

# An Ottoman Attempt for the Control of Christian Education: Plan of Fünûn Mektebi (School of Sciences) in the Early Tanzimat Period

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*Hıristiyan Eğitimi Kontrol Etmeye Yönelik bir Osmanlı Girişimi: Erken Tanzimat Döneminde Fünûn Mektebi Düşüncesi*

Öz ■ Bu makalenin amacı, Tanzimât döneminde Osmanlı hükümeti tarafından Hıristiyan tebaaya yönelik planlanan bir eğitim politikası olarak Fünûn Mektebi girişimini mütalaa etmektir. Bu deneme gerçekleşmemiş olasa da, böyle bir girişim hükümetin Osmanlı Hıristiyanlarına karşı varolan eğitim politikası hakkında fikir verebilmektedir. Fünûn Mektebi, “saltanat-ı seniyye ‘aleyhine bir takım uygunsuz şeyler”den Hıristiyan çocukları uzak tutmak için planlanmıştır. O zamanki Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun iç ve dış haline göre “uygunsuz şeyler”, radikal milliyetçilik veya liberalizm olarak yorumlanabilir. Ayrıca bu çalışmada her ikisi de Meclis-i Ma’ârif-i Muvakkat tarafından oluşturulan Fünûn Mektebi ve Dârü’l-fünûn’un ilişkisi de incelenmiştir. Araştırmamıza göre Dârü’l-fünûn, Fünûn Mektebi’nin planı akılda tutularak planlanmışa benzemektedir; çünkü her ikisinin eğitimsel içeriği, seviyesi, amacı ve ismi hemen hemen müşterek olmuştur.

Anahtar kelimeler: Fünûn Mektebi, Dârü’l-fünûn, Meclis-i Ma’ârif-i Muvakkat, Hıristiyan, gayr-i Müslim eğitimi, Tanzimât, eğitim, milliyetçilik

## Introduction

Under the Ottoman Empire (ca.1300-1922), non-Muslims such as the Orthodox, Armenians, and Jews were, as *zimmî*, permitted to maintain their faith in exchange for the payment of poll tax and restrictions on movement. To that end, education which made possible the continuance of their faith transcending generations were provided according to each religious community. In most cases, the various non-Muslim languages had unique alphabets, such as the Greek alphabet and the Armenian alphabet. Therefore, education provided by non-Muslim was

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completed within their respective sphere for a long period of time and was outside of the realm directly controlled by the government.

The Ottoman government did not involve themselves, not only in such education of non-Muslims but also in the education of Muslims in general. The *mekteb* which mainly taught the recitation of the Quran and reading and writing, the *medrese* which taught various Islamic studies and trained *ulema* had independent financial resources from *wakf* and gratuity given to teachers, and the contents of their teachings were not determined by the intent of the government. It is true that training of *oğlan* in the *Enderun* was conducted, but this was exceptional. In addition, it is known that the *ulema* under the Ottoman Empire formed a unique hierarchical organization called the *İlmiyye*, whose members largely participated in governmental affairs. However, that is not to say that the *mekteb* and *medrese* in the towns and subdivisions throughout the empire were directly connected to the government. Generally speaking, it can be concluded that education under the Ottoman Empire, regardless of whether the subjects were Muslim or non-Muslim, contributed to the reproduction of religious experts and believer without direct involvement of the government.

Changes to such a situation were brought about during the Tanzimat Period (1839-76). From this period on, the government began to intervene in the education of not only the Muslims but also of the non-Muslims, although not always directly. Firstly, with regard to Muslim education, prior to the issuance of the Rescript of the Gülhane (1839) which announced the start of the Tanzimat reformation, the opinion brief of the Council of Public Works (*Meclis-i Umûr-ı Nâfi'â'nın lâyihası*) was published in the Official Gazette (*Takvîm-i Vekâyi'*) attempting to introduce a compulsory education system (1839).<sup>1</sup> In addition, two small-scale government official training schools were established (1839). Then in 1845, the Temporary Council of Education (*Meclis-i Ma'ârif-i Muvakkat*) was established, and based on its proposal, in 1846, it was announced that the state educational system would be set up in three stages, namely *mekteb-i sibyan*, *mekteb-i rüşdiyye*, and *Dârü'l-fünûn*, which accepted "anyone who is a subject," and that also a permanent educational council would be established. The council which was named the Council of Public Education (*Meclis-i Ma'ârif-i 'Umûmiyye*) was placed under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Hâriciyye Nezâreti*) and the Sublime Council of Judicial Ordinances (*Meclis-i Vâlâ-yi Ahkâm-ı Adliyye*) until the establishment of

1 Regarding the legislation of the compulsory education system, see Kiyohiko Hasebe, "On the Introduction of Compulsory Education in the Ottoman Empire", *Research Bulletin of Japan Society for the Historical Studies of Education* 51, 2008, pp.82-94 (in Japanese).

the Ministry of Public Education (*Ma'ârif-i 'Umûmiyye Nezâreti*) in 1857. Thereafter, under the Ministry of Public Education, the Council of Public Education functioned at the center of the government-led educational reformation.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, regarding government intervention in non-Muslim education, the legal equality between Muslims and non-Muslims was clearly defined and was carried out after the Reform Rescript (1856).<sup>3</sup> In particular, by means of the Regulation of Public Education (*Ma'ârif-i 'Umûmiyye Nizâmnâmesi*, 1869) which was the sole systematic educational administration law under the Ottoman Empire, the legislation of government supervision over the non-Muslim educational institutions is considered to be the origin of educational policies toward non-Muslims.<sup>4</sup>

This paper endorses the common opinion regarding the actual legislation of the policies. However, the educational policies toward non-Muslims, in particular toward Christians, were brought into action in 1845 in the form of a plan to establish an institution called the *Fünûn Mektebi* (School of Sciences). But it remained only conceptual. The purpose of this paper is to study the *Fünûn Mektebi* as it has never been discussed in traditional studies despite its significance both as a policy toward Christians and as an educational policy. In this paper, matters like the kind of organization the Temporary Council of Education was, who formulated the plan (Section 1), the specifics of the plan (Section 2), and how it related to future educational policies (Section 3) have been discussed.

