

EGYPTIAN AND ARMANIAN SCHOOLS ATTENDED BY OTTOMAN STUDENTS IN PARIS*

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Abstract

In 19th century, educational reforms influenced by the West were seen in the Ottoman education system. In this case, sending students to Europe especially to France had an important meaning. The case of sending of the first students to France from the subjects of the Ottoman Empire was the students who were sent to Paris by the Governor of Egypt, Mohammed Ali Pasha. These students went to *Ecole Egyptienne* (the Egyptian School) between 1826 and 1835. The Ottoman Government began to send students as groups to Paris in 1830. After 1840, the Ottoman Government did not send student to France for a short time period. However, after two years with the following of opening *Ecole Egyptienne Militaire* (Egyptian Military School) in 1844 the Ottoman Government began to send students to France again in 1847. Even some of these students studied in *Ecole Egyptienne de Paris* mentioned above. In 1849, this school was closed. After 8 years with the following of closing of *Ecole Egyptienne*, in order to educate and foster military officers, engineers, and civil administrators, in Paris, *Mekteb-i Osmani* (the School of Ottoman) was opened in October, 1857. It was thought and showed that previously founded *Ecole Egyptienne* and *Collège Arménian de Saint-Samuel Moorat* (College of Saint-Samuel Moorat Armenian), in which Armenian students studied, gave the idea of opening a similar school called *Mekteb-i Osmani* to the Ottoman Government in the capital of France. In this paper, the interest and support of the Ottomans to *Ecole Egyptienne* and *Collège Arménian de Saint-Samuel Moorat* will be explained by giving examples. And also, the justified approaching attitude of the Ottoman Administration to her whole subjects based on the language, religion, and race without showing any difference will be tried to reveal.

Key Words: The Egyptian School and College of Saint-Samuel Moorat Armenian, Ottoman students, France

OSMANLI ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN PARİS’TE TAHSİL YAPTIKLARI MISIR VE ERMENİ MEKTEPLERİ

Özet

Osmanlı öğrencilerinin Paris’te tahsil yaptıkları Mısır ve Ermeni mektepleri XIX. yüzyılda Osmanlı eğitim sisteminde Batı’dan mülhem yenilik hareketlerine

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devam edildiği görülmektedir. Bu konuda Avrupa'ya özellikle Fransa'ya öğrenci gönderilmesi önemli bir yer tutmaktadır. Osmanlı Devleti tebaasından Avrupa'nın çeşitli şehirlerine tahsil için öğrenci gönderilmesi hususunda Mısır valisi Mehmet Ali Paşa'nın Paris'e yolladığı öğrenciler Fransa'ya ilk gönderilen öğrenciler olmuşlardır. Bunlar Paris'te *Ecole Egyptienne* (1826-1835)'e verilmişlerdir. Osmanlı hükümeti ise guruplar halinde 1830 yılında Paris'e talebe göndermeye başlamıştır. 1840 yılından sonra bir süre Fransa'ya öğrenci göndermeyen Osmanlı hükümeti 1844'te *Ecole Militaire Egyptienne*'in açılmasından birkaç yıl sonra, 1847'de tekrar bu ülkeye öğrenci göndermeye başlamıştır. Hatta bu öğrencilerden bazıları zikredilen Mısır Mektebi'nde tahsil görmüşlerdir. 1849'da bu mektep kapatılmış, 8 yıl sonra 1857'de askeri ve sivil görevlere adam yetiştirmek ve Erkân-ı Harb subaylarına, mühendislere, yönetici devlet adamlarına sahip olmak gayesiyle Ekim 1857'de Paris'te Mekteb-i Osmanî açılmıştır. Paris'te daha önce kurulan Mısır Mektebi'nin ve Ermeni öğrencilerinin tahsil gördüğü Muradyan Mektebi'nin Osmanlı devlet adamlarına Fransa'nın başkentinde bunlara benzer bir mektep kurulması düşüncesini verdiği, bu okulların varlığının Mekteb-i Osmanî'nin kuruluş sebeplerinden biri olduğu düşünülmekte ve gösterilmektedir. Bu tebliğimizde Osmanlıların Mısır Mektebi ve Ermeni Muradyan Mektebi'ne olan ilgi ve desteği örneklerle açıklanarak Osmanlı yönetiminin dil, din ve ırk farkı gözetmeden bütün tebaasına adaletle yaklaşan tutumu ortaya konulmaya çalışılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mısır ve Muratyan mektebi, Osmanlı öğrencileri, Fransa

In 19th century, new movements influenced by the west were seen to continue in the education system of the Ottoman Empire. In this context, sending students to Europe especially to France is an important point. Especially, Ottoman students studied in French schools in Paris, the capital of France and *Mekteb-i Osmânî* (the School of Ottoman)¹ established by the Ottoman Empire. Also, they studied *Ecole Militaire Egyptienne* (the Military School of Egypt) founded by Egyptians and *Collège Arménian de Saint-Samuel Moorat* (College of Saint-Samuel Moorat Armenian) or the other name mentioned on the record as the Mouradian School of Armenians.

