Reasons for the Success of American Education in late Ottoman Bulgaria

By

Martin Trenkov

Submitted to
Central European University
History Department

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Supervisor: Professor Roumen Daskalov
Second Reader: Professor Maciej Janowski

Budapest, Hungary

2014

Abstract

This master thesis gives four reasons for the success of American education in late Ottoman Bulgaria before the year 1876, when an American educational institution in Constantinople – Robert College – was to a great extent involved in the report of mass killings in Bulgaria. The scope of the master thesis deals with history of education in the late Ottoman Empire, including church and *medrese* schools, as well as monitorial and state schools. This background continues to explain the roots of American education in a series of missions sent after 1820 with the purpose of evangelizing the local population, which ended up focusing instead on education as opposed to conversion. Then, a more topical survey shows the schooling practices of American missionaries with an emphasis on their approach to girls' education. Finally, this progression is seen as leading to the feminization of the teaching profession and emphasizes the importance of inquiry into the history of family and culture values brought into education.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgment

To the few of my generation:

My friends,
My sister,
And my cousins.
My classmates
And colleagues.

> Happy state of childish ignorance, and happy would be their state of maturity, if a knowledge of their *duty* and their *Savior*, were the only knowledge they would obtain by an increase of years. But time multiplies ideas; and an increase of ideas is generally only an increase of sorrows and sins. We cannot breathe the air of this polluted world, with our polluted natures, without contracting the infection; and this moral disease "grows with our growth, and strengthens with our strength." The children of God, to be sure, are supplied with spiritual medicine to counteract its ravages; but taking this remnant out of the account, and this vast world is little better than a hospital and a mad-house. As ignorance gives place to knowledge, she draws away peace in her train, and leaves unhappy man with an enlightened understanding and an aching heart.[1]
>
> --- Mary Lyon

[1] Mary Lyon, *Memoirs of Miss Mary Lyon of New Haven, Conn*., 176-7.

Introduction
Mediating Narratives

NEUTRALITY UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

DIZZY. "BULGARIAN ATROCITIES! I CAN'T FIND THEM IN THE 'OFFICIAL REPORTS'!!!"

† *Punch, or the London Charivari*, August 5, 1876, p. 51.

Introduction

Bulgaria has proven a successful ground for American missionary education and for Protestantism in general. Though the most significant remnant of American missionary success is Robert College of Istanbul, even there between 1868 and 1890 there was a so-called 'Bulgarian' period, when most graduates were Bulgarians. It had followed a very successful campaign, which opened boarding schools even before the foundation of Robert College in 1863. These were among the first American educational institutions outside the territory of the Untied States. Such were the boys' school in Plovdiv (Philippopolis), with which the American College of Sofia even today relates its own history all the way back to 1860, and the girls' school in Stara Zagora (Eski Zagra), which was modeled in 1863 after the revolutionary Mount Holyoke women's seminary of Mary Lyon.

The success was not accidental and in fact began two decades before 1878, when Bulgaria was founded by the Treaty of Berlin. Furthermore, it was in concurrence with the entry of American missions in the Ottoman Empire as far back as 1820. And the presence of these missions brought a unique nuance to a setting that was already complicated enough – the final stages of what was known as 'Ottoman Decline.'

The disintegration of the Ottoman Empire is one of these study areas that still appear complicated even if the whole western world was at the time convinced that this was the inevitable. Yet these final stages of decay remain intriguing in a number of aspects accompanying that phenomenon – the Greek War of Independence, the *Tanzimat* period of reform, the Crimean War, the formation of nation-states on the 'Balkans,' and the rise

of the Young Turks. There is always great incentive to put the chaos into order and to understand that unique human setting. The topic of this master thesis seeks exactly that – to construct from written evidence that has been scattered.

But this thesis deals with history of education. It is therefore difficult to set a time period for this study. The question is clear: For what reasons was American education successful in late Ottoman Bulgaria? However, there is more than one answer.

In the first chapter, an assessment of the traditional religious school system is preceded by a brief review of what is considered a 'call for education' and thus a first reason for success.

In the second chapter, the available forms of secular education are put into context with what Americans have observed – claiming that imported monitorial schools were more successful than the Ottoman state schools of the *Tanzimat*.

In the third chapter, a circumstance in the development of American schooling is made clear as a 'reversal of missionary priorities' forced by the missionaries' failure in Armenia in order to be more successful in Bulgaria.

In the fourth chapter, the personal presence of American missionaries is taken into consideration in order to present the final reason for American school success – the inclusion of family values and culture into schooling.

This is not an under-researched topic, though the question of American school success probably has not been previously addressed in this manner and from such perspective. Yet there has not been a unifying narrative for the four 'reasons' addressed in each of the following four chapters. In fact, this introduction also intends to bring one reason, though it is more of a problem – the complete monopoly of historiography on the American

missionary education from the memoirs of its own functionaries. Missionary historians were part of the missions themselves, not to mention they wrote at the time when they were especially flourishing. The only comprehensive secondary source on this phenomenon – at least among those made available for the assembly of this thesis – was a PhD dissertation written in 1938 by William Webster Hall, which was translated in Bulgarian in 2008. This translation has been used for the thesis, rather than the original. But this source was based entirely on the memoirs of missionaries and the publications and archive of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (A.B.C.F.M.), which originally sent Americans to the Ottoman Empire. Quite a few problems may arise from building a narrative – especially a dissertation – entirely on primary literature.