The Tanzimat Period was an era when the principle of order underwent a dramatic restructuring from “co-existence of inferiority under Muslim superiority”

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- 2 There are a number of researches on educational history during the Tanzimat period. See Faik Reşit Unat, *Türkiye Eğitim Sisteminin Gelişmesine Tarihî Bir Bakış*, Ankara, 1964; Cahit Yalçın Bilim, *Türkiye'de Çağdaş Eğitim Tarihi (1734-1876)*, Eskişehir, 2002; Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire 1839-1908 Islamization, Autocracy and Discipline*, Leiden/Boston/Köln, 2001; Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire*, Oxford, 2002.
  - 3 Selçuk Akşin Somel, “Christian Community Schools during the Ottoman Reform Period”, Elisabeth Özdalga ed., *Late Ottoman Society: The Intellectual Legacy*, New York, 2005, p.268.
  - 4 Even prior to the Regulation of Public Education, an education policy for non-Muslims existed. For example, in military-related educational institutions such as the *Military College*, *Naval College*, and *Military Medical College*, admission of non-Muslims was permitted. However, this can be interpreted as the opening the way for non-Muslims into state educational system rather than government intervention into non-Muslim education.

to “co-existence of legal equality between Muslims and non-Muslims.” During this period, what was the government’s attitude toward non-Muslims? This study attempts, in part, to investigate the answer to this question. In addition, through this study, our goal is to rethink the educational history of the Ottoman Empire by understanding the relationship between the educational reforms during the Tanzimat period and the policies toward Christians.

In order to examine the above, we will mainly use content from the *Takvîm-i Vekâyi*’ as a published source and the imperial rescript (*irâde-i seniyye*) preserved at the Prime Ministerial Ottoman Archives (*Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi*) as an unpublished source.<sup>5</sup>

### 1. Establishment of the Temporary Council of Education

After the issuance of the Rescript of the Gülhane, several reforms were actually implemented. For example, in the following year, the Criminal Law was put into effect (1840), and of the policies set out in the rescript, the abolishment of pre-sentence execution and the guarantee of life was legislated. In addition, the *iltizâm* tax system was abolished (1840), and revenue officers were dispatched to various areas. However, the local magnates who had long been undertaking tax collection were uncooperative to this change, thus the new tax collection system faced difficulties and the former system was revived soon after (1842). The focus of the early Tanzimat reformation was the financial reform, but it came to a dead end in its early stage.<sup>6</sup>

‘Abdü’l-mecîd (1839-61) took this matter seriously and in the new year’s decree of 1261 of the Hijra calendar (21.January.1845), he ordered the reforms to be further intensified. In the decree, in addition to local administration reform and the establishment of hospitals, “the quest for a public education (*terbiye-i ‘âmme*) policy through organization of schools” was included.<sup>7</sup> The Grand Vizier Mehmed Emîn Ra’ûf (1842-46) made the Sublime Council of Judicial Ordinances consider setting up a council handling education exclusively. The issue of education had been deliberated in the Council of Public Works previously as stated above, but this was the first time that an exclusive council handling education was planned.

The deliberation held at the Sublime Council of Judicial Ordinances was completed by February 1845, and the same council reported to the Grand Vizier the establishment of the Temporary Council of Education and the council member

5 *Takvîm-i Vekâyi*’ is abbreviated as *TV* and *Îrâde Tasnifi* is abbreviated as *İ*.

6 Coşkun Çakır, *Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Maliyesi*, İstanbul, 2001, pp.41-48.

7 *TV* 280 (12.M.1261/21.January.1845).

candidates. The Grand Vizier summoned a General Council (*Meclis-i 'Umûmî*) with the participation of *Şeyhü'l-islâm* etc., and a further deliberation was carried out. As a result, the establishment of the Temporary Council of Education was unanimously approved, and the Grand Vizier reported this matter to the *Padişah*. The *Padişah* ratified this, and as an institution “to discuss a school system (*mekâtib nizâmâtı müzâkeresi zımnında*),”<sup>8</sup> the establishment of the Temporary Council of Education was decided upon.<sup>9</sup> On 13 March, along with the establishment of the Temporary Council of Education, the appointment of one chairman, six council members and one scribe was published in the *Takvîm-i-Vekâyi'*.<sup>10</sup> The ruling organization of the then-Ottoman government broadly consisted of the ulema (*'ilmiyye*), secretaries (*kalemiyye*) and military personnel (*seyfiyye*), and the members of the Temporary Council of Education was appointed from among the three groups (see Table).

**Table: Members of Temporary Council of Education**

Title	Name	Birth and Death Dates	Origin
Chairman	'Abdü'l-kâdir Bey Efendi	?-1846	'ilmiyye
Member	Ârif Hikmet Bey Efendi	?-1859	'ilmiyye
	Es'ad Efendi	1789-1848	'ilmiyye
	Ârif Efendi	?-1858	'ilmiyye
	Sa'id Muhibb Efendi*	?-1851	kalemiyye
	Emîn Paşa	?-1851	seyfiyye
	Fu'ad Efendi	1815-69	kalemiyye
	Scribe	Recâ'i Efendi	1803-74

Source: İ.MSM 46; TV 283 (4.Ra.1261/13.March.1845).

\* As referred to in the main text, in actuality, there was an individual named 'Âlî who participated in the council.