Bernard Lewis in his paper "*Comment l'Islam regardait l'Occident*"² expressed that Muslims did not want to learn Non-Muslim languages and when it was necessary to send represent to the western countries, they usually appointed Christians or Jewish subjects of the empire. After the Ottoman Empire (*Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmaniye*) established permanent embassies in the western capitals³, they tent to learn western languages and

¹ See, Adnan Şişman "Mekteb-i Osmânî", *Ottoman Studies V*, Istanbul 1986, pp. 83-160.

² Bernard Lewis, "Comment l'Islam regardait l'Occident", *L'histoire*, Paris No:6 May 1983, p. 51.

³ Ercüment Kuran, *Avrupa'da Osmanlı İkamet Elçiliklerinin Kuruluşu ve İlk Elçiliklerin Siyasi Faaliyetleri*, 1793-1821, Ankara 1968, p. 71.

began to send military officers in the different ranks and many students to the western countries. The same author (Bernard Lewis)⁴ in his another book, *The Middle East and The West*, indicated that Mohammed Ali Pasha, the Governor of Egypt, sent students to Italy in 1809. Also, Lewis mentioned in his book that there were 23 Egyptian students in Europe in 1818 and in 1826, 44 Egyptian students in Paris.

In the beginning of 19th century, it was known that Mohammed Ali Pasha called some technicians and specialists from Europe to meet the urgent needs of Egypt⁵. According to records, the first Ottoman student sent to Europe could be *Nicola Nassabiki* whose origin was Syrian and who was sent by Mohammed Ali Pasha to Italy to study pressing in 1815. *Osman Nurettin* was one of the first students sent to France by Mohammed Ali Pasha in 1818. This person studied French, English, and Mathematics in Paris. After he returned to Cairo in 1820 and took some positions, he was promoted to the command of Navy in 1828. Also, he taught French and was appointed as a director of Bulak School and its library⁶.

After Mohammed Ali Pasha had met French Navy Commander Robillard visiting Alexandria and Pyramids before returning to Toulon, with the influence of Robillard he sent 44 students as 16 of them were Turks born in Istanbul and the others were Armenian and Circassian to France in April, 1826⁷. Also, all of these students were born out of Cairo and came from mainly aristocrat and rich families. After 32 days traveling with the sea route, these students arrived at Marcillia, France on May, 15, 1826 and they were under control for 18 days due to health quarantine or cordon. Public paid them too much attention. After staying two months in Marcillia, they went to Paris and moved in Clichy Avenue number 33 on 5th of August. They began to study French, Mathematics, and Art. The destroyed Egyptian Navy in Navarin on the 20th of October, 1827 made the pasha take a decision to send 6 students to Toleon in order to study and learn ship making in August, 1828. At the end of same year, other students were sent to Paris. After that, new students were sent in 1829, 1830, 1832, respectively. These students studied *Ecole Egyptienne* in 1826 and for them the school stayed open until 1835⁸. The number of students in the school was 115 in 1833⁹. In

⁴ London 1963, p. 39.

⁵ Şinasi Altundağ, "Mehmet Ali Paşa, Kavalalı", *İA*, VII, İstanbul 1979, p. 574-575; J.H.Kramers, "Mısır", Mehmed Ali Hanedanı Devri ve İstiklâl, *İA*, VIII, İstanbul 1979, p. 250-268; Anouar Louca, *Voyageurs et Ecrivains Egyptiens en France au XIX^e Siècle*, Paris 1970, p. 33-34.

⁶ Anouar Louca, *Op.cit.*, p. 34-35.

⁷ AMAE, Paris "Correspondance Consulaire, le Caire", Cilt: XXVI, s. 282, 4 Nisan 1826; Anouar Louca, *Idem*, p. 3, 40.

⁸ Anouar Louca, *Idem*, p. 3, 40.

