Ottoman Educational Institutions during the Reform Period
OTTOMAN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS DURING THE REFORM PERIOD

The Ottoman history witnessed a long period of change and reform, which started as of the eighteenth century and continued until the end of the Empire. One of the most important aspects of this period was the reform movement in the cultural and educational life. In our opinion it is necessary to evaluate with a new approach the process of development of institutionalisation, which has not been considered as a whole up until the present and that forms the basis of this movement, within its political, social and cultural context. This evaluation, which will be made, based on new information and documents, will provide us with the opportunity of setting forth the real paradigm of the Ottoman reform.

The reform movement in the army that was initiated with enthusiasm and great interest was first of all to prevent the defeats on the battlefields and to regain the military superiority, which had been lost. This reform movement was later extended to include the civilian fields as well. In the process of modernization that was started at the same time in many fields within an extensive period of time, the traditional institutions also attempted to preserve their own existences and functions. This situation in the initial period paved the way for the old and new institutions being intermingled and for them assuming an intricate status. It is necessary to evaluate in the form of two different models this coexistence, which was connected to each other. We will attempt to study in this chapter how the modern educational institutions were established and developed.

In the eighteenth century the technology in the weapons industry in Europe started to change even more rapidly. The adaptation of the Ottomans to this became comparatively more difficult than in the previous periods. The Ottomans, who compared the military forces of Europe with their own forces, felt the necessity of transferring with new methods the technology, which was different from those in the past in order to, re-establish the balances of power, which had been upset to their disadvantage. Naturally, a need was felt for the consultancy of European experts for applying this technology. In general, this need was met up until the 1770s with the experts who had entered into the Ottoman service by being converted to Islam. Furthermore, in this period the Ottoman administrators were purchasing gunpowder, weapons and warships for the navy by importing directly from Europe to meet their own needs for war materials. In other words, the dependence on the imports of products and materials for the transfer of technology increased in this period. In this period as well, a number of new applications were started with the thought of learning the new military techniques and for the gradual modernization of the Ottoman army.

The Emergence of the Military Educational Institutions and Reform in Education

The establishment of new institutions within the Ottoman military organization, inspired by similar ones in Europe and the new type of instruction applied at these institutions, paved the way for a slow, but gradually increasing change in the Ottoman scientific and educational life.¹ The first initiative on this subject was the Ulufeli Humbaraci Ocagi (Corps of Bombardiers) that was established at the beginning of 1735

¹ See Mustafa Kacar, Osmanlı Devleti'nde Bilim ve Eğitim Anlayısındaki Değişmeler ve Mühendishânelerin Kuruluşu, (Ph.D. thesis, Istanbul University, Faculty of Literature, Department of the History of Science), Istanbul, 1996 on the reform movements in the military field in the Ottoman Empire and on the situation of the schools of engineering up until 1808.
under the direction of Compte de Bonneval (Bombardier Ahmed Pasha) of French origin who assumed the name of Ahmed after he sought asylum in the Ottoman State in 1729 and became a Muslim. The Corps of Bombardiers was organized in a different manner from the similar corps in the Ottoman military organization, both from the military aspect and from the administrative aspect. At this corps, besides the practical instruction, theoretical lessons were taught such as geometry, trigonometry, ballistics and technical drawing with the objective of educating bombardiers.ii

The Military Engineering Education

The Hendesehâne (Mathematical School) was the first institution that was assigned separately for modern military technical education in the Ottoman Empire. The Hendesehâne, which was called the Ecole des Théories or the Ecoles des Mathématiques in French, was established at the Imperial Shipyard on 29 April 1775. Baron de Tott and another French expert besides the Ottoman teachers taught courses and this institution had up to ten students and later assumed the name of the Mühendishâne (School of Engineering).

FIGURE 1- The New (Imperial) School of Engineering (Mühendishâne) established in 1793 by Sultan Selim III at the Cannonier’s Barracks.

