WOMEN TEACHERS' EDUCATION IN GREECE, BULGARIA, AND TURKEY DURING THE 19TH CENTURY: PARALLEL PATHS AND INTERACTIONS

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ABSTRACT

The Balkans have a rich history of cultural and religious diversity, where Greeks, Bulgarians, and Ottomans lived together in the same area and under the same state system. Despite their differences, their social, economic, and cultural lives were intertwined. As time passed, distinct national ideologies emerged, resulting in the creation of independent and diverse nation-states. Even after the Ottoman era, interactions between these groups continued amidst the rise of secessionism and nationalist debates. During this time, the importance of secular-national educational systems increased while monastic schools declined, leading to a remarkable outcome. In the 19th century, the first public girls' schools and women's associations were established, along with women's journals and the recognition of teaching as a profession for women. The education systems of Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey followed similar paths towards the full social acceptance of women teachers, with the first female teachers emerging in Greek-speaking populations with Western bourgeois consciousness. This paper examines the women teachers' education in these countries during the 19th century, identifying the parallel paths and interactions in the organization and content of their schools within a broader educational, socio-economic, and ideological context.

Keywords: Women Reachers' Education, Normal Schools, Women Associations, Nationalization.

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INTRODUCTION**

The Balkans region is a treasure trove of diverse cultures. The past of this region is rich with momentous events that have led to the development of a unique and multifaceted cultural legacy. Through their interaction, the Balkan people have cultivated an incredibly diverse and vibrant cultural heritage. It is no wonder that the Balkans continue to fascinate people from all over the world. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the geopolitical outlook of the Eastern Mediterranean region underwent significant transformations. The political upheavals of the French Revolution, the emergence of nationalist movements, and the gradual decline of the Ottoman administration created a power gap in Europe and the Middle East. The major European powers sought to exploit this by filling the gap or sabotaging the plans of their rivals.

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** After several years, this paper represents the initial attempt to record and interpret the research data based on the findings of a prior research program. This paper provides further elaboration on those conclusions.

The political transformations that occurred affected the balance of power within the region. Russia, one of these powers, pursued a policy of Pan-Slavism (Tachiaos 1974; Dialla 2009), which involved reaching out to and emotionally mobilizing Slavic populations. In turn, the national movements that developed in the Balkans mobilized the school mechanisms at their disposal —and those they created in the process— to homogenize the populations that inhabited the areas where they exercised influence or control, turning the functioning of schools into a nationalistic factor (Iliadou-Tachou 2004; Vouri 2010). These tendencies were reinforced by the events that followed and consolidated by the results of the Second Balkan War and the Treaty of Bucharest (1913).

The transition from the Ottoman Empire to the nation-states was a complex process that was neither straightforward nor pre-determined. In some instances, the Empire was forced to concede both autonomy and independence to determinate regions, while in others, it allowed self-governance under a Christian governor (Kechriotis 2008: 17). Moreover, in the context of national historiographies, the emergence, development and consolidation of the respective national movements were often dominated by the need to overemphasize the specific characteristics of each nation, thus degrading both the processes that determine the broader historical context and the similar cases of national movements, which would allow us to discern common elements between them and parallel processes, sometimes even mutually reinforcing or interdependent (Todorova 2000: 410-412).

The definition of the term "woman" in the Ottoman Empire is a complex concept for the modern researcher[1] because of the long history of the Ottoman Empire and the large and diverse geographical and cultural spectrum it includes women —Muslim, Christian and Jewish women— of Anatolia, the Balkan Peninsula, North Africa, and West Asia. Men and women did not have the same rights as citizens of Balkan nation-states. In the Balkans during the 19th century, educators shared the same belief as their Western counterparts regarding the two-sex model theory. This theory posits that men and women are fundamentally different and possess distinct physical attributes that lead to varying levels of intellectual potential and deviant behavior (Laquereur 1990). Hence, they believed that women and men have different inherent tendencies and thus require distinct education and socialization approaches. According to this

[1] In her analysis, Todorova argues that the subordinate status of women in certain societies is often wrongly attributed solely to the influence of Islam. Various factors can make it challenging to differentiate the impact of Islam from other factors. For instance, rural areas may have traditional patriarchal norms, and Christian orthodoxy could also influence the situation. Furthermore, Ottoman culture is often linked to Islam's influence, further complicating the matter. See, Todorova 2000: 405-406.

view, women are better suited to fulfil their natural maternal and internal obligations, while men are better equipped to handle political and public affairs. Throughout the Balkan nations, this paradigm influenced education systems and curricula.