⁹ Anouar Louca, *Idem*, p. 46.

the returning, these students took some active positions, such as, *Abdi* the head of Supreme Judiciary Board, *Muhtar* the Minister of Education, *Artin and Stephan* the Minister of Foreign Relations respectively, *Mazhar* the Minister of Infrastructure, the best students according to Mohammed Ali Pasha, *Hasan* from Alexandria the Minister of Navy, and *Mahmut Nami* the Minister of Finance¹⁰.

Although four of the students sent to Paris by the Ottoman Empire came to high level in science and military sciences, for them there was no proper place found in first hand to continue their studies in 1847. There were some places found for them to study but these schools did not have enough equipment to meet their needs. Therefore, it was thought that they could go to *Ecole Militaire Egyptienne*¹¹ founded in 1844 by the Governor of Egypt, Mohammed Ali Pasha in Paris. The director of *Ecole Militaire Egyptienne*, Stephan, acknowledged the embassy that those students mentioned above were tried to help them to pursue their education and studies in the school¹². As a result, these four students were entered to the mentioned school above¹³. The faculty and military officers of the school were chosen from the bests at the time. The school founded in the second half of 19th century and imitated from *Ecole Militaire de Saint-Cry* and *Ecole Polytechnique* (Saint-Cry Military School and Polytechnic School) had two purposes which were to prepare students in very short time to the School of Military Academy for high level officers and *Ecole d'Application et d'Artillerie et de Génie*. For that reason, the programs in the school were divided to two main categories as mentioned below¹⁴.

1st category: in this category, there were some general courses found in the private and public schools in French education system at that time.

1. French
2. Applied General Geography
3. General History and the History of Eastern Countries
4. Algebra
5. Arithmetic
6. General Geometry
7. Trigonometry
8. Static

¹⁰ Anouar Louca, *Idem*, p. 51; Adnan Şişman, "XIX. Yüzyıl Başlarında Fransa'daki İlk Osmanlı Öğrencileri", *Osmanlı 5*, Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, Ankara 1999, p. 246.

¹¹ Anouar Louca, *Idem*, p. 362.

¹² Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri Dairesi (BOAD.) İrade Hâriciye (İH.) 2161.

¹³ Paris Türk Büyükelçiliği Arşivi (PTBA.) 5/1; Archives Nationales, Paris (AN.) F¹⁷ 4147/1; BOAD. İH. 2380.

¹⁴ BOAD. İH. 2161.

9. Basic Design Geometry
10. Basic Physics and Chemistry
11. Art (Picturing Natural Views)

2nd category: In this category, special courses and information not found in the other schools were given to teach how to use some equipment.

1. Design Geometry
2. The course of Machine
3. Topography
4. Fortification
5. The Course of Artillery
6. The Method of Military Arrangement Rules and the Method of Military Administration
7. The techniques and Ways of How to Make War
8. Instructions of Land Forces, as Person, Division, and Battalion
9. The course of Architecture
10. Basic Astronomical Concepts

Ahmet Muhtar, one of four students who came to Paris in September 1847 and graduated from the academy (school) of war, entered to *Ecole Militaire Egyptienne*. After this school, he studied in *Ecole d'Application et d'Artillerie et de Génie* and returned to Turkey. He was appointed at the ministry of war as a captain. *Mehmet Salim*, one of the other students who studied in *Ecole Egyptienne* in Paris graduated from the School of Polytechnic and returned to Turkey in 1853. *Mehmet Teyfik*, another student, who studied in *Ecole Egyptienne*, graduated from *Ecole d'Application et d'Artillerie et de Génie*¹⁵ and returned to Turkey¹⁶ and he was appointed at the Ministry of War as a captain in 1854¹⁷. Mustafa, the last student who went to *Ecole Militaire Egyptienne*, returned to Turkey and was appointed at the Ministry of War as a captain in 1854¹⁸.

In August, 1849, *Ecole Egyptienne* was closed with the order of Abbas Pasha and the students finishing their studies returned to Egypt with their school director Stephan. For the head of students who remained in Paris, the Accountant of the School, Lemercier was appointed.

Other than those students who received scholarship from the Ottoman Government there were also non-Muslim students who support themselves financially, both groups continuing their education in Paris. These non-Muslim students mostly attended to the *Saint-Samuel Moorat College of Armenian* (12, Reu de Monsieur).