Aside from missionary-related literature, the most significant sources used in this research are a couple of encyclopedias on the Ottoman Empire, an old *Cyclopedia of Education*, secondary literature on late Ottoman Bulgaria, and a few publications on gender theory and history, as well as urban history.

Practically all of the 19th century primary and secondary sources used for the compilation of this thesis were out of copyright and found on Archive.org, so there have not been any discoveries of previously hidden materials. The only rare source, which has been used for only one citation, is a rare Robert College brochure from 1838 – the 75th anniversary of the school. The remaining print sources were purchased separately or borrowed from the CEU Library. Unfortunately, a planned research trip to the archives of Robert College at Columbia University Libraries did not happen due to administrative delay.

Divergence of narratives

The schools founded by American missions in the Ottoman Empire were unlike anything formerly available. They did not simply impose themselves and flourish through competition with high educational standards and propaganda, which they were doing anyway as missionaries dedicated to evangelizing the 'heathen' world. They actually made a conscious effort of blending with the environment – by the famous missionary practice of settling and learning local languages and culture, but also by the even more famous Protestant practice of translating the bible from its old archaic form into an understandable contemporary language.

They did so by active printing – not only of the bibles they imposed for the evangelization of school children, but of propaganda newspapers as well. The latter and the general scope of the printing practices unfortunately do not feature enough in the research at hand, but they were nevertheless one of the main indications of the missionaries' purpose and dedication to evangelization through education of children.

They had learned to proceed with preaching in that order by the time they began work in Bulgaria, following unsuccessful attempts in Greece and Armenia, where they had focused first on infiltrating the church institutions, from which they were promptly excommunicated. All the while this had been relevant to them, but not really to Bulgaria, or the Ottoman Empire for that matter.

There is hardly an appropriate designation for the 19th century anyway. It has given grounds for the study of nationalism and nation-states, of natural science and anthropology. Sometimes contemporary scholars have seen fit to scrutinize the temporality of that century by means of comparative history. And whether one decides to

study political, intellectual, military, scientific, or any other possible field of historical inquiry, one thing is for certain – the 19th century was very intense.

The recorded work of American missionaries has created a narrative that involves itself with current and past events in the Ottoman setting that allowed them to stay. But their narrative was essentially their own. Everything they did and found important, which is the subject of Chapter III, was a mix of their motivations and their adaptation to local circumstance. On the other hand, the first and second chapters show the setting that they found in the Empire and in late Ottoman Bulgaria, which was used to their advantage.

And as much as the preachers, educators, and missionary historians have found a way to relate themselves to the history of late Ottoman Bulgaria, their story does not always match the setting.

The revolutionary setting

So before the foundation of Bulgaria the only real meeting of narratives between American missionary education and Bulgarian nationalism was in the violent suppression of the uprising in 1876. And it was because the American missionaries, particularly the educators at Robert College, had a practice of spreading news about massacres. They also did the same in 1894-6 with the mass killings of Armenians,[3] which Henry van Dyke immortalized in his poem "Mercy for Armenia."[4] It had even become part of missionary relief activity to help the survivors of what was considered a 'movement' for open massacres during the 19th century. In 1876, for example, the girls' school in Samokov

[3] Washburn, 232-3. The Kurdish attacks on Christians had been supported by Turkish troops, while in 1896 10,000 Armenians were slaughtered in Constantinople.
[4] Henry van Dyke, "Mercy for Armenia," *The Poems of Henry van Dyke*, 306.

closed for a few days so that the teachers and students could sew clothes for the people.[5] Amongst those victims of mass murder throughout the 19th centuries were Greeks during the Greek War, Armenians and Nestorians in the Nestorian mountains, as well as Maronites and Syrians in Lebanon and Damascus, before the events in 1876 and 1894-6.[6] After the massacres of 1876, Robert College came into possession of a number of letters from Bulgarians that were being sent to Bulgarian-language expert Albert Long. He then translated them in English and gave them to a couple of British correspondents living in Constantinople at the time – Galenga with the *Times* and Edwin Pears with *Daily News*.[7] And the latter was particularly instrumental in providing William Gladstone with one of his main incentives to run the opposition against Benjamin Disraeli, who refrained from international intervention. Pears had sent two letters via the British ambassador Henry Elliot, which the prime minister considered inaccurate or exaggerated, but nevertheless chose to send a researcher to Bulgaria – a man named Walter Barring. It was his report that prompted Gladstone to publish his pamphlet *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*.