A series of reform decrees, the Gülhane Hat-ı Şerif (1839), the Islahat Fermanı (1856) and the Ottoman Constitution (1876), known as the Tanzimat period, marked the beginning of a shift of the Ottoman administration towards modernization and led to a series of reforms in the penal code, property and individual rights tax structure and education (Van Duinkerken 1998; Betsas 2005: 27-46; Ahmed 2021: 25). Reforms have opened up more opportunities in the field of education. However, girls' schools still adhere to traditional gender roles and stereotypes. This point of view reinforces the idea that women require a different education from men. The notion that educating women will benefit not only their children but also the destination in the country still holds. Throughout history, education for women has been treated differently from that of men. Society expects men to follow success on public sphere and women to focus on raising children.

The 1960s and 1970s were a milestone in women's education history because the main goal was to make women visible in history and become subjects of history. From the 1970s until today, there has been a fundamental shift in the objectives of historical research in the international literature (Weiler 1989: 9-24; Offen et al. 1991) from a history that focused on women and the particular fields historically shaped by their experiences to "gender history" or "gender relations" (Scott 1986, 1053-1075). The teaching profession has been a distinct category of female subjectivity that has gradually evolved since the early 19th century, albeit not without notable contradictions (Dalakoura 2008). Recent literature has shed light on new areas of historical investigation, unveiling previously overlooked sources and women's "places of memory" (Ziogou-Karastergiou 2006: 351). This point of view presents numerous research opportunities, with particular significance placed on detecting the multifaceted relationships of women in Balkan education and examining the role of female teachers.

Despite the extensive literature on the topic, a comprehensive comparative analysis of the educational experiences of female teachers in the Ottoman Empire and its resulting nation-states in Southeastern Europe is yet to be conducted.[2] This gap in research is significant to gain

[2] The history of teaching education in the Balkans is sketched briefly in various general historical works. However, a recent edition of a biographical dictionary that focuses on women's movements and feminists in Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe sheds light on the significant contributions of numerous female teachers in women's development and feminist movements during the 19th century. See Haan et al. 2006; Ziogou-Karastergiou 2010.

a deeper understanding of the historical and cultural influences that shaped women's education in the region. The studies in this field should be further increased (Ziogou-Karastergiou 2010). This paper investigates female teacher training and the development of the teaching profession for women in Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey during the 19th century.[3] The study aims to identify similar patterns in organizing training institutions, analyzing them in the context of education, socio-economics, and global circumstances.

Recent research shows the importance of the women teachers' profession for the middle classes, the only that could be applied. Teaching is the first profession for women practiced in the public realm and receives social recognition. It is the profession that allows women to leave the domestic realm, liberates their personality and opens up the way towards literature, journalism and the feminist movement (Ziogou-Karastergiou 1986; Avdela 1990: 21-27; Varikas 1996: 242-246; Aydınlık & Kenan 2021: 400-418).

In the Ottoman Empire, female teachers were noticeably absent from all cultural communities. Education was only accessible to a few girls from upper social classes, while learned women were primarily tutored at home by male educators (Gedeon 1899: 425-426; Ziogou-Karastergiou 1986: 23-28). For example, the Ottoman women poets Zeynep Hatun (15th century) and Mihrî Hatun (1460-1515) adhered to the aristocratic literary tradition (Toska 1998: 21; Akyüz 2000; Havlioglu 2010: 25-54; Havlioglu 2017). These examples illustrate the limited nature of women's education during this period, which was primarily religious. Before the Greek Revolution of 1821, women's monasteries were the only institutions that taught reading and writing skills (Gedeon 1930: 332-333). In Bulgaria, Fota —born in 1734— became the first Bulgarian woman teacher and later became a nun after her husband's death. Historically, Muslim women have faced significant constraints that have limited their access to education and confined them to domestic spaces. The education provided to these women was primarily religious and did not provide them with opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge in other areas (Toska 1998: 21; Gelisli 2004: 126).