¹⁵ PTBA. 5/1; BOAD. İD. 8147, 7702, 19892, İH. 2049.

¹⁶ Anouar Louca, *Op.cit.*, p. 362; BOAD. İH.2161; PTBA. 5/1; AN F¹⁷ 4147/1.

¹⁷ PTBA. 5/1; BOAD. İD. 8417, 7702, 19892, İH. 2049.

¹⁸ PTBA. 5/1; BOAD. İD. 8147, 7702, 19892; İH. 2049.

According to a document found in the department of the Ottoman Archives and dated in Selh-i Receb 1273 (26.03.1857), because of an increase in the number of students who study language and science in Paris, Armenians demanded a new school to be founded in Paris by the Embassy of the Ottoman Government. They also demanded the school to be financed by the Ottoman Government. Another archive document dated on 22 Ca 1273 (19.01.1857) shows that the Ottoman government approved this demand. However, there is an uncertainty about the date of establishment of the school, *the Saint-Samuel Moorat College of Armenian*. In a letter dated 11 February 1864 and written by the administrator of the school, Mr. P. Auxence Kurken, to the Ottoman Ambassador Cemil Pasha in Paris, the foundation of the school was mentioned as 1844.¹⁹ The letter also acknowledged the support and help of the Ottoman Government to the school. The administrator stated that their students were looking forward to serving in the Ottoman Schools and they were paying special attention to Turkish Language course. Other courses in school's curriculum included Conduct, Catechism, Armenian Language and Literature, Rhetoric, History and Religion of Foreign Countries, Chronology, Physical and Political Geography, French and French Literature, Turkish, English, Algebra, Arithmetic, Geometry, Mechanics, Psychics, History of Nature, Geology, Philosophy, Law, Economy-Politics, Accounting, Commerce, Calligraphy, Painting-Oil Painting, Vocal Music, Instrumental Music-Piano, and Gymnastic.²⁰ The Ottoman Ambassador in Paris, Cemil Pasha, wrote on 15 March 1867 that Foreign Minister Fuat Pasha requested Cemil Pasha to select 30 students among those who continued their education in Paris in order to be sent to *Ecole des Mines* and *Ecole des Ponts et Chaussées*. Acting upon this request, Cemil Pasha wrote to the administrators of the *Collège Arménian de Saint-Samuel Moorat* and Ottoman Student Association of Paris and demanded a list of students who would succeed in *Ecole des Mines* and *Ecole des Ponts et Chaussées*.²¹ In the following years, names of Armeninan students who graduated from *Collège Arménian de Saint-Samuel Moorat* was found besides Turkish students both groups sponsored by the Ottoman Government.²² When Paris was surrounded by the Prussia in 1870, 32 students of the *Collège Arménian de Saint-Samuel*

¹⁹ Hariciye Arşivi (HA) İdâre (İ) /147, 148.

²⁰ Adnan Şişman, "Tanzimat Döneminde Fransa'ya Gönderilen Gayr-i Müslim Osmanlı Öğrencileri", *10. Turkish Historical Board Congress*, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, Ankara 1994, p. 2520-2521.

²¹ HA. İ/148: Adnan Şişman, *Tanzimat Döneminde Fransa'ya Gönderilen Gayr-i Müslim Osmanlı Öğrencileri 1839-1876*, İstanbul University, Faculty of Literature, Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, 1983.

²² PTBA 29/3, 34/1, 54/5; HA. İ/147, 148.

Moorat were transferred to Istanbul. The Cemil Pasha's telegraph dated 7th of September 1870 and sent to the Foreign Minister, Âli Pasha, stated that according to Mr. Kurken, in order to transfer 32 students a 11.000 Frank was needed and this was beyond the capabilities of the school therefore a request was issued to the Ottoman Government by Mr. Kurken to bear the expense of the students' transfer to Istanbul.²³ An archive document dated 17th of December 1870 (21 Receb 1287) shows that the Finance Ministry financed the expenditures of students' transfers.²⁴ In the archive documents, also, names of P. Léon M. Alishan in 13 June 1860²⁵ and de Erémian in 30 October 1873²⁶ were mentioned as the administrators of the school.