Control of information

This particular exercise of informational capacity from missionaries and missionary friends leads into the topic of American presence in late Ottoman Bulgaria. What chapters I-III show is essentially information that was available to the American missionaries, even if it is researched today. Then the final chapter is an observation on

[5] J.M. Nankivell, Ed. *A Life for the Balkans*, 72.
[6] James Barton, *Daybreak in Turkey*, 218.
[7] Edwin Pears, *Forty Years in Constantinople*, 15-16. Long and Washburn also put together a statement of the events, which they gave to the British ambassador Henry Elliot.

them, which was perhaps not entirely available to people in Bulgaria during this crucial period.

The fact of American and British report for the Bulgarian Horrors has been interpreted from the one side as an offering of refuge to the victims of persecution into an institution that was open to them, while it was apolitical and could protect them. But – as this continues into Chapter I – the American schools were never really interested in a Bulgarian national cause, but rather maintained their Christian missionary values, which they brought with them from America.

Chapter I
The Call for Education: Reform and Tradition

1876 was probably the most intense year in Ottoman history, though there had been earlier situations that threatened this political unit – like the early 15th century civil wars and the late 17th century holy wars, the continuous loss of territory and the Greek War. But only during 1875-6 was every aspect of Ottoman existence put into question. There were threats from within and from without – in the form of national uprisings in the Balkan provinces, revolution of elites in Constantinople, and a possible foreign intervention.

This was the final 'landmark' year in the period of *Tanzimat* reforms, after 1839 and 1856. And just like these earlier dates, it marked the issuing of a supreme state law, while coinciding with major international events relevant to the Ottoman Empire – in the earlier cases the war with Mohamed Ali and the Crimean War. But 1876, as mentioned, was such an intense year politically for the Empire, because concurrent with the issuing of the later revoked Constitution, there was also massive resistance to reform from Ottoman elites, who managed to depose the sultan, while a Christian-Muslim clash in Salonica nearly caused war with France and Germany.

But the prevalent theme in this decisive period of Ottoman history was the process of reformation and the various state and non-state factors, which helped or hindered it. So this chapter considers education as the most consistent element in Ottoman reform and offers a background to explain the first reason for the ultimate success of American education in Bulgaria before 1876 – a specific 'call for education,' which the Americans clearly understood and used to their advantage.

A reported call for education

The Bulgarian uprisings are a decisive presence in Bulgarian historiography and their chronicler Zachary Stoyanoff considered them as the glorious past needed to characterize Bulgarians as a people.[8] He also constructed an understanding of the uprisings as a first-personal narrative, which begins with his abandonment of a shepherd life in pursuit for education. This beginning of his personal call for education happened between 1866 and 1870, when reforms in Constantinople were well underway and all of the school developments discussed in this thesis were already taking place.

Yet the setting that the later revolutionary described was one apparently untouched by the advances found in the following chapter. So he attributed to ignorance and lack of education the fact that his superstitious village folk perceived Muslims (interchangeable with Turks) as fundamentally different creatures from Christians – upon dying they would turn into swine, as opposed to even the most sinful Christians who would turn into vampires and at least maintain human form.[9] Whether this was an exaggeration or just one extreme case, it is not the example that matters, but the clarity that "every one believed all this like gospel, and the youngsters dared not go out of the dark."[10]

Throughout this period the American missions also included in their narrative that Bulgarians had a call for education. These missions had already been active in Bulgaria since 1857, when the Congregationalists settled in Roumelia, Rodosto, and Adrianople (south of the Balkan mountain range), while the Methodists began their work in the northern part.[11] The former were from the same organization that originally sent

[8] Zachary Stoyanoff, *Memoirs of the Bulgarian Uprisings*, Intro. ix.
[9] Ibid., *Pages from the Autobiography of a Bulgarian Insurgent*, trans. Potter, 9.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Cyrus Hamlin, *Among the Turks*, 262.

missionaries to the Ottoman Empire already in 1819-20 and whose former missionaries later founded boarding schools in Constantinople, Beirut, and Bulgaria, of which the most known is the still functioning Robert College. And these evangelists thought that their earlier success within the churches in Armenia had caused a 'general spirit of inquiry' among the population.[12] The same was thought for the availability of printed tracts and Testaments in Bulgarian at the start of the mission in Bulgaria, when more and more Bulgarian schools were beginning instruction in the vernacular instead of Greek.[13]

The Americans quickly appropriated a role of religious protectors for Bulgarians after beginning their mission in Bulgaria in 1857. Already in 1860, when the boys' school had been founded in Philippopolis, they described the condition of Bulgarians demanding their 'ancient privileges' from the cultural domination of Greece:

> Meanwhile, the breach between them and the Greeks has been growing wider and wider. The Greeks accuse the Bulgarians of plotting against the Government, the Bulgarians proclaim their fidelity to the Porte and substitute in their liturgy the name of the Sultan in the place of the Greek Patriarch. They have demanded the reading of the Slavic in their churches, instead of the Greek. The contest has sometimes been so fierce as to lead to bloodshed in the churches, but the Bulgarians have generally gained their point.[14]

