accorded to the western countries but also from lack of supervision. Religious institutions like churches and missionary organizations patronized by different countries played the major role in opening those schools. Up until the edict of reform and reorganization (*Tanzimat*) in 1839, there were no sanctions regarding the educational activities and number of the schools. Using legal loopholes, foreign countries and organizations founded their schools and obtained the licenses later whenever they were needed (Vahapoğlu, 1992).

## **The Factors Precipitating the Proliferation of the Foreign Schools**

The Rights given to Minorities: The Ottoman Empire had peoples from different ethnicities and faiths. They were never mentioned by their ethnic origins and were considered to be nations with their own religions and creeds. They were free to speak their languages and live their culture in their own religious and educational institutions. Their freedom of thought and faith was accompanied by freedom in the field of education. The state, which did not see education as a public service, left every group of religion and creed regarding education. All around the multi-faith and multinational empire, the educational institutions were naturally very different from one another. The schools of every different group and the programmes they implemented varied greatly.

Moreover, foreigners, who used the rights given by the state, began to found their schools especially after the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. By the countries controlling them, the schools were considered to be a means of influencing the Ottomans politically, culturally, commercially and economically. Taking advantage also of the privileges granted to the minorities in 1839 and 1856, missionaries increased the number of schools. Besides the privileges and rights in question, the capitulations and missionary activities were other major factors in the growing number of schools (Sezer, 1999).

The Capitulations: Capitulations refer to the privileges accorded by intergovernmental treaties to the foreigners living in a particular country. From the Ottomans' point of view, it was the name of the economic privileges granted especially to the non-Muslim foreign citizens living in the country and the authorizations and rights growing out of those privileges. The economic capitulations, which were given unilaterally and obligingly to the citizens of the European countries when the Ottomans were strong, gave those countries the chance to meddle in the internal affairs of the Ottoman state in its periods of stagnation and dissolution. Despite not including any precise provisions about education, the capitulations gained some religious, political and social aspects when the Ottomans became weaker and they were extended to the field of education as well. It was undoubtedly the missionaries who benefited the most from the privileges granted by the capitulations (Topçu, 2007)

The Missionaries and Missionary Activities: The missionaries, who did everything to spread their religions, cultures and languages, made use of the schools in particular. Most of the foreign schools founded in the Ottoman lands belonged to the missionaries. The initial ones were owned by the Catholics. The Protestant schools were opened afterwards. The most important ones were founded by American missionaries. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, which was started in Boston in 1810, was the foremost missionary organization which took on opening schools. Besides the US and France, the missionaries controlled by England, Germany and Italy also founded schools. After the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, even more were opened by Russians, Austro-Hungarians and Persians (Vahapoğlu, 1992; Topçu, 2007)

Up until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the foreign schools in the empire belonged only to the Catholics. Taking advantage of the privileges created by the capitulations, the Roman Catholics living in Istanbul demanded priests from the Pope to educate their children. The

priests sent to Istanbul settled in Saint Benoit Monastery on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 1583 and founded the first foreign school in the Ottoman state only ten days later. It was different from the schools that had been run in or near churches to teach Christian children about religion and literacy. Together with Catholic children, 50 Greek and Jewish students were taught French, mathematics, classical Latin and the arts besides literacy and religion.

The foreign schools were generally opened and run with the support of the Pope and France, which was the country given the first capitulations in 1536. As the Ottoman state became weaker and weaker and more countries were given capitulations, the number of schools increased and they diversified (Taşdemirci, 2001). After Saint Benoit opened in 1583, Capuchin priests founded Saint Louis school in 1629 and it still exists today (Kılıç, 2005). Using also the minority privileges and rights granted by the reforms of 1839 and 1856, missionaries increased the number of schools which they opened (Sezer, 1999).

Up until the General Educational Charter in 1869, the Ottoman state did not even have a law governing the foreign schools in the empire (Akyüz, 2008). Due to the pressure of the western countries, the dissolving and declining state conferred new rights and freedoms on non-Muslims and minorities, which played a major role in the proliferation of the foreign schools (Kılıç, 2005). The accepted opinion was that most of such schools belonged to Frenchmen. However; recent studies show that the number of American schools, the first of which was opened in 1824, became much higher than the number of French schools. In 1886, while there were nearly 400 American schools in the Ottoman lands, the number of French schools legitimized by the 1912-1913 Turco-French Treaty was 100. The foreign schools were kept under control only after the capitulations were temporarily abolished in 1914 (Taşdemirci, 2001).