[3] It is crucial to acknowledge three significant limitations at the outset of this paper. Firstly, although the Turks are not Balkan people, they have had a long-standing physical presence in the Balkans (Skopetea 2000: 143-155). Secondly, the focus is primarily on the initial efforts made by the Greek and Bulgarian states, the Muslim communities of Istanbul in the 19th century, and the Orthodox Greek communities of non-state Hellenism in the 19th century (Istanbul, Plovdiv and Edirne). Finally, the paper does not address the women teachers' education provided by the Jewish and non-Muslim communities of the Ottoman Empire generally.

18th and the First Half of the 19th Centuries: "The First Steps"

During the Enlightenment and the first half of the 19th century, there was a growing belief that the development of logic and knowledge could enhance individuals and society. This belief led to the idea that men and women should receive an education. During that period in Greece, the emergence of female educators led to an increase in the number of educated women (Ziogou-Karastergiou 1986: 33-36; Bouzakis & Tzikas 1996: 27). These women maintain correspondence with renowned pedagogues, who, in turn, have affiliations with Western thought. For instance, Evanthia Kairi (1799-1861), sister of Theophilos Kairis (1784-1853), a Greek priest, philosopher, and revolutionary, corresponds with Adamantios Korais (1748-1833), a Greek scholar credited with laying the foundations of modern Greek literature and a leading figure in the Greek Enlightenment, in France (Xiradaki 1956). The establishment of *the Society for the Promotion of Education and Learning in Athens* in 1836 was a significant milestone in women's education in Greece and the teaching profession. The Hill's School, a Protestant missionary school that focused on training women teachers, began operating in Athens a few years earlier in 1831 (Ziogou-Karastergiou 1986: 203-210; Bouzakis & Tzikas 1996: 27-28).[4] Kalliopi Kehajia (1839-1905) —the Head of the Hill School for girls in Athens and the Zappeion School for Girls in Istanbul (Dalakoura 2008: 103-116)— and Aikaterini Laskaridou (1842-1916) (Ziogou & Chatzistefanidou 2010: 207-250) —a Greek educator who created the kindergarten system in Greece and introduced physical exercise into the girls' schools— were pupils of Hill School and later succeeded her as school director. Both women published scholarly articles and pedagogical works, delivered public lectures, and edited the first women's journals that addressed women's calling and education.

The Enlightenment movement played a crucial role in the National Revival period in Bulgaria by providing the necessary theoretical foundation for the cause. It also highlighted the importance of education for Bulgarian women. While the education of female teachers was mainly associated with monasteries,[5] Anastasia Dimitrova, who herself educated in an abbey,

[4] As early as the 1800s, Western missionary schools provided education to Greek students and trained Greek women to become teachers, with the Hill School being a notable example. In Bulgaria, 29 Catholic and several Protestant schools were established after the Crimean War (1853-1856), as reported by Daskalova (2010: 154). An American observer in 1908 estimated that Protestant missions operated 527 schools throughout the Ottoman Empire, with 23,572 students enrolled and 45 Normal Schools with 3,004 students. (Kazamias 1966: 95). See also Akgün 1991: 3; Nasiudzik 2000: 35-52.

[5] Until the end of the 18th century, Bulgarians had only primary schools, the so-called *Kiliyni*, that is, cell schools connected to monasteries or churches. At the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, a new type of school appeared, thanks to private initiative, the so-called *obshtesveni kiliyni*, i.e. public schools. Boys mostly attended these schools, but girls were also welcome to attend. Following the establishment of the Bulgarian state