A great number of French experts and officers came to Istanbul between 1783 and 1788, with the renewed closeness between the Ottomans and France. All of the French experts and foremen left Istanbul as the

result of the alliance formed between Russia and France when the Ottomans entered into war against Russia between 1787-1788. It was observed that Ottoman foremen and workers and workers from other European states (some Swedes) were employed after the French departed. When all of the French experts and officers returned to their country between 1787 and 1788, the applied courses were discontinued and theoretical courses continued to be given by only the Ottoman scholars, such as Gelenbevî Ismâil Efendi and Palabiyik Mehmed Efendi, the famous mathematicians. Within the *Nizâm-i Cedid* (the New Order) movement, which was started in 1792, three years after Sultan Selim III (1789-1807) ascended the throne, the *Mühendishâne-i Cedide* (New School of Engineering) was established in 1793 with the objective of providing education for bombardiers, sappers and artillerymen.

The classes at the new school of engineering started in 1794. The new generation Ottoman engineering teachers, such as Hoca Abdurrahman Efendi and Seyyid Osman Efendi, were instructors at the new school of engineering. Ten years earlier they had received courses in military engineering techniques from the French experts at the Shipyard School of Engineering. Additionally, there was Hüseyin Rifki Tamâni, who was later appointed to be the chief instructor at the *Mühendishâne-i Berri-i Hümayun* (Imperial School of Military Engineering) for artillery officers and army engineers.

The organization of the New School of Engineering, just like the previous School of Engineering was composed of one teacher, four assistants, ten students and the other officials. Here the members of the

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*Frédéric Hitzel, "Défense de la Place Turque d'Oczakow par un Officier du Génie Francaise (1787)", in *Ikinci Tarih Boyunca Karadeniz Kongresi Bildirileri*, ed. Mehmet Saglam (Samsun 1990), 639-655.*

*K. Beydilli, Türk Bilim ve Matbaacılık Tarihinde Mühendishane, Mühendishane Matbaası ve Kütüphanesi (1776-1826), (İstanbul, 1995), 33-34.*
bombardier and sapper corps were instructed on subjects such as geometry, trigonometry and measurement of elevations.

With the transfer of the artillery and army engineering teachers to the above-mentioned newly established New School of Engineering, only courses in shipbuilding, navigation, cartography and geography were taught at the Shipyard Engineering School. In May 1793, S. Balthasar Le Brun, who had been brought from France, was appointed as the head of this school. After Le Brun returned to France, educated Ottoman naval officers were appointed in his place. This institution took the name of the Mühendishâne-i Bahr-i Hümayun (Imperial School of Naval Engineering) with the regulation of 1806. Later this school was moved to Heybeli Island with the name of the Bahriye Mektebi (Naval Academy) and continued to provide education for many years.\(^v\)

After the Janissary Corps was abolished in 1826, the need for officers for the Asâkir-i Mansûre-i Muhammediye, a new military organization established by Sultan Mahmud II, was met from the schools of engineering. Subsequently, in 1831, with the establishment of the Harbiye Mektebi (War School) as well, it was attempted to meet the needs for officers from both institutions. After the Tanzimat, the War School started to appear in the forefront and the demand for the Imperial School of Military Engineering decreased. An unstable period was experienced up until the First Constitutional Period, due to insufficient buildings and administration. Moreover, the educational activities in the 1870s were continued in the artillery and military engineering classes within the War School.

![Figure 3](image)

**FIGURE 3** - The Harbiye Mektebi (War School).

The period of education at the School of Engineering was decreased to three years in 1900 and it acquired the status of a vocational school as the Artillery School, completely attached to the War School.\(^vi\)

**The Civilian Engineering Education**

Civilian engineering education in the Ottoman Empire started with the Mülkiye Mühendis Mektebi (Civilian School of Engineering) that later assumed the name of Turûk u Maâbir Mektebi (School of Roads and


Passages) which was opened as a department of the *Dar al-fünun-i Sultânî* (Imperial University) that started within the *Galatasaray Sultânisi* (Galatasaray High School) in the 1874-1875 school year.