### ***The Management of the Foreign Schools***

The foreign schools had a hierarchical system. They were controlled by missionary organizations and the countries that controlled those organizations were very influential in their management. Therefore, it may be said that they were directly controlled by different countries (Akyüz, 2008). The directors and teachers were appointed either by missionary organizations or by the countries they belonged to. Until the General Educational Charter was issued in 1869, the schools were never supervised by the state even though most of them were unlicensed and the attempts to supervise them in accordance with the Charter ended in abject failure. The first article of the Charter, which stated that the founders themselves had the initiative to build and manage the private schools, made it impossible to superintend the management of the schools until the Bylaw of Private Schools in 1915 (Topçu, 2007). The founders of the foreign schools funded them too. Besides, some benefactors supported them either directly or through the missionary organizations. There were also schools giving hands-on vocational education and the money earned from their products was used to finance the schools. When paid education started in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the money obtained from students was spent on meeting the expenses (Topçu, 2001). In order to have places to build schools, people bought or donated land (Vahapoğlu, 1992).

In the beginning, the teachers of the schools were missionaries coming from other countries and not all of them were professional teachers. There were doctors, economists, jurists, botanists and men of religion teaching at the schools (Vahapoğlu, 1992).

### **The General Educational Charter and the Regulations regarding the Minority and Foreign Schools**

The *Tanzimat* (Reorganization) period was the time when the efforts to close the loopholes in the Ottoman legal system began. The revision of the education system was during the same period. The most important change was in the rules and regulations introduced by the General Educational Charter of 1869 (Akyüz, 2008), which divided the schools into two groups as the state schools and community groups. The aim was to regulate education, eliminate disorderliness in educational activities on a legal basis and prevent the detrimental effects and expansionist policies of the minority and foreign schools (Ergin, 1977).

The section of the Charter on secondary schools does not include a distinction for non-Muslim people. The one on high schools states that anyone living in the Ottoman state and meeting the requirements will be admitted to the schools. It was also decided to accept non-Muslim students to train teachers for the secondary and high schools. In teacher training programmes, courses teaching the languages of every different community and vocational courses in those languages were offered (Akyüz, 2008). Article 129 was the most important one for the minority and foreign schools as it concerned the authorization to found schools. It defined private schools as schools opened based on a payment or non-payment system by communities, Ottoman citizens or “foreigners”. All the expenses to found and run the schools were to be met by the founders. Besides, it was required to have teaching certificates given by the Ministry of Education or local educational boards, approval of the syllabuses and course books in terms of public morality and state policy, and licenses given by the Ministry of Education for the schools in Istanbul and by the local boards or governors for the ones in the provinces (Vahapoğlu, 1992).

*Rumeli-i Şarkinin Nizamname-i Dâhilîsi (The Local Regulations for Eastern Rumelia):* This specified that students would not learn about other religions at school, the schools in the region were to be controlled by the directorate of education and supervised by someone esteemed by the locals, any kind of professional misconduct of the teachers was to be reported by the inspectors to the directorate of education, the minority schools would not be forced to teach in a different language to their own, and the minorities were to teach at least one of their old or new languages (Vahapoğlu, 1992 )

*The Law on the Essentials of Education in Eastern Rumelia:* The law, which was enacted in 1881, required that all the educational institutions be supervised by the general director of education and inspected by officers according to the legal requirements. Everyone living in Eastern Rumelia had the right to education in any language and in any field they wished. The expenses to found and run the schools were to be met by the founders. The law clearly stated that the minorities could have education in any language they wished and the spiritual leaders, who had the authority to shape education, could design the syllabuses of the

religious courses (Akyüz, 2008). It was possible to educate students from different faiths in the same school and build new schools at least three kilometres away from one another. The schools could be opened only after the approval of the Educational Commission of the *Sanjak* (administrative division). However, people had the right to open schools in the case of receiving no official response to their applications within 30 days. Starting from article 122, the law provided regulations on the superintendence of the schools. The schools and the number of inspectors appointed for them were as follows: the Bulgarian Orthodox schools – 27, the Muslim schools – 16, the Greek schools – 3, the Bulgarian Catholic schools – 1, the Armenian schools – 1, the Jewish schools – 1. The inspectors had to have at least five years' length of service or be knowledgeable about private schools, and be from the related minority (Vahapoğlu, 1992).