founded the first monitorial school for girls in Plevna (present-day Pleven) in 1841 (Dorosiev 1925: 93), thereby bringing about a much-needed change in the education system of the time. This event marked a significant moment in the history of women's education in Bulgaria. The students of this school established, in turn, similar schools in other Bulgarian cities under Greek influence (Daskalova 2010: 153) as, for example, Mica Nikolova in Sofia, Paraskeva Nejkova in Lovec, and Zinovia Konstantinova in Gabrovo. By the beginning of 1850, thirty-five schools were in existence. Up to the 1840s, the most important influence was Greece, not only in the type of schools and programs but also in the number of people —mainly men— educated in Greek institutions of elementary and higher learning (Daskalova 1999; Daskalova 2010: 150). During the 1860s, many Bulgarian women teachers studied at foreign institutions, mainly in Kyiv and Odesa. The most well-known of these teachers are Anastasia Toševa, Sandra Milkova, Rada Gugova, and Tsarevna Miladinova (Kirkovic 1927; Gospodinova-Petrova 1996: 37; Hani-Moissidou 2010: 121-131). They left diaries and memoirs charting their studying and teaching experience. The Bulgarian class school (*klasni* in Bulgarian) for girls established by Anastasia Toševa in Eski Zagra in 1863 shows the interplay between nationalism, modernization, and the emancipation of women (Daskalova 2010: 154).

During the Tanzimat era, extending from 1839 to 1876, women's education was focused on primary education. The first school for girls was opened in 1859 in Istanbul and was called *Kız Rüştiyesi* (Girls' School). The objective of this new venture was to provide women with education on par with men so that they could assist and comfort their husbands, who bear the responsibility of providing for the family. Moreover, education will help women towards a better understanding of religious and secular studies, and encourage them to obey their husbands, refrain from going against their wishes and overall, protect their honor (Sönmez 1969: 25; Aydınlık & Kenan 2021: 403). However, the period marked by reformist movements brought about changes that led to the acknowledgement of the need for girls to receive further education beyond primary school. To this end, a modern education system established a restructured version of the Western education system, specifically inspired by the French education system (Akyüz 2000; Somel 2001; Gelisli 2004: 126). In the Ottoman Empire, therefore, during the Reformation period, the inadequacy of the education system rendered private education necessary (Toska 1998: 21; Ýnankur 2001: 2). In Muslim communities,

in 1878, around 384 schools were already in operation. These schools were not limited to a single type, as Greek, Greek-Bulgarian, and coeducational schools also existed during the early 19th century. See Daskalova 2017: 2.

female education was limited to basic instruction.[6] However, non-Muslim communities within the Ottoman Empire established schools specifically for girls, which welcomed even young Muslim girls. Ayşe Sıdıka Hanım (1872-1903), one of the pioneering women teachers at the Normal School for Girls, received her education at the Zappeion School for Girls in Istanbul from 1882 to 1888 (Çevik-Bayvertyan 2010: 105-112; Altin 2017: 179-192; Gündüz 2020: 2). In 1891, she was appointed as a teacher of geography, ethics and handicrafts at *Darülmuallimâta*, and was later promoted to the position of head teacher (Gündüz 2020: 4). Although affluent families in the Ottoman Empire typically educated their daughters at home, the girls' school establishment within non-Muslim communities presented new opportunities for girls to receive education beyond the basics (Gelisli 2004). In their effort to save the Empire from decline, the intellectuals that comprised the elite of the Reformation considered the amelioration of the social, cultural, and economic position of women indispensable, believing that the westernization, as well as the more general growth of the State, would be impossible without it. Within this frame, they take measures towards women's education (Toska 1998: 22; Akyüz 2002: 64; Gelisli 2004: 122-123). Due to the absence of female educators in some schools, only male teachers with "irreproachable morals" were employed. However, the presence of male teachers was not favored by the students' families, leading to the establishment of the first Normal Schools for Girls. These schools allowed girls' education by female teachers rather than limiting them to handiwork or sewing classes taught by women of both Muslim and non-Muslim backgrounds (Toska 1998: 23; Gelisli 2005).