8 İ.DH 4972 (24.S.1261/4.March.1845).

9 No date is written at the end of the I.MSM 46 rescript; however, on the back of the stationery in which the address by the Grand Vizier and the irâde-i seniyye by the *Padişah* was written on, the date 21.S.[12]61/1.March.1845 is recorded. This is most likely the date of the issuance of the rescript; however, it could be the date received by the Grand Vizier following the issuance, or the date it was stored. To be noted is at the end of the minutes of the General Council attached to this rescript, the same date of 21.S.[12]61/1.March.1845 is written. This indicates that the resolution by the Sublime Council of Judicial Ordinances was passed by February 1845.

10 TV 283 (4.Ra.1261/13.March.1845); Mahmûd Cevâd ibnü'ş-Şeyh Nâfi', *Ma'ârif-i 'Umûmiyye Nezâreti Târîhçe-i Teşkilât ve İcrâ'âtı*, Matba'a-i Âmire [İstanbul], 1338, pp.28-29; Ali Akyıldız, *Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Merkez Teşkilâtında Reform*, İstanbul, 1993, p.229.

The four *ulemas* were extremely high in honorary grade (*pâye*) and title of rank (*unvân*). In particular the chairman ‘Abdül-kâdir (?-1846)<sup>11</sup> held the title of *Re’îsü’l-ulemâ*<sup>12</sup> which means the senior member of *pâye* possessor of the Rumeli Kazasker. In addition, ‘Ârif Hikmet (?-1859)<sup>13</sup> and ‘Ârif (?-1858)<sup>14</sup> who hold the *pâye* of inspector (*müfettiş*) of Rumeli and Anadolu respectively, were *ulema* who would be later appointed as the *Şeyhül-islâm*. Also, Es’ad (1789-1848) was an *ulema* who served as an official historiographer, director of official newspaper and the Rumeli Kazasker.<sup>15</sup> In this way, many leading *ulema* were appointed for the government-led reform promoting organization, and as several studies have indicated previously,<sup>16</sup> the fact that such leaders led the reform proves that the Ottoman Empire reformation was not necessarily held back by the “old-school *ulema*.”

Of the three members of the scribe class, Sa’îd Muhibb (?-1851),<sup>17</sup> has been said to be appointed to the Temporary Council of Education according to some historical documents,<sup>18</sup> but in the only minutes (*mazbata*) of the Temporary Council of Education presently in existence, his seal cannot be confirmed, and instead the seal of an individual named ‘Âlî is found in the minutes.<sup>19</sup>

The representative of Sa’îd Muhibb of the scribe class is most likely to have been selected from the same scribe class. In addition, of the individuals listed in the *Sicill-i ‘Osmânî* which includes many high-ranking officials under the Ottoman Empire, there is only one individual who could correspond to this ‘Âlî.<sup>20</sup>

11 Mehmed Süreyyâ, *Sicill-i ‘Osmânî*, Vol.III, [İstanbul], 1311, p.350. Hereafter, Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, 4 vols., [İstanbul], 1308-n.d. will be abbreviated as *SO*.

12 İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin İlmiye Teşkilâtı*, Ankara, 1965, p.159.

13 *SO*, Vol.III, pp.274-275.

14 *SO*, Vol.III, p.275. During his office as a *Şeyhül-islâm*, he promoted the reformation of the Qadi organization. Jun Akiba, “A New School for Qadis: Education of the Sharia Judges in the Late Ottoman Empire”, *Turcica* 35, 2003, p.132.

15 *SO*, Vol.I, pp.339-340. For detailed information: Ziya Yılmaz ed., *Vak’a-nüvis Es’ad Efendi Tarihi*, İstanbul, 2000, pp. XXXVII-XLVI.

16 Uriel Heyd, “The Ottoman Ulemâ and Westernization in the Time of Selim III and Mahmûd II”, Albert Hourani, Philip Khoury, Mary C. Wilson ed., *The Modern Middle East: A Reader*, London, New York, 2004, pp.29-59 (original 1961); David Kushner, “The Place of the Ulema in the Ottoman Empire during the Age of Reform (1839-1918)”, *Turcica* 19, 1987, pp.51-74.

17 *SO*, Vol.III, p.44.

18 İ.MSM 46; *TV* 283.

19 İ.MSM 654. These minutes are connected to the subject of this paper, namely the *Fünûn Mektebi*.

20 *SO*, Vol.III, pp.290-291.

Thus, there is a strong possibility that this 'Âlî is Mehmed Emîn 'Âlî (1815-71) who had accumulated experience in the Translation Office (*Tercüme Odası*) and who later served as a Grand Vizier in the Late Tanzimat Period. In fact, in some studies, he is specifically referred to as such.<sup>21</sup> If this were true, it is of interest that Fu'âd (1815-69)<sup>22</sup> who also worked at the Translation Office and later served as a Grand Vizier was appointed as a member of the Temporary Council of Education, and together they were a new type of bureaucrat who worked at the Translation Office and were familiar with the French language. It means that 'Âlî and Fu'âd who were known to have promoted the late Tanzimat reformation, both participated in the Temporary Council of Education, a point of great interest.

However, in Mehmed Emin 'Âlî's biography<sup>23</sup> or dictionary entry, his participation in the Temporary Council of Education is not indicated. In addition, the seal placed on the minutes of the Temporary Council of Education is "'Âlî" but in the minutes of the General Council regarding the same matter, his "Es-Seyyid Mehmed Emîn 'Âlî" seal is placed. There is a possibility that he had a new seal made between the Temporary Council of Education and the General Council, but it is still unclear as to whether Mehmed Emin 'Âlî participated in the Temporary Council of Education.