*The Regulation on the Duties of the Directors of Education in the Provinces:* In the regulation issued in 1896, the duties of the officers in the provinces were explained in detail. The conditions regarding the schools of local non-Muslims were laid down. It was required that the levels, locations, names, principals and teachers of the schools be recorded and their programmes, course books and teaching diplomas approved by the directorates of education. The schools opened by foreigners had the status of private schools. The local directors of education had the authority to dismiss the school principals and other staff members of all the schools. The programmes in the non-Muslim schools allowed for a course in Turkish, which was to be supervised to make sure that it was taught intensively enough for the students to learn the language. The licences to found foreign schools were to be given with the Sultan's consent and the founders had to submit a commitment letter declaring that they would obey the state rules (Vahapoğlu, 1992). The intention was to choose the people to work in the minority schools from the graduates of the national schools and, if necessary, to employ foreign school graduates only after clearing up any doubts as to their aims. It was another requirement that the population of a region be dense enough to open a Christian minority school there. Besides, a committee was to be appointed to test if the graduates of the minority schools had a good command of Turkish (Akyüz, 2008).

*The Law on Controversial Churches and Schools in Rumelia:* The law, which was enacted on June 20<sup>th</sup>, 1910, was passed in order to solve the problems caused by the antagonism between the Greek Patriarchate's and Bulgarian Exarchate's attempts to be dominant in Rumelia. When a conflict occurred over a place where there was a church and a school together, both of them were to be given to one of the sides while the other one was to be financially supported by the Ottoman state so that they could build a school and church for themselves (Vahapoğlu, 1992).

*The Regulation on the Organization of the Ministry of Education:* This regulation aimed to organize the management of education.

*The Regulation on Private Schools:* The Ottoman state, which repealed the capitulations unilaterally after the First World War broke out, began to make some attempts to control the foreign schools, and the regulation in question was the most important step (Akyüz, 2008). Nevertheless, the rules could never be enforced as desired because of the war atmosphere. Lots of schools were closed down during the war but they reopened after the Armistice of

Moudros. Defeated in the war, the Ottoman state could not enforce its laws and rules. Even if the regulation failed in that period, it was used for a long time in the national movement and republican periods. It defined the private schools, which have an important place in our education system today, and the cram schools, which had never been officially mentioned before, were given the status of private schools. It gave any foreigner the right to open a school with the stipulations that the population be dense enough in the place where the school was to be built and that Ottoman-Turkish schools be permitted in the country of that foreigner. Besides, such Ottoman schools were all required to have Turkish teachers to teach Turkish language, history and geography (Sezer, 1999).

Below are the results of the legal regulations regarding the schools of minorities and foreigners in the Ottoman state:

1. An attempt was made to create a new system of education.
2. Besides an organizational structure in education, the initial step was made towards uniformity of the curricula.
3. Elementary education was made compulsory for everyone and teachers were given the chance to specialize in different fields.
4. Local educational units were constituted and educational assemblies were started.
5. Rules were formulated to organize the student-school relationships in education.
6. Attempts were made to organize and spread the scientific institutions as desired.
7. Such issues as opening educational institutions, employing teaching staff, developing programmes, choosing course books and superintending educational processes were openly discussed and finalized (Topçu, 2007).

## RESULTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Political systems have always tried to have absolute control over educational institutions because of their contributions to the establishment of the political, ideological, cultural and economic existence of states (Gökçe, 2007). On the other hand, since the city-states and empires of the past until today, it can be said that the ways education is supervised have always been different from one another. The method the Ottoman state followed as an empire consisting of different ethnicities is an example in that it did not consider education to be a responsibility of the state (Ertuğrul, 1997; Dere, 2008). This resulted in the highest number of minority and foreign schools in the world. The types, aims and effects varied greatly from school to school. While there were those providing religious education, others gave secular education. Most of them educated the children of the minorities and foreign citizens of the countries that the schools belonged to. However, there was also a group of schools which admitted and trained Ottoman citizens.