1870-1900: Nationalisation and Nationalist Dimension

During the 1870s, significant changes occurred in the Greek, Bulgarian, and Turkish societies. A new middle class has emerged in Greece (Dertilis 1985[3]: 69; Bouzakis & Tzikas 1996: 31). This development represented a significant milestone in the country's social and economic history, as it had a lasting impact on the nation's cultural and political landscape. Furthermore, similar changes occurred in neighboring countries, signaling a broader shift in the region's socioeconomic structures. These developments remain of interest to scholars and professionals alike, as they provide valuable insights into the historical and contemporary dynamics of the area. During the period in question, there was a growing demand for a comprehensive overhaul of Bulgaria's economic, social, and political systems. As urban development began to take

[6] According to one interpretation, this was due to two reasons: a) the psychology of the community: parents were afraid of the reaction of their neighbors if they deviated from the tradition and b) because in these schools, due to a lack of female teachers, male teachers taught. See Öztürk 2010: 73.

shape, it became increasingly clear that there was a pressing need for more effective management of the Bulgarian Exarchate —a de facto autocephaly without the blessing of the Ecumenical Patriarch promulgated in 1872. During a crucial juncture in the nation's progress, a series of novel complexities necessitated new approaches. Despite certain limitations, this period was noteworthy for its remarkable advancements (Dalakoura 2000: 315-332). In Greece, primary education was reformed in 1880 by eliminating the monitorial method and introducing the Herbartian method. Three Normal Schools for boys were established, and education was monitored more closely. In 1872, the *Ladies' Association in Favor of Women's Education* was founded by Kalliopi Kehajia to promote women's rights to education. The *Ladies' Association in Favor of Women's Education*, as well as the donations from rich Greek diaspora, resulted in a great expansion for schools for girls in Greece in the 1870s. During the latter part of the 19th century, the women's movement gained significant traction, resulting in the emergence of influential female figures who ardently advocated for women's rights. Subsequently, this movement also facilitated the publication of the first women's journals, marking a significant milestone in the history of women's rights. The first women's journal was published in 1845 in Istanbul by Efrosyn Samartzidou with the title *Kypseli*. Several publications were released in Istanbul as the journal *Eurydiki* in 1871, including the *Ladies' Diary* (1888-1889) by Alexandra Papadopoulou and Chariklia Korakidou, *Maarifet* (1898) by Theodosia [surname not declared], and the *Bosporus* (1899-1906) by Cornelia Preveziotou. In Athens, *Thalia* was published in 1867 by Penelope Lazaridou, the *Ladies' Journal* in 1887 by Kallirhoe Parren, which marked a significant milestone in the movement, the *Family* in 1897 by Anna Serouiou and the *Pleias* in 1899 by the *Ladies' Association "Ergani Athena"* (Ziogou-Karastergiou 1986, 307-313; Rizaki 2007: 55-81; Dalakoura 2010 115-150; Denisi 2014). Women, however, also wrote in journals published by male editors and asked for collaborations of both sexes, such as *Athenais* (Athens, 1876-1882) and *Anthon* (Athens, 1877), but also in printed matter, which without setting to invite women's collaborations, they did not exclude them, such as the Athenian publications *Pandora* (1848-1872), *Euterpi* (1847-1855), *Schools' Newspaper* (1850-1872), *Hestia* (1876-1894), *Attikon Imerologion* (1867-1896), *Parnassos* (1877-1895) or the Istanbulian journals *Eptalofos* and *New Eptalofos* (1865-1870[?]), *Kastalia* (1861-1862), *Philological Echo* (1893-1897) and the Smyrna journals *Izmir* (1870-1872), and *Homer* (1873-1878) (Dalakoura & Ziogou-Karastergiou 2015: 261-278). Women teachers played a crucial role in the propagation of education, which helped to preserve the national identity of enslaved Hellenism in areas where national struggles were common, particularly with Bulgarians.

Despite the risks involved, the movement of women teachers in the Balkan area symbolized freedom and recognition of their role (Varikas 1996: 234-244).