The School of Roads and Passages has followed a program directed at the education of the engineers who would carry out the services required in public works and especially in the area of transportation that had been initiated on the extensive territories of the Empire, rather than providing solely scientific education, by taking into consideration the requirements of the country and the society. The Ministry of Public Works employed all of the graduates of this school as civil servants. The School of Roads and Passages provided a four-year education with semester breaks and its first group of students graduated in 1880. It can easily be understood from the curriculum that the school provided engineering education with a broad scope. There was a Train Machinist or Train Engineer School connected to this school, which was planned to provide a lower level of engineering education. The School of Roads and Passages, after its second group of students graduated in 1881, continued its activities after that date at the new civilian engineering school established with name of the Civilian School of Engineering in 1884 under the control of the state and in light of the experience acquired in engineering education.

![Figure 4](image)

**FIGURE 4** - The *Galatasaray Sultânisi* (Galatasaray High School) opened in 1867 (still in use today as Lycee de Galatasaray).

### The Medical Education

Besides the schools of engineering, the new style of educational institutions established for the military needs around the beginning of the nineteenth century, were the Medical School and the War School, in the fields of medical and military education. The first attempt on the subject of modern medical education was materialized in January 1806 by the establishment of a medical school with the name of *Tersane Tibbiyesi* (Shipyard Medical School), within the structure of the Imperial Shipyard to educate the physicians and surgeons needed by this institution. The goal of the Shipyard Medical School was to make modern medical education widespread and to increase the number of Muslim physicians in the Empire. The classes would be conducted in the Italian and French languages that were used a lot by the Levantine physicians; surgeons and pharmacists who were generally in contact with Europe and the textbooks would also be brought from Europe. However, the school was closed in 1808 after Sultan Selim III was deposed from the throne.\[vii\]


Approximately 20 years after the opening of the medical school within the Shipyard, the second initiative, with the objective of meeting the needs of the army for physicians and surgeons, was realized during the period when Mustafa Behçet Efendi was the Court Chief Physician. A new modern medical school was established in Istanbul in 1827, also under his leadership, with the name of Tıphâne-i Amire (Imperial Medical School). It was followed by the Cerrahhâne-i Amire (Imperial School of Surgery) established in 1832 to educate surgeons in the existing building at the Gülhane garden next to the Topkapi Palace. The same year the Imperial Medical School of Sultan Mahmud located at Sehzâdebasi, was also moved to the same building where the Imperial School of Surgery was located at Gülhane and the medical education was reorganized and Sat-Deygallière, who was invited from France as well as several European physicians, served as teachers and the principal at this school. In 1836 these two schools were combined under the name of Mekteb-i Tibbiye (Medical School) and moved to Galatasaray in 1839. C. A. Bernard, a young Austrian physician, was made the head of this school at this date and the name of the school was changed to Mekteb-i Tibbiye-i Adliye-i Sahane (Imperial School of Forensic Medicine) in honour of Sultan Mahmud II.

Dr. Bernard started a new period at this school by using different methods and changing the curricula. French was accepted as the language of teaching. Since the number of students in each grade was limited, a sequential system used to be applied for passing from one grade to the next. This sequential passing to the next higher grade was abandoned, the education was limited to five years and the method of giving a diploma to the graduating students was adopted. This European manner of graduation was also accepted at the Imperial School of Engineering and it was accepted to give the graduating students a diploma from the educational institution rather than an icazet (certificate). An icazet was a document given to a student by his teacher in the classical period, including a chain of teachers going all the way back to the Prophet Muhammad who is the source of the first sacred knowledge in religious sciences.
Following the proclamation of the Tanzimat Imperial Rescript in 1839, it became possible for the non-Muslim Ottoman citizens to enter into the Imperial Medical School. The obligation of conducting the education in French at the school caused a decrease in the number of Muslim students in time and in contrast, caused a rapid increase in the number of non-Muslim students who were more familiar with the French culture. After a while, as a reaction to the fact that most of the physicians graduating were non-Muslims, Cemalreddin Efendi, who was appointed as the principal of the Imperial Medical School, formed a distinguished class of the students he selected from among talented youth at the school with the idea of increasing the Muslim physicians and had Turkish, Arabic and Persian language courses given to this class.