The church struggle between Bulgarians and Greeks apparently reminded the evangelists of the Reformation and Martin Luther, seeing how Bulgarians read the Bulgarian bible (translated by the Protestant missionaries) as if for the first time, and compared the text with Greek editions.[15]

But the American missionary educators occupied a setting that was, most importantly, the school system in the declining Ottoman Empire. They entered and saw its situation as it was during the *Tanzimat*. So they understood and made use of major Ottoman events, just

[12] Ibid., 29.
[13] Ibid., 264.
[14] "Letter from Mr. Morse, December 3, 1860," *Missionary Herald*, vol. LVII, 68.
[15] Ibid., 69.

as the numerous other missions in the unstable Empire had been doing. And it had been a general practice that missionaries would appear and hasten their activity after the announcement of reforms.[16] Thus their Protestant activity became a threat to the existing religious order that the rest of this chapter questions. But its way of religious propaganda by means of education was something unprecedented in the Ottoman Empire and late Ottoman Bulgaria.[17] The Americans witnessed the conditions set through the rest of this chapter, which for that purpose are not based on the American accounts. Yet these were the conditions that produced the call for education and thus the first incentive for success of American education in late Ottoman Bulgaria.

Schools according to the *millet* system

Education was a major issue through the Ottoman *Tanzimat* period of reforms. But traditional schools in the area, though involved in these reforms, played no active part in them. They were unable to develop organically like their more successful European counterparts. And the way in which the Empire was ethnically organized – while allowing the maintenance of traditional languages and religions – was also a source of cultural heterogeneity.[18] Traditional schooling is thus associated with Christian- and Islamic-based methods of teaching in the 19th century.

[16] Ilija Konev, *America in the Spiritual Space of the Bulgarian Renaissance*, 104. An alternative case is provided with the Polish "Christ's Ascension," which opened in 1863 a Bulgarian Catholic school in Adrianople in order to turn that town into a center of uniatism, as well as to counteract Robert College (cites Св. Елдъров, *130 години от създаването на българо-католическата гимназия в Одрин*, Abagar, 1944).
[17] Ibid., 110.
[18] L.S. Stavrianos, "Antecedents to the Balkan Revolutions of the Nineteenth Century," *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 29, No. 4, 339.

The Ottoman *millet*[19] system designated populations according to categories like Islam and Christianity. Furthermore, the Christian Schism of 1054 had been a cause for existential conflict between West and East, or Rome and Constantinople, which expressed in events like the Fourth Crusade and contributed to the final fall of Constantinople under the Ottoman Turks in 1453.

Following this siege and the accompanying conversions of both the local setting and of Ottoman culture itself,[20] Mehmed II used the Schismatic legacy to consolidate under imperial rule the conquered populations of non-Muslims. He did so by exerting his own admiration of Hellenic culture and appointing as Patriarch of Christians a resident opponent of the last attempts to restore Catholic/Orthodox unity. This man – Gennadios Scolarios – duly began forming new centralized governance over Christians, by establishing a Patriarchal school in Constantinople.[21] But this institute of theology remained elite and poorly attended, which was in turn addressed by appointing teaching privileges to bishops in the countryside.[22] As an act of central planning this also later contributed to the antagonisms of Serbs/Bulgarians against Greeks, because after 1766 their separate archbishoprics were abolished and placed under the rule of the same Greek ecumenical patriarchate.[23]

[19] *Millet* was the ethno-religious administrative division of the Ottoman Empire, specifically toward non-Muslims. It was derived from the Arabic word *milla* (nation), but by 1835 there still were only three *millets* – Greek Orthodox, Armenian, and Jewish. All were governed from Constantinople, with the Greek Orthodox also containing by definition Serbs, Bulgarians, and Wallachians. See Gábor Ágoston and Bruce Masters, *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire*, 383.

[20] Ibid., 287. The *ghazi* warrior culture had to be replaced by a *kul* (slave) culture toward the new, more sedentary and autocratic power, which the ancient city represented for the former mercenary Turks.

[21] Stephen Panaretoff, *Near Eastern Affairs and Conditions*, 70. This patriarchal school was either founded at that time, or restored from the former Greek Patriarchate.

[22] Ibid., 70-71. In 1550, there were apparently only 10 students in the Constantinople patriarchal school, another 10 in Peloponnesus, and 4 in Chio. Therefore, an ordinance from 1593 entitled bishops to assist and oversee public instruction.

[23] Stavrianos, 346. The Serbian church was restored in 1831, the Bulgarian in 1870.

But in the 19th century this produced a form of education known as cloister/cell schools. Instead of textbooks, these schools used clerical literature and their graduates could only realize themselves in the church hierarchy or the same closed circle.[24] Though this practice at least maintained the local language by teaching in Church Slavonic, it was existent at a time when commerce was probably a more relevant human activity.[25] This phenomenon already looked backward as it coincided with a turbulent reform in education through the Empire, which contributed to national life, aside from rising above the set intellectual standards.