The establishment of the Exarchate in Bulgaria in 1872 and the formation of the Bulgarian nation-state in 1878 marked the pinnacle of Bulgarian nationalism. The preceding progressions resulted in noteworthy improvements in education, specifically in girls' education. The founding of girls' schools in Sofia and Turnovo in 1879, which were subsequently renamed Normal Schools in 1882, and the establishment of additional girls' schools in Plovdiv and Stara Zagora in 1881 were among the notable developments. By 1888, the Bulgarian State had expanded its school system to include six grades in all girls' schools. The curriculum of these schools also included instruction in Pedagogy and Psychology. The Bulgarian State modelled its school system on those of France, Belgium, Sweden, Russia, Austria, and Germany, with adaptations to suit Bulgarian traditions (Daskalova 2010: 156-157). Despite previous reforms, the Boy's and Girls' Normal Schools curriculum was standardized in 1905. During this period, there were diverse educational ideas that encompassed a range of philosophies. These included the notions of J.A. Comenius, J. Locke, J.J. Rousseau, J.H. Pestalozzi, Fr. Fröbel, H. Spencer, Herbart's pedagogy, his anti-Herbartian criticisms, and Ellen Key's new education texts. These ideas were promoted and discussed in various pedagogical journals of the time. In modern times, it is essential to understand and appreciate the diverse educational philosophies that have shaped the development of education over the years. Despite the advancements made in the teaching sector, there exists a persistent gender pay disparity, with female instructors earning an average of 10% less than their male counterparts. Additionally, a decree from 1899 prohibited married women from pursuing a career in teaching (Daskalova 2010: 157).

During the same timeframe, a major change hold on the educational system of the Empire: the extension of educational opportunities to girls began. Women among the elite always had had access to private education, but this opportunity was only then extended to the public. Some girls' primary schools were started in Istanbul. The first Normal School for Girls was founded in Istanbul as early as 1870 (*Dârülmuallimât*) (Gelisli 2004: 126; Gelisli 2018: 67-97; Peker & Taskin 2018: 67-97). After completing two years of study, female students who graduated from the Gymnasium for Girls (*İnas Rüştiyesi*) were eligible to enroll in this Normal School. Nevertheless, at the end of the nineteenth century, there were only nine *Rüştiyes*, or girls' primary schools, and nine teacher's colleges. Not more than three hundred students were enrolled in each *Rüştiyes*, while there were around fifty students at the most in each of the

teacher's colleges. Needless to say these schools were located only in a few major cities (Akgün 1991: 3). Women teachers played a remarkable role in the movement for girls' education nationally. This school laid the foundation for the rise of Turkey's first female educators, managers and visionaries and contributed to the birth of modern Turkey (Öztürk 2010: 73-74). Saffet Pasa (1814-1883), who served as the Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire during the reign of Abdul Hamid II (1878) and reformed the education during the Tanzimat period as he was one of the co-founders of the prestigious *Galatasaray High School*, stressed in his speech at the opening of the High School the lack of educational development of Turkish women. He also pointed out the significance that Islam attached to women's education and explained the importance of the opening of the college: women needed to work in several branches of industry, and the educated women in the college would be employed as teachers in the primary schools (Gelisli 2004: 126). Ayşe Sıdıka Hanım contribution to developing and improving instructional methodology was significant and noteworthy. In 1897, the first book on pedagogy in Turkey was published entitled *Usûl-i Talim ve Terbiye Dersleri* [*Educational Methodology and Lessons of Education*] prepared as a textbook at *Dârülmuallimât*, has a simple language and a fluent style (Akyüz 2002: 65; Altin 2017: 179-192; Gündüz 2020: 4). In 1876, a government official's wife founded the inaugural Ottoman women's organization to aid wounded soldiers entitled *Association in Favor of Women's Education*. Additional organizations with comparable charitable aims followed suit. However, it was not until 1908 that associations with a concentrated focus on political matters, particularly women's civil rights, began to surface.