The administration and running of the educational institutions in the Ottoman state were controlled by *waqfs* (inalienable religious endowments in Islam, often translated into English as “Foundation”). This system was also implemented for the groups called “the minorities” after the conquest of Istanbul and education was left to their religious communities (Akyüz, 2008). Their schools, education programmes and staff were exempt from state supervision, which made them strong enough to exert some significant effects on the minorities and to be a factor in the dissolution and fall of the empire. It was as late as the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the state

realized what had happened but it could not impose the measures it took because of the pressure of the western countries and its own internal problems (Sezer, 1999). The General Educational Charter and the ensuing regulations and laws also failed. Some drastic and harsh measures were proposed during the First World War but they could not be implemented as the schools had already been closed down. They reopened after the Armistice of Moudros but it was the political conditions of the time which prevented the state from implementing its measures (Bozkurt, 1996).

Studies on the foreign and minority schools have generally focused on their missionary activities and efforts to divide the Ottoman state. They have been of use but the schools' effects on and contributions to our education system, which can be listed as follows, should not be ignored:

1. The principal effect of the foreign schools was on educational objectives. The Ottoman state abandoned the traditional approach and adopted an educational philosophy conforming to the objectives of western education systems. The schools induced the state to supervise any kind of educational activities and to consider it a responsibility (Topçu, 2007; Kafadar, 1997).

2. The foreign schools caused an increase in the number of educational institutions and students. The neighbourhood schools in the Ottoman education system admitted only a limited number of female students (Lewis, 2004). The foreign schools did not reject girls and they educated female students from Muslim families as well, which also gave them the chance to receive higher education. In the end, the Ottoman state had to found schools for girls (Topçu, 2007).

3. For the Ottomans, the languages to learn other than Turkish were Arabic and Persian. However, they were not seen as foreign languages. France was chosen as the model for westernization and Great Britain dominated the global economy, which entailed learning French and English as foreign languages. The staff of the foreign schools taught their own languages and also gave lessons in different languages. This brought foreign language teaching to schools and popularized it (İhsanoğlu, 1999; Tekeli and İkin).

4. The foreign and minority schools served as an example of the fact that education must be comprehensive and continuous. They included religious festivals and special days in their work programmes. They developed their teaching methods after learning about their students' skills, abilities, intelligence and emotions and thus they introduced student-based education (Başaran, 1993).

5. The schools were highly advanced and organized in terms of their management, teaching and ancillary staff and they had the equipment and system that could compete with today's private schools in terms of educating and entertaining students with their own facilities. For the first time in Ottoman history, students were grouped according to their abilities in order to enable them to specialize in specific fields. Their teachers were professionally trained people and the scholars they employed were trained in pedagogy. This

professional approach had positive effects on students and encouraged the state to require a certificate to teach in the education system (Topçu, 2007).

6. Even though the target groups of the foreign and minority schools were children and young people, they also tried to train adults and young working people. Italians were the first to open evening schools similar to the ones we have today (Sezer, 1999; Ertuğrul, 1997).

7. During the periods when the state schools retreated from society, the foreign schools also concerned themselves with what surrounded the schools. They knew that quality education could not be achieved with students only and that they needed the parents as well (Ergün, 1999; Kodaman, 1999). They started school-family cooperation and drew the attention of the parents who saw that they made a difference in education and that graduates gained high positions in society. People agreed to pay so that their children could be educated in schools like them, and the private schools of our day were pioneered by the schools opened by foreigners with a system in which parents were charged money to meet their expenses (Tozlu, 1991).

8. With their teaching materials, technical equipment and organization that was continually renewed, they paved the way for more developed schools (Topçu, 2007; Tekeli and İlkin, 1999; Sezer, 1999; Karal, 1983; Mutlu, 1999; Birol, 2008).

As a result the minority and foreign schools, which maximized their effects after the enlightenment movement and industrial revolution in Europe in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, had considerable ideological, political and economic influence over Ottoman socio-political life. On the other hand, they functioned as a means that facilitated the peaceful coexistence of people from different ethnicities and faiths and made great contributions to the creation of an education system that a multi-faith, multinational and multicultural political system was supposed to have. They also mean a lot for the education systems of today's Turkey, the Balkans and other European countries.