These church cell schools were in fact the Christian equivalent of Islamic *medrese* schools. In both cases the education was basically church/mosque oriented[26] and neither were state-sponsored institutions.[27] But the *medreses* were an established system. They were distributed according to their level of advancement from Constantinople to the countryside,[28] yet even the highest level was limited to Islamic and Quranic-related studies, while the study of secular subjects did not lead to further application.[29]

Along with this critique, the *medrese* schools generally lost their influence in the 19th century, on the one hand through the passing of a state law for secular education in 1846

[24] Panaretoff, 72-4. The 'cells' were rooms in churches, where boys were gathered by priests for instruction. The high-point of a educational achievement would be to read a gospel in front of church public, with the right intonation.

[25] Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans*, vol. 1, 337. The alternative, where commerce and secular subjects were indeed taught, were Helleno-Bulgarian schools, where on the other hand the language of instruction was Greek.

[26] Free education similar to the *medrese* could be found in mosques, libraries, and the mansions of prominent officials. See Ágoston and Masters, 199.

[27] As a public service, the *medreses* were held by pious foundations. The same was valid for all other public and municipal services found along the *imâret* – the complex adjacent to every larger mosque in Ottoman towns and cities. See Aksin Somel, *Historical Dictionary of the Ottoman Empire*, 178.

[28] Ibid. The lowest, 'outer' level of *medrese* was found in the countryside, while the middle 'inner' were in provincial towns and the highest in Constantinople.

[29] Ibid. 'Outer' *medreses* taught practical sciences (introduction to Arabic grammar, theology, astronomy, geometry, and rhetoric). The 'inner' taught principles of jurisprudence and Quranic exegesis, while those in Constantinople offered further scholastic theology.

– instating three grades of schooling[30] and founding a superior council of education.[31] On the other hand, their governing body – the *ulema* – had their privileges challenged, at least in words, with the 'official' start of the Tanzimat period in 1839, when the *Hatti-sheriff* of Gülhanè was issued.[32] But the *ulema* were not like any of the priests and bishops who taught boys in the Bulgarian or Serbian countryside. They were not even the teaching class[33] and in this regard the established traditional education posed a class issue, hindering any advance in education.

The period of Ottoman reform is a recurrent topic throughout the remainder of this chapter and education was always a central aspect in this kind of change – from within or from without. So it is noticeable how the *ulema* behaved like a stubborn elite by continuously opposing reformation, culminating in their active involvement at probably the most revolutionary year in Ottoman history – 1876. This educated class had previously acted as a 'check' on the Sultan, but did not possess legislative power in the Empire.[34] Yet, since the time of Suleiman I, they had enjoyed rare privileges like tax exemption, heredity, and protection from the confiscation of property,[35] while also acting as mediators of public opinion to the sultan.[36] So their self-justified disinterest in reform,

[30] Stephen Panaretoff, *Near Eastern Affairs and Conditions*, 92. The standardized state school system included primary, secondary, and higher grades of schools. The distribution of primary and high schools was the same as with 'outer' and 'inner' *medreses*, in the countryside and in towns respectively.
[31] Paul Monroe, Ed., *A Cyclopedia of Education*, vol. 5, 639.
[32] "Hatti-sheriff," in Edward Herstlet, *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, vol. 2, 1005. As the conclusion reads, "those from among the Ulemas or the Grandees of the Empire, or any other persons whatsoever, who shall infringe these Institutions, shall undergo, without respect of rank, position, and influence, the punishment corresponding to his crime, after having been authenticated."
[33] The instructors were *müderris*.
[34] Ruth Lancaster, *The Ottoman Empire and the Reforms of Selim III*, 10.
[35] Creasy, 208-9. Creasy summed them up in Western terms as "the only class among the Turks in which hereditary wealth is accumulated in families, is furnished by the educational and legal professions; and the only aristocracy that can be said to exist there, is an aristocracy of the brain." They were established by Mehmed II as "educators and men learned in the law," before their rise of status concurred with Suleiman's improvements in Ottoman education.
[36] Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans*, vol. 1, 40.

together with their patronage of *medreses*, was very much the reason why these schools were not an active stage of educational reforms – neither in the 19th century, nor at any time between 1331 and 1924 when they were operational.

Having in mind the parallel between Islamic and Orthodox Christian schools is also helpful in understanding the lack of progressive input from the leadership of both institutions. As mentioned earlier, the *ulema* stood in opposition, as did the Greek patriarchs. The *ulema*, though, were indicative of resistance from established social classes in the Empire. Similar to how the Janissaries, just before their extermination, had opposed military change,[37] so did the educated class stage riots in Constantinople, trying to overthrow the government of Abdul Aziz at the time of trouble in 1875-6.[38]

After the eventual deposition, Midhat Pasha managed to pass the first Ottoman constitution with the interim sultan (between Abdul Aziz and Abdul Hamid II). But some of Midhat's additions to this document were overlooked, such as his desire for mixed schools (for Christians/Muslims) that he had proposed already as governor of Bulgaria.[39] And in the end the constitution was only written text and not an effective measure. It was soon suspended by Abdul Hamid II, while Midhat, who had been the most reformist-

[37] Creasy, 407-8. In the mid-14th century the Janissaries were the world's first standing army, but by 1826 they had become an elite high class, which exerted influence in public and government affairs. At the same time they had become obsolete on the battlefield and a military reform was urgent. But their inability to cope with that caused the mass killing of every single janissary during a protest in front of the royal palace.