The Ottoman government paid close attention to the school. Even a priest was sent to non-Muslim students. Armenian Patriarch requested a Gregorian priest from the Ottoman Government to serve to the non-Muslim students at *Collège Arménian de Saint-Samuel Moorat* and the Ottoman Student Association. In 1863, this request was approved and the priest Ohanes Hünkarbeyendiyan was sent to France with a salary of 400 Frank. This person returned to İstanbul in 1870 but re-appointed to Brussel one year later with the same assignment.²⁷ Mr. Hünkarbeyendiyan and his son-hapened to be a student in Paris²⁸ - were paid 900 Frank allowances (450 each) for their return to Istanbul²⁹. Until 1867, Mr. Tahsin Efendi was responsible for instruction of religion course.³⁰ Together with Mr. Selim Sabit Efendi, he was sent to Paris in 1857 to study in the field of *Natural Science* and *Calculation* and teach Turkish to Christian students and to prepare students to teaching positions at *Darülfünun*.³¹ He also attended physics and chemistry at a college and at the *Collège de France* and taught Eastern languages and Armenian Dialects at the *Mekteb-i Osmaniye*.³² After his return to Istanbul, no one remained to serve as a Muslim priest to Muslim students in Paris. For example, as a student called Ibrahim Hasan Hilmi was

²³ HA. İ/147; PTBA 67/Eylül 1870.

²⁴ BOAD. İrade Dahiliye 43199; PTBA. 67/Eylül 1870.

²⁵ HA. I/147.

²⁶ PTBA.81/2.

²⁷ HA. İ/148; PTBA. 39/3, 74/1, 62/1, 60/1.

²⁸ PTBA. 34/1.

²⁹ PTBA. 92/2.

³⁰ Richard L. Chambers, "Notes on the Mekteb-i Osmanî in Paris, 1857-1874", *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East, The Nineteenth Century*, Ed.by W.Polk and R. Chambers, Londra 1968, p. 324.

³¹ BOAD. İH. 7197; Cengiz Orhonlu; "Edebiyat Fakültesi Kuruluşu Gelişmesi (1901-1933) Hakkında Bazı Düşünceler" *Cumhuriyetin 50. Yılına Armağan*; İstanbul 1973, p. 57-58; Sadrettin Celâl Antel, "Tanzimat Maarifi", *Tanzimat I*, İstanbul 1940, p. 448.

³² AN. F¹⁷ 4147/5; Adnan Şişman, "Mekteb-i Osmânî", pp. 96-97.

giving his last breathe; his friends were unable to find an Ottoman Muslim priest in Paris. Since the Ottoman Student Association had a priest for non-Muslims but not for the Muslims, the administration of the association requested a priest for Muslim students in 28th of May 1875 from the Embassy³³ but all students sponsored by the Ottoman Government ordered to return to Home Land in 30 June 1875.³⁴

The administrator of the *Collège Arménian de Saint-Samuel Moorat*, Mr. M. l'Arman, accepted the invitation of the Ottoman Ambassador held at the home of the ambassador in 26 May 1866. This also showed the government's supported for and interest in the *Collège Arménian de Saint-Samuel Moorat*.³⁵

The Governor of Egypt, Mehmet Ali Pasha, sent the first group of students to France for education. This first group was sent to *Ecole Egyptienne* in 1826. The Ottoman government started to send its own student to Paris in 1830. The Ottoman Government stopped sending students to Paris after 1840 for a short time. After the establishment of *Ecole Militaire Egyptienne* in 1844, the Ottoman Government restarted sending student in 1847. Even some students attended to *Ecole Militaire Egyptienne*. The Ottoman Government opened *Mekteb-i Osmani* in 1857 in Paris after *Ecole Militaire Egyptienne* was closed in 1849. It appears that there is a relationship between ottoman government's and Egyptian Government's behaviors.

The indiscriminative support of the Ottoman Government to the *Collège Arménian de Saint-Samuel Moorat* shows impartiality and equality of the government towards the non-Muslim subjects. Armenians had lived as *Millet-i Sadıka* (a nation loyal to the Empire) until 19th century. Armenian movements starting in 1890 were mainly related to anti-ottoman policies of the western countries that aimed destruction of Ottoman Land.

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³³ The Death of Ambassador of Paris, Arifi Paşazâde Ali Pasha between H. 1289-1292: Beyrut First of Receb 1306/3 March 1889 (See Mehmet Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani III*, İstanbul 1311, p. 580).

³⁴ PTBA. 94/2.

³⁵ PTBA. 38/1.

Adnan Şişman, “ XIX. Yüzyıl Başlarında Fransa’daki İlk Osmanlı Öğrencileri”, *Osmanlı 5, Yeni Türkiye Yayınları*, Ankara 1999, p. 246.

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