**FIGURE 6** - Aziz Bey of Crimea (1840-1878), who made important contributions to the use of Turkish in medical education.

This class formed the foundation of the civilian medical school that would be established later. A group of Ottoman physicians, all of whom were educated in the distinguished class, led by Aziz Bey of Crimea (1840-
1878), succeeded in opening the *Mekteb-i Tibbiye-i Mülkiye* (Civilian Medical School) in 1867 as a faculty under the Imperial Medical School.

Thus, civilian medical education acquired an independent institution providing education in Turkish. In a decision made at the Supreme Military Council in 1870, the teaching of medicine in Turkish at the Imperial Medical School as well was realized. After this decision, major disputes arose between some pro-Turkish physicians and their non-Muslim colleagues who were in favor of the medical education in French. After the triumph of the pro-Turkish physicians, the medical education in the Ottoman Empire started to be conducted completely in Turkish. A great number of works in Turkish have been printed in medicine and in scientific branches related to medicine. For instance, outside of Istanbul, in Damascus where the language of the local people was Arabic, the education at the Ottoman Medical School, established in 1903, was carried out successfully in Turkish.

**FIGURE 7** - The Haydarpasa Medical School (*Dar al-fünun-i Osmanlı Tip Fakültesi*) building. The location is still being used as the Marmara University School of Medicine.

The military and civilian schools of medicine carried out their activities independent from each other in proportion to their needs, the number of students and at different buildings and clinics. After the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Government in 1908, it was considered to combine these two schools. In 1909 the Imperial Medical School, educating military physicians, and the Civilian Medical School, educating civilian physicians, were combined at the Medical School building at Haydarpasa under the name of *Dar al-fünun-i Osmanlı Tip Fakültesi* (Ottoman University Faculty of Medicine).
Thus, the Imperial Medical School was discontinued. The Medical Faculty was moved to the European side of Istanbul in 1917 and became the source of the Turkish medical faculties that were established later.⁹

**The Mekteb-i Harbiye (War School)**

In 1826 Sultan Mahmud II (1808-1839), abolished the Janissary Corps, which constituted one of the foundation stones of the Ottoman Army. In its place he established the new army with the name of *Asakir-i Mansure-i Muhammediye* (Victorious Muhammedan Soldiers). Subsequently he decided to establish a military school in 1831 with the objective of educating officers (scientific officers) who would know modern war methods and techniques in the new army. This need was previously met to a certain extent from the Schools of Engineering. This school, which was established on the model of the European military schools and having a capacity of 400 students, started education at the Macka Barracks in 1834 with the name of *Mekteb-i Harbiye-i Sahane* (Imperial War School). Namik Pasha, who was educated in Europe, was made the principal of the school.

Emin Pasha, who became the principal in 1838, divided the school into two sections. The first of these was the four-year higher education section called the *Mekteb-i Fünûn-i Harbiye* (School of Military Sciences) and

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⁹ Nuran Yildirim, "Mekteb-i Tibbiye-i Sahane" (Imperial Medical School), in *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 5, 376.
the other was the three-year preparatory section called the *Mekteb-i Fünûn-i İdadiye* (Preparatory School for Sciences). During the period of Emin Pasha's superintendence, the number of teachers was increased with the employment of those who had completed their education in Europe and returned and as well as the European experts as teachers. The Chemist Mehmed Emin Dervis Pasha (1817-1878), who also completed his education in Europe and became the principal of the school in 1848, completely reorganized the War School on a European model by being inspired by St. Cyr, the French military school.

In 1846, as an addition to the War School, the *Baytar Mektebi* (The School of Veterinary Medicine) was also opened, that would provide the first modern veterinary education in the Empire to meet the veterinary needs of the army.