[38] Edwin Pears, *Forty Years in Constantinople*, 52-4. In 1876, the *ulema* had become discontented with the reign of Abdul Aziz and its impact on the Ottoman image. The Empire had become irregular in its payment of international debt, while the murder of a French and German consul in Salonica by Muslim fanatics had caused threats of intervention from these powers. The concurrent uprisings in Herzegovina and Bulgaria also contributed to this instability. So the *ulema* sent their students (*softas*) on daily demonstrations, while a part of the Ottoman fleet was taken to the Bosporus, aiming at the royal palace. Aside from reporting this, Pears also claimed an authoritative position on how Abdul Aziz died during these protests – that he committed suicide, rather than being poisoned by the Western-friendly Midhat Pasha, who was convicted for the murder and in the end exiled to Baghdad.

[39] Ali Haydar Midhat, *The Life of Midhat Pasha*, 111. Ali Haydar used some notes and correspondence to show how his father's attempts at reform were held back.

minded of the Ottoman administrators, was exiled. The education reform was therefore incomplete from that instance, even if its path was clear.

In comparative western-European context, central state interest in education could have been a tool for the Ottoman Empire to increase identification of its state power. However, as observed in the following chapter, this could not happen on its own because the state secular schools were not organic as were their European counterparts. To exemplify a contrast – in the German lands, and Saxony in particular, the Christian Reformation had first impulsively bettered the conditions of education due to Protestant churches establishing schools in propagation of their new doctrines, but real advance happened only after the church hierarchy toward schooling began to break.[40] During the 17th and 18th centuries more and more public ruling bodies began to concern themselves with education and from the churches it was taken over by municipalities and finally by the state.[41]

In Saxony this really meant an increase of population control and state determination, so it is no surprise that the Ottomans had a similar change of attitude not long after these developments – during the reign of Selim III. This period – from 1789 to 1807 – coincided with the Napoleonic Wars and a time of European instability, so it produced a similar drive to improve the military. Selim's reforms were thus directed toward the creation of new and better military/legal officers, yet he is credited for encouraging educational advancement "among all classes of his subjects."[42]

[40] John Bashford, *Elementary Education in Saxony*, 2.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Edward Creasy, *History of the Ottoman Turks*, 332.

In effect, educational reform held the potential to make schools into a useful tool for social control.[43] The short-lived Ottoman Constitution of 1876 had also progressed from this to sanction the freedom of education and state supervision over schools. This implied freedom of education was actually the freedom to choose public or private education, while state supervision sought to avoid interference with the religious education of various districts.[44] But since the state religion remained Islam and the *millets* were based on religion, this point of divergence continued to affect class representation among traditional schools, overshadowing any more general need for education. The purpose of *medrese*s throughout the country had been to spread Islamic jurisprudence and form educated elites of uniform worldview.[45]

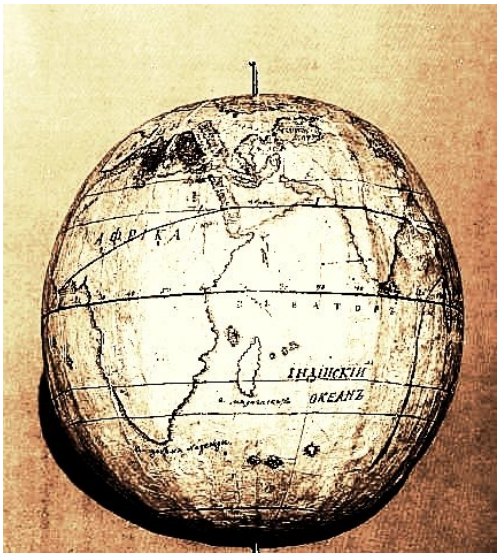
While the practice of traditional schooling may have worked well – considering its long duration – it was rather backward into a 19th century scope of education. The Islamic community was too spread-out for such organic consolidation and it was not the only religious variety living in the Ottoman Empire. Finally – the use of Islam or Christianity as a starting point was not a beneficial means to advance education. The national, commercial, and state irrelevance of the education these schools provided was substantial proof for that. In the end they were ineffectual to the general population of the empire.

[43] Saxony represents a good reference point for school development, because it was considered a model for educational reform and an example of state 'particularism' wherein grassroots education was used for social control. For this concept of school 'particularism' in Saxony, see Abigail Green, *Fatherlands*, 190-193.

[44] *Constitution of the Ottoman Empire*, Art. XV-XVI, in Hertslet, vol. 4, 2534. See footnote 19 for a story of how some more revolutionary propositions by Midhat Pasha were changed in the final act of the Constitution.

[45] Ágoston and Masters, 198-9.