On the other hand, Recâî (1803-74)<sup>24</sup> who was appointed as a scribe was appointed as an official historian after the death of Es'ad as his successor. Though there is still no definite information about 'Âlî, it seems that all three members of the scribe class were top class personnel of their day.

The sole military member, Emîn (?-1851), was the principal of the Military College (*Mekteb-i Harbiyye*) at the time, had experience studying aboard in London<sup>25</sup> and was familiar with the French language.<sup>26</sup> It was anticipated that his knowledge and experience could be applied in the council.

Thus far, we have summarized the members of the Temporary Council of Education according to their origin. From the foregoing, we understand that

21 Andreas M. Kazamias, *Education and the Quest for Modernity in Turkey*, London, 1966, p.58. However, Kazamias notes the chairman of the Temporary Council of Education as *Şeyhül-islâm*, and does not indicate an authoritative source; therefore, this cannot be a reliable source of information.

22 *SO*, Vol.IV, pp.26-28. Detailed information: İbnülemin Mahmut Kemal İnal, *Son Sadrazamlar*, Vol.I, İstanbul, 1940, pp.149-195.

23 *Ibid.*, pp.4-58.

24 *SO*, Vol.II, p.370.

25 Mehmed Es'ad, *Mirât-ı Mekteb-i Harbiyye*, İstanbul, 1310, p.33.

26 *SO*, Vol.I, p.432.

all members of the council were Muslim that they were selected from the three groups which constitute the Ottoman government, at the very least Fu'ad and Emîn were proficient in French and that such "westernized" elites and *ulema* participated in the council together.

## 2. Concept behind the establishment of the Fünûn Mektebi

Upon the establishment of the Temporary Council of Education, the Sublime Council of Judicial Ordinances immediately ordered them to deliberate on "public education as a public works (*terbiyet-i umûmiyye mâdde-i nâfi'asi*)."<sup>27</sup> As a result, the council devised a separate school system (*nizâmât*) for Muslims and non-Muslims, and on 26 May 1845, a resolution was passed for the establishment of the *Fünûn Mektebi* (School of Sciences) especially for *re'âyâ* (*re'âyâya mahsûs*, more will be discussed about the *re'âyâ* later).<sup>28</sup> At that time, minutes bearing the seals of eight individuals including the chairman was prepared and submitted to the Sublime Council of Judicial Ordinances (hereafter noted as the "minutes of the Temporary Council of Education").

A similar deliberation was held in the Sublime Council of Judicial Ordinances, and minutes were prepared anew for its resolution (hereafter noted as the "minutes of the Sublime Council of Judicial Ordinances"). These were submitted to the General Council in which the Grand Vizier served as the chairman,<sup>29</sup> but to date, the existence of the actual document has not be confirmed. Additionally, deliberations were held at the General Council, a resolution was passed on 19 June, and minutes with the seals of sixteen members were prepared (hereafter noted as the "minutes of the General Council").<sup>30</sup> The Grand Vizier Mehmed Emîn Ra'ûf compiled an address to the throne based on the three minutes. The *Padişah* ratified this, officially decreeing the establishment of the *Fünûn Mektebi* herein. This took place on 22 June 1845.<sup>31</sup>

27 Address to the throne by the Grand Vizier contained in İ.MSM 654. The date is not written.

28 Minutes of the Temporary Council of Education contained in İ.MSM 654 (19. Ca.1261/26.May.1845).

29 Address to the throne by the Grand Vizier contained in İ.MSM 654.

30 Minutes of the General Council (13.C.1261/19.June.1845). The date is not written, but according to the address to the throne by the Grand Vizier, the council was held on this date.

31 Decree by the *Padişah* contained in İ.MSM 654 (16.C.1261/22.June.1845). This date was noted on the back of the stationery in which both the address by the Grand Vizier and the *Padişah's* decree were written.

Based on the above planning process, we would like to consider the concept behind the kind of school the *Fünûn Mektebi*. The most distinctive feature was that it was “especially for the *re’âyâ* (*re’âyâya mahsûs*).” According to Ottoman history, *re’âyâ* refers generally to the subject class, in contrast to *’askerî* which refers to the ruling class. In a more limited sense, *re’âyâ* refers to common people, and in a further limited sense, the term was used to mean the peasant class. Needless to say, among the subject class Muslims were included; therefore, this classification was not originally based on religion.

However in later years, *re’âyâ* was gradually referred to non-Muslims in contrast to Muslims, and in particular, it came to refer to Christians. The concept of *re’âyâ* referred to herein by the *Fünûn Mektebi* is also in contrast to “*mekâtib-i islâmîyye*” and as discussed later, in the minutes of the Temporary Council of Education, the expression “customs of Christian denominations (*’âdet-i mezhebiyye-i Nasârâ*)”<sup>32</sup> is used. Thus, it is thought that among the non-Muslims, Christians are referred to herein.

Why then, did the Ottoman government seek to establish a school exclusively for Christians? As mentioned above, non-Muslim education was outside the realm of governmental authority. Therefore, the very fact that the government sought to establish a school exclusively for Christians was an extremely major change. In addition, the members of the Temporary Council of Education who planned the *Fünûn Mektebi* were, as already confirmed, all Muslims. What was the reason which led them to feel the need to establish a school exclusively for Christians at their expense? We would like to consider this issue based on the minutes of the Temporary Council of Education which founded the concept of the *Fünûn Mektebi*.

According to the minutes, the schools for the “*re’âyâ*” within the empire was “not something desired (*matlûb olan sûrette olmayarak*).” It was noted that many of them had no choice but to send their children to “foreign countries (*memâlik-i ecnebiyye*)” or were sending them to “European schools located in Beyoğlu and so on (*Beyoğlu’nda ve sâ’ir mahallerde kâ’in Efrenc mektepleri*).”