![Figure 9 - The School of Veterinary Medicine (Baytar Mektebi), teachers and students (1906).]

**FIGURE 9** - The School of Veterinary Medicine (*Baytar Mektebi*), teachers and students (1906).

**The Establishment of Modern Civilian Educational Institutions And The Formation Of An Educational Policy**

There were two main types of educational institutions in the period around the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century prior to the Tanzimat, which is considered to be the initial period of the fundamental reform movement in the Ottoman cultural and educational life. The first of
these were the schools and madrasas supported by the foundations inherited from the founders and the only institutions providing the possibility for diffused education. The others were the engineering, medicine and military institutions that provided the opportunity to limited classes in Istanbul for military and technical education supported by the state revenues. It is observed that the Western style educational institutions established in the Ottoman educational life until the second half of the nineteenth century were realized in fields aimed at meeting the military requirements as has been briefly indicated above. After the Tanzimat the establishment of civilian primary, secondary, higher education or professional schools in the Western style have formed a completely new educational system. At the same time, the interest decreased in the madrasas that had maintained their existence as the most important educational institutions for centuries.

The first signs of change in the general education in the Ottoman world was observed in the first half of the nineteenth century by the reforms introduced by Sultan Mahmud II (1808-1839) in the administrative structure and functioning of the state and especially after the abolishment of the Janissary Corps in 1826. The Meclis-i Ahkâm-i Adliye (Council for Judicial Ordinances) was established in 1837 to prepare the new regulations required for the reform movements, to deal with trials related to civil servants and to have a vote in the administration of the state affairs and the Meclis-i Vâlâ-yi Ahkâm-i Adliye (Supreme Council for Judicial Ordinances), which was formed after the Tanzimat and the Meclis-i Umûr-i Nafia (Council of Public Works), which was opened in 1838. These councils were introduced essentially for the development of the state structure and to serve in providing for the welfare of the society. Although an independent institution to realize the reforms in the field of culture and education has not been established in this early period, the Council of Public Works prepared a draft bill in 1838 on the subject of "some matters related to education" and took some initiatives on the subject of the determination of the basic principles of public education.\(^x\)

Another reform that was started during the reign of Sultan Mahmud II was the sending of students to the capital cities of Europe for education. Initially, a limited number of students were selected and sent from among the Muslim citizens to receive military education. Along with the Tanzimat a large number of students were sent to Europe without discriminating between Muslims and non-Muslims to receive education in military and civilian fields. The Mekteb-i Osmani (Ottoman School) was opened in 1857 in Paris to provide preparatory education for a large number of Ottoman students to be sent to Europe for education, especially at the French schools in Paris. This school continued its activities until 1865 and was closed because it could not provide the benefits expected from it. However, sending students abroad for education continued until the end of the Empire.

A majority of the students who returned to the Empire after completing their education abroad served in high positions in the State and became directly influential in the cultural and educational life of the society. However, their initiatives aimed at establishing the foundations of domestic scientific traditions and the production of new knowledge based on research at the newly established educational and scientific institutions could not attain the intensity needed for reaching this objective.

Changes In Education After The Tanzimat

The Imperial Tanzimat Rescript announced at Gülhane in Istanbul on 3 November 1839, was composed of articles guaranteeing on behalf of the state the basic rights and freedoms of the people, Muslim and non-Muslim, such as guaranteeing life, property and honor, equitable collection of taxes, regulation of military

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service, fair trial for everyone and not confiscating property. The purpose of the Tanzimat was explained to be the giving of new life and prosperity to the country and people and not only for religion and state. It was accepted that the basic principle of the state was the existence of the state for the people, not the people for the state.\textsuperscript{xii}

Although there was not any clear objective envisaged in the Tanzimat Imperial Rescript related to education and culture, after a short period of time it was observed that the reforms had not produced positive results and it became evident that the reforms should be based on education. With this firman the subject of "conducting the education of the people from one centre" was considered for the first time in Ottoman history.\textsuperscript{xiii}