Chapter II
Secularization:
National and Multicultural



Traditional schools in the Ottoman Empire could not provide an application for secular subjects or preparation for relevant life practices outside of the church and mosque hierarchies. And for the Bulgarians, who were the most numerous people in the immediate region, there was always going to be a call for education simply because the 19th century had made it into such an important aspect of human development.

But great attempts were made to meet this call for education and they were in fact more elaborate than what some continental observers like Cyprien Robert had suggested at the time. The latter thought "there is little to be said of the Bulgarian schools," because all of them were in fact cell schools, a few of which had moved into what was known at the time as 'mutual instruction.'[46] This particular statement was quite wrong, because the system of mutual instruction, which is a subject in the first part of this chapter, was very successful for Bulgarians and made a form of national schooling – adding to the Ottoman Empire's already complex array of educational advance. And it was certainly not an outgrowth of the traditional cell schools.

In the meantime, the Empire itself made attempts at likewise advance from traditional schooling – as part of the *Tanzimat* reforms. The schools they opened are important for this thesis and their peculiar multicultural approach to schooling highlighted a French Enlightenment influence as opposed to the English Educationist influence on mutual instruction.

This chapter thus explains two distinct educational phenomena as the second reason why American education succeeded in late Ottoman Bulgaria.

[46] Cyprien Robert, trans. Mrs. Alexander Kerr, *The Slave Provinces of Turkey*, included in Ranke's *The History of Servia and the Servian Revolution*, 481. He also thought that "the Christian of the East" had "become accustomed, from childhood, to confound together sacred and profane things, ecclesiastical and secular habits."

National schooling

The dominant culture of the Ottoman Empire was the Turkish, though the second part of this chapter shows that the *Tanzimat* doctrine of Ottomanism produced multicultural schools in addition to those in support of the Turkish element. But the Ottomans were anyway more secular than the nationalities of the *millet* system, since they included these nationalities in its administration, but did not make decisions about their patriarchate and churches.[47]

So the dominant culture of the Orthodox Christian *millet* – as accentuated – was the Greek. And the Greek influence in education was not limited to the control exerted from the ecumenical patriarchate in Constantinople. In fact, the consistent presence of Hellenism meant that Greeks were the only ones who could advance their own secular education. Their schools had influence throughout the periphery of the Empire and were found also in Bulgaria and Romania. A few important Bulgarian revolutionaries were educated in Hellenic schools during the 1850's and 1860's. But during the first half of the 19th century the landmass of Greece, rather than Hellenic culture, became the first host to an English school system, which completely revolutionized education for nationalities of the Empire.

Even earlier than the above events, the monitorial system of mutual instruction had been brought to Greece and then Bulgaria. This was the most modern system of primary and secondary education at the time, also known as the 'Bell-Lancaster method' by the names of its first practitioners – Joseph Lancaster and Andrew Bell, but most often found in the literature of the later influential American educational missionaries as 'Lancasterian.' It

[47] Stavrianos, 336.

was indeed the first global attempt at standardization of school management and classroom organization,[48] while the practices of Bell and Lancaster also contributed to the later pupil-teacher system.[49] Both 'inventors' were from the English Educationist tradition and drew on their experience with schools for orphans and poor children in India (Madras) and London respectively. The aim of the resulting 'experiment' was to create a national mass education where a schoolmaster would be able to teach a large group of pupils.[50]

When these schools first appeared in Greece, they quickly achieved the needed secularization, because they worked as more than 'asylums of scholasticism.'[51] Their eventual spread to Bulgaria happened in 1835, when a newly opened school became in fact the first Bulgarian national school.[52] Founded in Gabrovo by two Bulgarian merchants from Odessa, it was considered 'modern' by European standards and furnished with contemporary appliances, globes, maps, etc.[53] This marked an end to both theocracy[54] and foreign influence in schooling itself, even if this system too was alien and had its own origin.

It is unfortunately unclear and under-researched whether all the specifics of original English monitorial schools were strictly applied in Greece and the Ottoman Empire, but the American and English literature took them for granted and considered them as the most effective form of schooling in its time and place. So the remainder of this section

[48] Jana Tschurenev, "Diffusing useful knowledge: the monitorial system of education in Madras, London and Bengal, 1789-1840," *Paedagogica Historica*, 44:3, 245.
[49] James Leitch, *Practical Educationists and their Systems of Teaching*, Preface vii.
[50] Tschurenev, 247.
[51] Panaretoff, 87.
[52] "Bulgaria,"*A Cyclopedia of Education*, vol. 1, 467.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Stavrianos, 345. The school in Gabrovo was an indication of humanistic curriculum, new kinds of teachers (not priests), and new national aspirations.

observes some of the foundational aspects of monitorial national schools and their application in the context of the region due to limited available research on this topic.