In addition, the “apparent reason (*sebeb-i zâhirî*)” was the “studying of mathematics and other sciences (*’ulûm-ı ri’yâziyye ve fûnûn-ı sâ’ire tahsîli*)” but it is stated that “it is plain that Christian children would learn a set of unsuitable things against the Ottoman government (*re’âyâ çocukları bunun zımnında saltanat-ı seniyye ’aleyhine bir takım uygunsuz şeyleri dahi ta’allüm eyledikleri zâhir*).”<sup>33</sup>

32 Minutes of the Temporary Council of Education contained in İ.MSM 654.

33 *Ibid.*

Furthermore, in order to devise a “means of obstacle (*esbâb-ı mâni‘a*)” against this “harm (*mazarrat*)” is the “obligation (*zimmat-i himmet*)” of the government, but “to prevent openly (*men‘-i sarîh ile men‘ buyurmak*)” such actions of Christians would be unsuitable in view of the times and circumstances. Rather they recognized that “implied prevention (*men‘-i zımnî*)” is more desirable “to connect to method and order (*usûl ve nizâma rabt*)” the various schools for Christians.<sup>34</sup>

What was then devised was the establishment of the *Fünûn Mektebi* “especially for *re‘âyâ* (*re‘âyâya mahsûs*)” that would “not to tie in customs of Christian denominations (*âdet-i mezhebiyye-i Nasârâdan ‘ârî olmak*)” with the appointment of an “exclusive principal (*müdüri mahsûs*) by the government.<sup>35</sup> The adoption of a “neutral method (*usûl-i mu‘tedile*)” in which they were “not to tie in customs of Christian denominations” is extremely interesting.

From the aforementioned, the so-called hidden purpose of the *Fünûn Mektebi* was the “implied prevention” of “harm” caused by “the unsuitable things” which the children of Christians would learn by going to “foreign countries” and “European schools.” What specifically then, do the “unsuitable things” refer to? According to historical records, there are no further references to “unsuitable things.” Therefore, we do well to consider the meaning of “unsuitable things” by taking into consideration the internal and external situations of the Ottoman Empire at the time of 1845 when these minutes were prepared, and reviewing other words such as “foreign countries” and “European schools.”

First of all, in confirming the internal and external situations at the time of 1845, the Ottoman Empire had up to then experienced such large scaled events as the two revolts in Serbia (1804-13, 1815-17), the revolt in Greece (1821-29), three revolts in Niş (1833, 35, 41), and the revolt in Crete (1841). In such conflicts in the Balkans, they knew from experience that depending on the war situation and popular opinion, great powers would intervene.

The direct trigger of such conflicts was not necessarily the heightening of nationalism. For example, the revolt in Greece did not break out because the feeling of nationalism was shared and cultivated widely by the Greeks.<sup>36</sup> However, the various peoples of the Balkans came to be aware of nationalism on an extensive scale. At the very least, the leaders of the revolt had as their slogan

34 *Ibid.*

35 *Ibid.*

36 Tetsuya Sahara, “Rise of Nationalism and the Emergence of an Independent State” Shiba Nobuhiro ed., *Balkan History*, Yamakawa Shuppansha Publishers, 1998, p. 154 (in Japanese).

of release or freedom from oppression of the Ottoman Empire. In addition, in such conflicts and wars of independence, involvement of other ethnic groups in the Balkans was seen.<sup>37</sup> In actuality, in 1829, Serbia and Greece were given autonomy, and in the following year (1830), the independence of Greece was internationally recognized. In this way, the Ottoman Empire had already experience the difficulties of a series of conflicts in the Balkans and the decrease in territory.

Bearing such situations in mind, let us consider the matter of Christians studying abroad in “foreign countries.” Of the Christians, the Greek Orthodox Church received economic support from merchants<sup>38</sup> to study in Padua and Bologna in Italy,<sup>39</sup> Oxford in England,<sup>40</sup> various universities in Germany,<sup>41</sup> and other universities throughout Europe. What is particularly important in this paper is that the young ones among the Greek Orthodox who studied in Europe came in contact with the trend of ideas in their land which existed at time, such as the enlightenment and philhellenism.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, A. Korais (1748-1833) who studied classic works from ancient Greece, and V. Rigas (1757-98) who drew up the “Declaration of Revolution” and the “Draft of Hellenic Republic Constitution” in Vienna were both influenced by the French Revolution, and the revolt in Greece was started by the *Filiki Etera* who carried on Rigas’ ideal. These factors led to the consideration of directives for the “unsuitable things”.

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37 Junko Sugawara, “Space Recognition in the Balkans: Interrelations of Racial Movements in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Balkans”, 21<sup>st</sup> Century COE Program “Establishment of Slavic-Eurasian Studies”, *Occasional Papers on Making a Discipline of Slavic Eurasian Studies* 13, Hokkaido University, 2006, p.18 (in Japanese).

38 In particular, as a result of the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (1774) which was concluded as a result of the Russo-Turkish War (1768-74), the Russians obtained the right of passage to the Black Sea, and the Greek Orthodox merchants, under the Russian flag, engaged in trade and accumulated great wealth. With the funds acquired, they embarked on a publishing business for the Greek language and provided scholarships for their young ones to study abroad in Europe. Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Cambridge, 2002, pp.25-27.

39 Tadashi Hagiwara, “Modern Hellenism and Balkan Races: Co-existence and Ethnic Integration in Balkan Society”, *Social Bond*, Iwanami Shoten Publishers, 1989, pp. 269-270 (in Japanese).

40 D.A. Zakythinos, tr. K.R. Johnstone, *The Making of Modern Greece: From Byzantium to Independence*, Oxford, 1976, p.128.