The Temporary Educational Council composed of individuals selected from the classes of ulema, bureaucrats and military, started their activities for organizing educational affairs as of 13 March 1845. Melekpazazâde Abdülkadir Bey, a member of the Besiktas Ulema Group, who became the Chief Ulema in 1843 and was also a member of the Supreme Council, was selected as the chairman of the Temporary Educational Council. The following individuals were selected as members: Arif Hikmet Bey who later became the Sheik ul-Islam, Chronicler Esad Efendi, Said Muhib Efendi who was trained at the Bâb-i Âli (Sublime Porte) and became the private secretary of Hâlet Efendi, Mesrebzâde Mehmed Arif Efendi, Mehmed Emin Pasha, Engineer and Principal of the War School and Kececizâde Fuad Efendi (Pasha) who later advanced to the position of Grand Vizier. Historian Mehmed Recâi Efendi who was at the Bâb-i Âli and who served as the council secretary of Halil Rifat Pasha was selected for the clerkship. Of these individuals selected, four from the ilmiye (ulema class), three bureaucrats and one from the military were appointed for preparing the basic principles and plans for the new educational policy. Those having the perception of traditional Ottoman education and culture, those who had been educated in Europe such as General Mehmed Emin Pasha and members who were in favour of Western style reforms jointly attempted to prepare a new educational reform.\textsuperscript{xiv}

The Temporary Educational Council at the end of its one-year study submitted a report to the Supreme Council. In this report the following decisions were made: to reorganize the primary schools, to reorganize the middle schools and to increase the education related to religious sciences and the establishment of an institution with the name of Dar al-Funun (University) that has the attributes which can answer the needs for everyone who wants to receive education in science and that can accommodate day and boarding students. Additionally, it was decided to establish general Educational Council responsible for the educational activities to follow the activities of these institutions.

The objective and function of the General Educational Council composed of a chairman, six members and one clerk that was established in 1846 upon the decision of the Temporary Educational Council, was to apply the decisions made by the Temporary Educational Council, to discuss problems related to education in the country and to make the necessary reforms.\textsuperscript{xv}


\textsuperscript{xiii} Kenan Akyüz, Encümen-i Dânis, (Ankara, 1975), 40-42.


\textsuperscript{xv} Ali Akyıldız, Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Merkez Teskilatında Reform (1836-1856) (Reform in the Ottoman central organization during the Tanzimat period [1836-1856]), (İstanbul, nd.), 233.
These councils, which aimed to make a reform in the educational life, followed a course directed at applying the most urgent measures according to the conditions of the day, rather than considering the educational matters with all their ramifications. The fact that the educational policy had not become crystallized and the inadequacies in financing resulting from the problems in allocating resources to new institutions within the Ottoman financial structure are among the primary reasons for this. The Educational Council decided to start the educational reform at the same time at three levels (primary, secondary and higher education), graded as primary schools, middle schools and university. However, under the circumstances, implementation of the reform became impossible because there was neither a teacher to provide the higher education nor was there an existing potential of students able to receive education at this institution and at the same time, the fact that the education at the primary and middle levels was connected to an old traditional system.

The Mekteb-i Sultânî (Galatasaray High School, The Imperial School of Galatasaray)

Although the educators of the Tanzimat period considered the middle schools as a source for the schools of higher education and the University, it was understood in time that the middle school education could not fulfill this function. The fact that they opened institutions such as the School to Educate Civil Servants and the Mahreq-i Aklâm (School for the education of bureaucrats) and some preparatory classes giving courses between the middle schools and higher education institutions from the beginning, that is, as of 1848, shows that there was a need felt for a school above the middle schools. Furthermore, it also became obligatory to take into consideration the educational needs of the non-Muslim citizens with the 1856 Reform Firman to ensure that the Muslim, non-Muslim and all the Ottoman citizens benefited from educational services under equal conditions and thus, provide for the Ottoman unity. However, since it was considered to be undesirable to teach the Muslim and non-Muslim children together at the primary and middle schools, it was decided to do this at the higher levels of education. Whereas, an idea was not stated on how these types of schools would be opened and what their curricula would be. Finally, by setting forth the subject of improving the situation of the non-Muslims, the first initiatives were started for the establishment of a high school where the non-Muslims could attend, taking into consideration the requests of France for implementing the articles related to the education of the non-Muslims that was included in the 1856 Reform Firman.\textsuperscript{xx}