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## OSMANLI EĞİTİM SİSTEMİNDE AZINLIK VE YABANCI OKULLAR

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### Özet

Osmanlı İmparatorluğu çok farklı etnik grupları bünyesinde barındıran bir devlettir. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu çok farklı etnik ve dinsel gruplardan oluşması nedeniyle bünyesinde barındırdığı her etnik ve dinsel grubu eğitim alanında serbest bırakmıştı. Bulduğu coğrafya ve sahip olduğu siyasal anlayışla Osmanlı devleti içinde yer alan farklı etnik köken ve dinsel inançlara sahip olan ve azınlıklar olarak adlandırılan bu grupların eğitimden, sosyal hayatlarına kadar kendi cemaatleri içerisinde özgür bir hayat sürdürdükleri söylenebilir. Eğitimi bir kamu görevi olarak görmeyen Osmanlı devleti, bünyesinde barındırdığı her din ve mezhebi eğitim alanında serbest bırakmıştı. Osmanlıda Müslüman olmayan farklı dinsel ve etnik gruplara ait eğitim kurumları azınlık okulları ve yabancı okullar olarak adlandırılmaktaydı. Bu araştırma Osmanlı Devleti'nde yaşayan azınlıklar ve yabancıların, eğitim ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak için açtıkları okulların Osmanlı eğitim sistemine ve bugünkü eğitim sistemimize olan etkilerini ve katkılarını ortaya koymak amacıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir.

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Araştırma zamansal açıdan dönemsel araştırma; araştırma tekniği açısından ise temel araştırma özelliklerini taşıyan ve betimleme amacıyla sınırlı olması nedeniyle de; tarama modelinde bir araştırma olarak değerlendirilebilir. Araştırma sürecinde kayıt ve dokümanlar taranarak doğrudan ve dolaylı kayıt teknikleriyle veri toplanmıştır. Araştırmada kullanılan veriler, ikincil (yargısal) veri niteliğini taşımaktadır. Toplanan veriler öncelikli olarak gerçek olup olmadıkları açısından geçerlilik sınavına tabi tutulmuş, ardından iç tutarlılık yönünden değerlendirilip güvenilirliği sınanmıştır. Son aşamada kaynaklar türlerine ve katkılarına göre sınıflandırıldıktan sonra eş değer kaynaklarla karşılaştırılıp çeşitlendirilmiştir. İncelenen dönemden elde edilen sonuç ve bulguların Osmanlı eğitim sisteminin üzerindeki batı etkisini ve Osmanlı eğitim sisteminin geçirdiği değişimleri açıklamak için genellenebilir nitelikte olduğu söylenebilir. Araştırmada Osmanlı Devleti içindeki azınlık okulları Rum okulları, Ermeni okulları ve Yahudi okulları olmak üzere üç ana grupta ele alınmıştır. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Müslüman olmayanlara yönelik olarak açılan ikinci grup okullar ise Batılı ülkelerin Osmanlı topraklarında yaşayan kendi vatandaşlarının eğitim ve öğretim ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak üzere açmış oldukları yabancı okullardır. Bugüne kadar yabancı okullar ve azınlık okullarıyla ilgili yapılan çalışmalara bakıldığında genel olarak bu okulların misyonerlik faaliyetlerini üstlendikleri söylenebilir. Ancak üzerinde durulması gereken asıl nokta bu okulların Osmanlı Devleti ve Balkan ülkeleri başta olmak üzere birçok Avrupa ülkesi ve bugünkü Türk eğitim sistemi üzerindeki etkileridir.



Batı kültürü ve yaşam tarzının Osmanlı topraklarında yayılıp benimsenmesi, okullaşma oranının artması, kız öğrencilerin de eğitim hizmetinden yararlanması, İngilizce ve diğer dillerin öğrenilmesinin yaygınlaşması, mesleki ve teknik eğitimin yaygınlaşması, deney, gözlem gibi yöntemlerin eğitimde kullanılması, zorunlu ve kesintisiz eğitim düşüncesinin oluşması, öğrencilerin yetenekleri, becerileri, zekâ ve duygularıyla farklı bireyler oldukları anlayışıyla öğrenci merkezli eğitimin temellerinin atılması, öğretmenliğin meslek olarak kabul edilmesi bu etkilere örnek olarak verilebilir. Dolayısıyla Osmanlı Devleti'nin yükselme dönemi ile Osmanlı'nın siyasal ve toplumsal yaşamına giren bu okulların; Bulgaristan ve Yunanistan gibi uzun süre Osmanlı yönetimi altında kalmış ülkeler ile Osmanlı Devleti ile son dönemde büyük etkileşim içinde olan Fransa, İngiltere, Almanya, Rusya gibi Avrupa ülkeleri ve Türkiye için büyük anlam ifade ettikleri söylenebilir.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Eğitim, azınlık okulları, yabancı okullar, Osmanlı devleti, eğitim tarihi