41 Clogg, *op.cit.*, pp.25-27.

42 Clogg states that foreign students came in contact with “romantic nationalism”. Clogg, *op.cit.*, p.27.

On the other hand, many points remain unclear about the Armenian's studies in foreign lands. However, in the case of the Dadians, who served as directors of the government powder mills for generations, their children studied abroad in London, Manchester, Paris and Vienna.<sup>43</sup> Although this was an exceptional case to acquire technical skills, this shows that Armenians, as the Greek Orthodox, studied abroad in Europe.

Next, in examining the "European schools" in Istanbul, their origin was the *Saint-Benoît Fransız Okulu*, established in the Galata district in 1583. The school was set up by the Jesuits, but was run by the Lazarists from 1773.<sup>44</sup> Including the aforementioned, at the time of 1845, there existed several schools run by French missionaries, such as the Lazarists and the Filles de la Charité, where Christians attended.<sup>45</sup> "European schools" mentioned in the minutes of the Temporary Council of Education are thought to refer to such schools run by the missionaries.

In view of the internal and external situations of the Ottoman Empire at the time of 1845, and the specific content and meaning of the terms found in sources, the expression "a set of unsuitable things against the Ottoman government" according to the minutes of the Temporary Council of Education is thought to refer to political ideas which may conflict with the national structure of the Ottoman Empire, although conclusive evidence is lacking. Specifically it refers to radical nationalism which inspires one to gain independence and autonomy, or liberalism which trumpets Ottoman rule as oppression and promotes the liberation of the brethren from such oppression. At the very least, at the time of 1845, it is certain that a group of Christians within the Ottoman Empire had such ideas.

That being the case, it can be deduced that one of the objectives in the planning of the *Fünûn Mektebi* was to enclose the Christians so that they would not be contaminated by such "dangerous thoughts." The fact that the Ottoman government bore the financial burden to establish a special school for Christians had such a background.

43 Pars Tuğlacı, *The Role of the Dadian Family in Ottoman Social, Economic and Political Life*, İstanbul, 1993. Armenian settlements existed in these cities.

44 İlnur Polat Haydaroğlu, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Yabancı Okullar*, Ankara, 1993, pp.108-109. The Lazarists are a mission established in 1625 by Vincent de Paul (1581-1660) in Paris.

45 M. Hidayet Vahapoğlu, *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Azınlık ve Yabancı Okulları (Yönetimleri Açısından)*, Ankara, 1990, pp.71-72.

However, despite the issuance of the rescript, the *Fünûn Mektebi* was never established. As far as we can confirm, it was not even mentioned in historical documents after the rescript. On 21 July 1846, one year after the issuance of the rescript on 22 June 1845, the matter was deliberated both at the Temporary Council of Education and the Sublime Council of Judicial Ordinances, and the three-stage system of the state educational system was published in the *Takvîm-i Vekâyi*.<sup>46</sup> The “third stage” (*derece-i sâlise*) was the *Dârü'l-fünûn* which advocated that “anyone who is a subject” in the Ottoman Empire can be accepted.

The reason for the disintegration of the establishment plan for the *Fünûn Mektebi* still remains a mystery due to lack of sources. However, the fact that both *Fünûn Mektebi* and *Dârü'l-fünûn* were devised by the same Temporary Council of Education, and that both institutions use the word *fünûn* in their names indicate that there is some connection between the two. In the next section, we would like to consider the relationship between the two institutions based on the history of *Dârü'l-fünûn*.<sup>47</sup>

### 3. Fünûn Mektebi and Dârü'l-fünûn

The establishment plan for *Dârü'l-fünûn* was announced in 1846, as stated above. G. Fossati (1809-83), a renowned Swiss architect of Italian descent who lived in Istanbul at the time, was commissioned to design the school building. The construction of the school building started in the adjoining land of *Hagia Sophia*, but it proceeded at a sluggish pace. In 1851, an Academy of Science (*Encümen-i Dâniş*) was set up to compile the textbooks for *Dârü'l-fünûn*, but in actuality not even one book was published, and it was dismissed ten years later. At last in 1863, in the classrooms that had been completed, physics, chemistry and history lectures were held on a provisional basis.<sup>48</sup>

However, in March 1865, it was decided that the school building next to *Hagia Sophia* was too spacious for *Dârü'l-fünûn*, and was transferred to the Ministry of

46 TV 303 (27.B.1262/21.July.1846).

47 Regarding *Dârü'l-fünûn*, see Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, “Dârülfünûn Tarihçesine Giriş: İlk İki Teşebbüs”, *Belleten* 210, 1990, pp.699-738; idem, “Dârülfünûn Tarihçesine Giriş (II) Üçüncü Teşebbüs: Dârülfünûn-ı Sultani”, *Belleten* 218, 1993, pp.201-239. For the latest complete history, see idem, *Darülfünun: Osmanlı'da Kültürel Modernleşmenin Odağı*, 2 vols., İstanbul, 2010; Emre Dölen, *Türkiye Üniversite Tarihi*, 5 vols., İstanbul, 2009-10. However, in either of the studies, there is no mentioned of the *Fünûn Mektebi*.

48 İhsanoğlu, “Dârülfünûn Tarihçesine Giriş: İlk İki Teşebbüs”, pp. 699-709.