In 1868, M. Bourée, the French Ambassador in Istanbul, talked with Grand Vizier Âlî Pasha and Fuad Pasha, the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Istanbul about the opening of a school that would provide education in French at the level of the European high schools and they tried to determine the principles on which this institution would be based. M. Victor Dury, the French Minister of Education, promised that he would provide all kinds of support for the opening of the school and recommended Dr. Alfred Levistal for the realization of preparations for the establishment of the school. Levistal was appointed as the assistant principal of this new school with a five-year contract.\textsuperscript{xvi} The school started the registration of students on 1868 and officially opened with a great ceremony on 1 September 1868 at Beyoğlu at the former Military High School building known by the name of the Galatasaray, allocated by the state. The school moved to the building vacated by the Imperial School of Medicine at Gülhane and started the 1873-1874 school year.

\textsuperscript{xvi} It is said that the note mentioned was prepared by this person, F. Resat Unat, Türkiye Egitim Sisteminin Gelismesine Tarihi bir Bakis, (Ankara, 1964), 47.
with Sava Pasha as the principal. In 1877 the Mekteb-i Sultânî moved from Gülhane back to its building at Galatasaray.

The Dar al-fünun (University) as an Institution of Higher Education

![Dar al-Funun building](image)

**FIGURE 10 - Dar al-Funun** building, which was built by Swiss architect G. Fossati, in the environs of the Ayasofya (St. Sophia) in Istanbul.

The *Dar al-Funun* in the Ottoman educational history was a civilian higher education institution whose structure and educational programs were different from the madrasas in the classical Ottoman educational system. The initial idea for establishing the University was proposed in the Tanzimat period for educating the new type of bureaucrat that the state required and the initiatives on this subject were started around the middle of the nineteenth century.

While the General Educational Council was considering the establishment of the University, it was stated that the objective was to educate well-informed civil servants who would carry out the services of the state in a good manner. This education would be made with the modern sciences. In 1846 an agreement was made with G. Fossati, the Swiss architect of Italian origin, for the construction of a three-story University building in the environs of the Ayasofya (St. Sophia) in Istanbul.

The building would have 125 rooms and have a structure similar to the European universities. However, the construction was not completed for many years. In 1863, with the order of Keceçizâde Fuad Pasha, the Grand Vizier of the period, courses started to be made for the people in the form of open lectures in some
of the rooms that had been completed. Lectures were given on the subjects of physics, chemistry, natural sciences, astronomy and history. When the construction was finally completed in 1865, with the reflection that it was too large for the University, it was allocated to the Ministry of Finance and it was conceived to construct a smaller building for the University. The University courses continued temporarily in the form of lectures at the Nuri Pasha Mansion at Cemberlitas that was rented. Courses were suspended when this building burned down completely in the large Hoca Pasha fire that broke out in the Cemberlitas district.

The University was opened in 1869 with a big ceremony attended by Ali Pasha, the Grand Vizier, Safvet Pasha, the Minister of Education and the other notables of the state. Hoca Tahsin Efendi was appointed as the principal. The appointment to this office of a person who was educated at the madrasa, that was a classical educational institution, and who had taught at the Ottoman School opened in Paris, had the objective of finding a common ground between the Islamic and Western cultures and of establishing a suitable balance between “Islam and the West” and “the old and the new”. However, the principles specified in the regulation of the Ottoman University could not be completely fulfilled and the education at the branches could not be implemented as envisaged due to the fact that the required conditions for starting university education were not ready, such as books and teachers were insufficient and financial resources were limited. They were forced to implement the same curriculum at all three branches and the students took the same courses. Thus, the second attempt to establish the University ended without producing the desired results.