The role of women in Ottoman Empire began to be recognized by intellectuals in the late 1800s. With more women receiving an education, several publications aimed at them began to appear. Notably, *Vakit yahut Murrebi-i Muhhaderat* [= Time or the Education of Muslim Women] was published in Istanbul in 1875, followed by *Ayine* [= Mirror] in Thessaloniki in 1876, *Aile* [= Family] in Istanbul in 1880, and *Insaniyet* [= Humanity] in 1883. While these publications typically avoided taking a radical stance, they were instrumental in women's history by focusing on topics such as family, religion, folk art, and notable women from both Muslim and non-Muslim backgrounds. In 1891, Fatma Aliye (1862-1936), the daughter of the historian and magnate Ahmed Cevdet Pasa (1822-1895), published *Nisvan-i Islam* [= Women of Islam], which has been recognised as the first documented defense of women's rights in the Ottoman Empire (Toska 2010; Aydınlık & Kenan 2021: 404). From 1870 onwards, education was influenced by nationalism, leading to a more conservative and uniform approach that

differed from the diverse schooling methods of earlier times. The promotion of nationalism was a prominent feature in the education of both male and female students, with a slightly lesser emphasis on male students (Dalakoura 2011: 659).

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the comprehensive presentation of information, it is evident that:

1. Women had access to teaching jobs during the Ottoman era.
2. The emergence and the women teachers' social acceptance in Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey is closely linked to the development of national consciousness and the Westernized urban societies in these countries. The female teaching profession originated with the Greek-speaking communities, the first to attain national identity and establish a Westernized urban class. The women teachers' training followed a similar pattern. The journey of this profession from its inception to its full social acceptance was not uniform, and there were differences in the time taken among the three countries.
3. In the 19th century, discussions on women teacher's education in Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey were part of a broader nationalist agenda to promote modernization. The notion of women's role or calling as mother educators in promoting national ideology further strengthened the perception in favor of a specialized form of women's teacher education.
4. When discussing the progress of girls' education in the Balkan region, particularly the education of female teachers, it is crucial to acknowledge the significant role Catholic and Protestant nuns and missionaries undertook.
5. During this period, there was a shift in the national education systems, resulting in a decrease in the importance of monastic schools. As a consequence, there were more complex interactions and imitations observed.
   i. In Bulgaria, Najden Joanovic translated the works of Greek teacher Dimitrios Darvaris in pedagogic views. Antonij Nikopit translated the works of Konstantinos Vardalachos and Neofytos Rilski and used Ioannis Kokkonis' work concerning the monitorial method in Pedagogy. In Turkey, Ayşe Sıdıka Hanım, a student at Zappeion School for Girls in Istanbul, wrote the first book of Pedagogy.
   ii. Girls' schools were initially established in the form of *Parthenagogia* [= a general term referring to girls' schools] around the middle of the 19th century in all three countries. At the end of the 19th century, the first Secondary Schools for girls were

instituted. As part of the educational reform introduced by Eleftherios Venizelos in 1929, Gymnasiums were established notably for girls in Greece.

1. During the 19th century, a significant shift occurred in education for females. The period saw the establishment of the first public schools for girls and the emergence of various groups that promoted women's education. Notable among these were the *Motherly Love Association*, originated in Bulgaria in 1866, the *Association in Favor of Women's Education* in Istanbul in 1871, and the *Ladies Association in Favor of Women's Education* in Greece in 1872. This development marked a milestone in the history of women's education and contributed significantly to progress towards gender equality.
2. The first women's journals were published in Turkey *Terakki-i Muhadderat* [= The Progress of Muslim Women] in 1869 and later in Bulgaria in 1871 and Greece in 1877. These publications marked a significant turning point in the representation and empowerment of women during that period.

To summarize, Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey have shown evidence of recognizing interactions. Education played a significant role in nation-building and modernization efforts, including Europeanisation and Westernization, both pre-and post-state establishment. There were some limitations to this emphasis on education for women and women teachers. During this period, the female teachers had recognized through the struggle for the spread of education and, therefore, the preservation of the national consciousness of the inhabitants had taught in areas of subjugated Hellenism where national rivalries were observed, mainly with the Bulgarians and the Albanians. The movements of teaching in the Balkan regions for all the risks they entail for women give, at the same time, a sense of freedom but also an appreciation of their role, making them "the Balkan guardian of knowledge". This work aims to foster scientific dialogue of the Balkan countries, thereby promoting cooperation and exchange of views. The work also seeks to recognize and accept the diversity in the Balkan area and leverage it to expand future perspectives.

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