Finance. Hence, a new school building was to be built for *Dârül-fünûn*, and it was determined that a new “abridged (*muhtasarca*)” school building would be built on the land of Beylik Fırını, next to Mahmud II’s shrine.<sup>49</sup>

Although a new school building was underway, there was a need for a temporary transfer. Thus, *Dârül-fünûn* was transferred not so far from the new school, to the residence of Nûrî, a teacher of the School of Civil Service (*Mekteb-i Mülkiyye*) which was held there. However, this residence was completely destroyed by fire in September 1865, and although the School of Civil Service was immediately transferred, *Dârül-fünûn* was forced to be discontinued.<sup>50</sup>

Thereafter, *Dârül-fünûn* was defined in detail by the Regulation of Public Education (1869), resumed at the new school building in Beylik Fırını in 1870, but was closed in 1873 or 74. In 1874, a law school was established, attached to and within the *Imperial Lycée* (*Mekteb-i Sultânî*, 1868). However, this too was taken over by the Law School of the Ministry of Justice in 1881. Finally in 1900, based on the rescript issued in 1896,<sup>51</sup> *Dârül-fünûn*, which became the direct forerunner of the present University of Istanbul was established.

With such history of *Dârül-fünûn* in mind, let us consider the relationship between the *Fünûn Mektebi* and *Dârül-fünûn* in the areas of 1) educational content, 2) purpose of education, 3) name, and 4) objects of education.

### 1) Educational content

As we have already seen, according to the minutes of the Temporary Council of Education, the “apparent reason” for Christians’ learning in foreign countries was for the acquisition of “mathematics and other sciences”. Therefore, in order to substitute this, these subjects would have to be lectured at the *Fünûn Mektebi* as well. Also, the expression mathematics (*‘ulûm-ı riyâziyye*) used instead of arithmetic (*hesâb*) would indicate that the level was far from introductory.

On the other hand, the subjects planned to be lectured in *Dârül-fünûn* at the 1846 stage are unknown; however, when the school finally opened in 1863, the subjects lectured were physics, chemistry and history as mentioned above. It is presumed that both *Fünûn Mektebi* and *Dârül-fünûn* were educational institutions with the concept of teaching mathematics and science to students who had completed primary education.

49 İ.DH 37075 (25.L.1281/23.March.1865).

50 İhsanoğlu, “Dâulfünûn Tarihçesine Giriş: İlk İki Teşebbüs”, p. 712.

51 İ.MF 1313/L-5 (24.L.1313/8.April.1896).

## 2) Purpose of education

As we have already seen, the hidden purpose of the *Fünûn Mektebi* was the “implied prevention” of “harm”, which is caused by the children of Christians who acquire “unsuitable things” by going to “foreign countries” and “European schools”.

On the other hand, needless to say, the purpose of *Dârü'l-fünûn* was to serve as an educational institution which taught the “third stage” of education. However, in 1865, when the establishment of the “abridged *Dârü'l-fünûn*” was planned in Beylik Fırını, Fu'âd, who was formerly a member of the Temporary Council of Education and was serving in the capacity of the Grand Vizier at the time, stated that “what is expected of *Dârü'l-fünûn* is to save the people of the land from the necessity to go to foreign countries (*memâlik-i ecnebiyye*) for learning, and to intercept vicious thoughts (*efkâr-ı fâsidenin önünü kesmek*) that people have acquired in the process of gaining knowledge.”<sup>52</sup> The expression “vicious thought” referred to herein, in view of the terms such as “foreign countries” and “intercept”, would seem to indicate the “dangerous thoughts” which conflict with the national structure of the Ottoman Empire, similar to the “unsuitable things” mentioned earlier.

However, as far as we can confirm to date, the idea of letting *Dârü'l-fünûn* assume the deterrent role in rejecting such “dangerous thoughts” is last mentioned in the address of 1865. On the other hand, the idea of a substitute for foreign studies is seen in the minutes of Regulation of Public Education,<sup>53</sup> written one year prior to its issuance, and also in the rescript<sup>54</sup> issued four years prior to the resumption of *Dârü'l-fünûn* in 1900. In the Regulation of Public Education, *Dârü'l-fünûn* was defined in detail, but when the regulation was legislated, the prevention of accepting “dangerous thoughts” which is the hidden purpose of *Dârü'l-fünûn* was no longer mentioned.

52 Address by the Grand Vizier contained in İ.DH 37075. İhsanoğlu had already pointed out that in 1865, the purpose of *Dârü'l-fünûn* was set out to be the “interception” of “vicious thoughts” based on this document. (However, there is a discrepancy in the request number of the document.) Since he does not have knowledge of the *Fünûn Mektebi*, he views this as a modification of *Dârü'l-fünûn*. However, this document indicates that this not a modification of *Dârü'l-fünûn*, but rather a continuity of the *Fünûn Mektebi*. Forecited Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, “Dârülfünûn Tarihçesine Giriş: İlk İki Teşebbüs”, 1990, p.711.

53 A.MKT.ŞD 5/43 (12.N.1285/27.December.1868).

54 İ.MF 1313/L-5.

### 3) Name

*Fünûn Mektebi* and *Dârü'l-fünûn* have the word “sciences (*fünûn*)” in common. This word is the plural form of *fenn*, and according to the dictionary of the time, is translated art or science.<sup>55</sup> It is noteworthy that in one sense, it is a general word meaning knowledge, but the word ‘*ilm*’ (plural form ‘*ulûm*’) which means religious knowledge in a limited sense is not used, rather the word corresponding in meaning to art and science is used.<sup>56</sup>

On the other hand, the word modifying *fünûn* differs between the two. *Mekteb* is a general term meaning school or a place of learning, whereas *dâr* which has as its original meaning “surrounded place,” came to mean house or mansion. It also came to mean relatively sophisticated academic institutions such as *Dârü'l-hadis* or *Dârü'ş-şifâ*. It is thought that the usage of the word *dâr* contributed to the impression that *Dârü'l-fünûn* is an institution that carries on such academic tradition. Regarding syntax, the *Fünûn Mektebi* is based on Turkish, where as *Dârü'l-fünûn* is based on Arabic.<sup>57</sup>

### 4) Objects of education

In this way, both *Fünûn Mektebi* and *Dârü'l-fünûn* have a considerable number of points in common in their educational content, standard, purpose and name. However, the definitive difference in the two is that the former was “especially for Christians (*re'âyâya mahsûs*)”, where as the latter was an educational institution which accepted “anyone who is a subject.”