In 1873, Safvet Pasha, the Minister of Education of the period, appointed Sava Pasha of Greek origin and principal of the Imperial School at Galatasaray, to establish a new University provided that it would not be a burden on the treasury. The University that was thought to be established was this time planned to be established on the foundation of the Galatasaray Imperial School that had been open since 1868. Thus, it was aimed to graft a shoot of higher education onto the trunk of a secondary education institution.

This new institution that was called the Dar al-fünun-i Sultânî (Imperial University), was composed of law, science and literature branches and these three branches were referred to as mekâtib-i âliye (higher education schools) in the official correspondence. When the 1874-1875 school year started, it was composed of the Higher Education Schools such as Literature, Law and (Civilian Engineering School). At the end of the first school year the Civilian School of Engineering, by taking the example of the “Ecole de Pontes et Chaussées” in France, was changed to the School of Roads and Passages.

According to the regulation, the students, after receiving a four-year education at the Imperial University, would prepare a scholarly thesis and if they defended this thesis with success, then they would graduate with the title of “doctor”. The jurists who graduated would be employed at the Ministry of Justice, while the engineers would be employed at the Ministry of Public Works. Those graduating from the Literature School would be appointed as literature teachers. The students who did not prepare a thesis would pass an examination easier than for the doctorate and would be employed in a suitable position related to their professions.

At the end of the 1875-1876 academic year, twenty-one students from the Law School and twenty-six students from the School of Roads and Passages participated in the examinations and were successful. We do not have information on whether or not courses were started at the Literature School. In 1881 the Law School was connected to the Ministry of Justice and the School of Roads and Passages was connected to
the Ministry of Public Works and continued with success in the status of separate higher education schools connected to these ministries.

After three unsuccessful attempts, the Ottoman University, with the name of Dar al-fünun-i Sahâne (Imperial University), composed of several departments within the same organic structure and under a separate administration was formed at the beginning of the twentieth century on 31 August 1900 on the anniversary of the twenty-fifth year of Sultan Abdülhamid's accession to the throne. In the light of the approximately fifty-five years of experience and the existence of a sufficient number of students educated in modern secondary education; the fact that professionals educated in the established law, medical and other higher education institutions took an active role in the educational life; and the fact that a literature had been formed in Turkish more or less for the different branches of science that would be taught at the university led to the successful conclusion of the final attempt. The Imperial University has formed the source of the universities in Turkey today.

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The objective of educating the new type of civil servants to modernize the state administration that was started by Sultan Mahmud II and intensified during the Tanzimat period followed a different course from the viewpoint of institutionalisation. It did not appear that either the Palace School or the madrasas had the potential to answer this need. For this, it was attempted to form new institutions, mainly in the field of civilian education or to send students abroad for education on civilian and military subjects. It was attempted by trial and error to establish the new schools that would rapidly answer the employment needs in the civilian field.

The Ottoman educational institutions became systemized with the promulgation of the 1869 Regulations for Public Education and one of the most salient characteristics was the provision of the money needed for these institutions from within the Ottoman financial system. As it was indicated above, great efforts were required to educate an adequate manpower for the three different levels of the new educational system and to prepare the books to be taught at these schools. In this situation, the results the Ottoman administrators obtained in the field of education in Istanbul, Rumelia, Anatolia and the Arab provinces, should be considered to be a great success if the means available at that time and the financial resources of the state are taken into consideration.

In conclusion, it has been observed as of the beginning of this chapter that the reform movement in the Ottoman educational life continued for a long period of time. The success of this reform, encompassing the entire Ottoman Empire spread over a very extensive geography, is so important that it should not be belittled when it is considered that the new structural forms arose next to the old or completely new forms were established, that the retarding influence created by the centuries of well-established traditions in the society and on the other hand, the desire of the state to succeed as soon as possible with the reforms and the due of limitation of resources. The result of this has been the formation of the infrastructure of modern education in all the states arising from the Ottoman Empire.
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