As long as historical data connecting the two is lacking, it remains a matter of speculation, however, this may have been the factor for the disintegration of the plan for the *Fünûn Mektebi*. As far as we can confirm, the *Fünûn Mektebi* was last referred to in the rescript dated 22 June 1845, while the first appearance of the term *Dârü'l-fünûn* was November 1845.<sup>58</sup> Most likely, during those four months, *Dârü'l-fünûn* was planned to encompass the idea of the *Fünûn Mektebi*,

55 J.D. Kieffer, T.X. Bianchi, *Dictionnaire Turc-Français*, Vol.II, Paris, 1837, p.398; J.W. Redhouse, *An English and Turkish Dictionary, in Two Parts, English and Turkish, and Turkish and English*, London, 1857, pp.859-860; N. Mallouf, *Dictionnaire Turc-Français*, Vol.II, Paris, 1867, p.927. However, Redhouse only refers to art as the translation.

56 It is thought that this is in consideration to *ulema* as the bearer of *ilm*.

57 The names of *Mekteb-i Mü'lkiye*, *Mekteb-i Sultânî* and the names of other state educational institutions were largely based on Persian syntax.

58 Minutes of the Sublime Council of Judicial Ordinances contained in İ.MSM 656 (12. Za.1261/12.November.1845).

or at least with that idea in mind. *Dârü'l-fünûn* was planned by the Temporary Council of Education, but it was also the same council that devised the *Fünûn Mektebi* as well. It is unlikely that the educational content, standard, purpose, and name deliberated several months earlier were not carried over.

### Conclusion

In this paper, we have considered the establishment plan of the *Fünûn Mektebi* which was on one hand an educational policy, but on the other hand was strongly characterized as a policy aimed at Christians. In Section 1, we considered the Temporary Council of Education which devised the *Fünûn Mektebi* and confirmed the characteristics of its members. In Section 2, we discussed that the hidden purpose of the school was for Christians not to adopt “a set of unsuitable things against the Ottoman government,” and that its aim was the “implied prevention” of such. We also learned that, in light of the internal and external situations which existed at the time, the “unsuitable things” most likely referred to nationalism and liberation. In Section 3, the relationship between *Fünûn Mektebi* and *Dârü'l-fünûn* was considered, and since both had considerable similarities in their educational content, standard, and name, there is a great possibility that *Dârü'l-fünûn* was devised with the establishment plan of the *Fünûn Mektebi* in mind.

In conclusion, let us consider the position of the *Fünûn Mektebi* in Ottoman educational history. Because the school was never actually established, despite the issuance of the rescript, it could not produce any achievements in the development of human resources. However, by putting the *Fünûn Mektebi* into perspective, it seems that it is possible to restructure the Ottoman educational history in a different light.

For example, the *Imperial Lycée* (1868), responsible for the co-education of Muslims and non-Muslims, was traditionally used as an example of “Ottomanism” which emphasized awareness of being Ottoman, transcending religious, linguistic and ethnic differences, and cultivated such an awareness. It is true that the characteristics of the *Imperial Lycée* can be interpreted in such a context. However, bearing in mind that the government attempted to intervene in the non-Muslim education from 1845 onward, the *Imperial Lycée* can be said to be the attainment of a long-term goal of placing non-Muslim education under government supervision, albeit partially.

Furthermore, since *Dârü'l-fünûn* is the forerunner of the present University of Istanbul, it seems to have been established only for the purpose of education

according to traditional studies. However, when considering the conclusion of this paper, we can gain insight into the aspect of *Dârü'l-fünûn* which cannot be contained in a mere university history. In particular, the fact that even in 1865, twenty years after 1845, the Grand Vizier felt that one of the purposes of *Dârü'l-fünûn* was “to intercept vicious thought” is an important point of controversy in contemplating the university’s history.

While obtaining such results from the study, the reason why the *Fünûn Mektebi* was never established is yet to be defined. In addition, whether Christians responded to the plan of the *Fünûn Mektebi* and if so, how they responded is another issue. These issues need to be addressed in future studies based on further research into source. This paper is originally published in Japanese. Kiyohiko Hasebe, “Tanzimat Shokiniokeru Tai Kirisutokyouto Kyouiku Kanri Kousou”, *Touyou Bunka* 91, 2011, pp.243-261.

*An Ottoman Attempt for the Control of Christian Education: Plan of Fünûn Mektebi (School of Sciences) in the Early Tanzimat Period*

Abstract ■ This paper examines the attempt at educational politics by the Ottoman Empire during the Tanzimat period through a plan that aimed to establish the Fünûn Mektebi (School of Sciences) which aimed at educating only Christian students. Although this plan was never carried out, I would like to clarify the Ottoman politics toward Christians through such a plan. The Fünûn Mektebi sought to keep Christian students from studying “a set of unsuitable things against the Ottoman government” and for the Ottoman government to prevent such study indirectly. It should be pointed out that “unsuitable things” referred to radical nationalism or liberation, in consideration of domestic and international conditions. I would like to discuss the relation between the Fünûn Mektebi and Dârü'l-fünûn, because both were planned by the Temporary Council of Education. I conclude that Dârü'l-fünûn was planned with the Fünûn Mektebi in mind, because the educational contents, standards, objectives, and names of both had much in common.

Key words: Fünûn Mektebi (School of Sciences), Dârü'l-fünûn (Istanbul University), Meclis-i Ma'ârif-i Muvakkat (Temporary Council of Education), Christian, non-Muslim education, Tanzîmât, education, nationalism

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