While still a recent development in London and New York, the monitorial system quickly became the most efficient available way of schooling.[55] It had become clear in 1806 when Mr. Lancaster requested royal patronage for a plan to mass education of poor English countryside children, with which he had come up after years of experience in teaching with the assistance of certain more docile students in his schools.[56] These 'docile' students would later become the so-called 'monitors' or more advanced students from the same class, whose participation in the teaching process allowed the teacher, or master, to instruct twice as many children as he normally would.[57]

But this condition also caused such schools to develop a principle that their teachers would have to be themselves graduates of the same type of school. One such Bulgarian graduate – Stephan Panaretoff – who later studied and taught at Robert College, could therefore afford himself to explain the benefits this system had on early 19th century education in Bulgaria, when teachers were especially scarce.[58] Even the neighboring autonomous state of Serbia had the same problems at the time, when the scarcity of teachers meant that Habsburg Serbs were employed in the new schools of king Miloš, instead of Ottoman Serbs.[59] So the monitorial development produced schools of a kind,

[55] Andrew Bell was more successful in Ireland and Canada, while Lancaster – in the United States and in the European mainland. See "Bell, Andrew" in *A Cyclopedia of Education*, vol. 1, 356.
[56] Joseph Lancaster, *Outlines of a Plan for educating ten thousand poor Children by establishing Schools in Country Towns and Villages; and for uniting Works of Industry with useful Knowledge, under Royal Patronage*, 5-7. The long title of this otherwise short pamphlet serves well to point out its motives. The 'docile' students were children who demonstrated patience in reading scripture, so Lancaster found them "capable of being easily brought in good order."
[57] Edward Baker, *A Brief Sketch of the Lancasterian System*, 18.
[58] Panaretoff, 80. These schools appeared in Greece at first, brought as an idea by Greek merchants established in England and Italy.
[59] Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans*, vol. 1, 242.

which better fit the local population. And when the school in Gabrovo was opened, its first master, who had formerly taught in a cell school, was sent to Bucharest in order to study the Bell-Lancaster method[60] and satisfy the required condition.

The monitorial schools thus contributed to a reform in education beyond the previously discussed traditional models – by actually stressing the preparation of teachers. This practice was clearly a necessity for a folk like the Bulgarians even more than it was for a consolidated group like the Greeks, due to the mentioned scarcity of teachers, the underdevelopment of language, and the lack of textbooks. Monitorial schools in fact did not require textbooks, despite still using Christian literature at later 'classes.'[61] On the other hand, in Bulgaria this allowed for Bulgarian textbooks to be used for the first time, including the first grammar book of the Bulgarian language, before the students were able to find teaching jobs in other newly-founded similar-type schools upon graduation.[62]All of these schools offered free education and also built reading rooms.[63]

Still, since teachers were only selected amongst graduates of the same system, this practice itself could not be "learned from books."[64] Therefore, the process of making and developing teachers was traceable from a pupil, through a 'monitor,' to a 'master' within

[60] Konstantin Jireček, ed. H. Petrov, *История на българите*, 506. The first Bulgarian national teacher was Neophit from the Rila Monastery.
[61] James Barton, *Daybreak in Turkey*, 160. To an American missionary observer, the use of scripture did not make them sectarian. The resulting efficacy had sparked both interest in learning and a "superficial exhibit of progress in the pupils."
[62] Panaretoff, 86-7.
[63] "Bulgaria," at Britannica Academic Edition. By the 1870's around 2000 schools had been founded by guilds, town and village councils, and wealthy groups. The reading rooms first appeared in 1856.
[64] Baker, 23. It was simply not recommended to apply Lancasterian models without having participated in them.

the same school. Most importantly, this experiment in schooling derived its novelty from the potential to replace the rule of a schoolmaster with a rule of the school system.[65]

But in the late Ottoman Bulgarian case the transfer of this system had a different root – it could not receive patronage from kings and lords as it had in England and elsewhere. So in places like Bulgaria these schools had to work on private resources and were not legally sanctioned by the Ottoman state.[66] Their growth and influence from the like schools in Greece was due rather to the more apparent state patronage that was present there. During the Greek War, the temporary peace of 1828 had allowed a provisional government under Kapodistrias, which opened monitorial schools in towns on the Ægean islands and began organizing a system of elementary (demotic) education.[67] Furthermore, the mutual instruction method was admired and also brought by the American missionaries into Turkish, Armenian, and Greek schools.[68] The latter is revisited in the following section.

Yet the most relevant use of these programs, previously devised in England and applied in America, was probably their cost-effective approach to schooling.[69] This was really needed in the conditions of scarcity that the Ottoman Empire held, especially with the inefficiency and inapplicability of its other available school systems. It was an improvement in both national and institutional terms, as well as a more appropriate

[65] Lancaster, *The British System of Education: being a complete Epitome of the Improvements and Inventions practiced by Joseph Lancaster*, 92-3. Lancaster thought that the anarchy that would normally follow the personal absence of a schoolmaster would be overcome by obedience to his proposed program.
[66] "Bulgaria," in *A Cyclopedia of Education*, vol. 1, 467. The authorities could issue a special license for the primary and secondary schools, but they remained under surveillance and threat of closing.
[67] "Greece, Education in Modern," in *A Cyclopedia of Education*, vol. 3, 161-2.
[68] William Webster Hall, *Puritans in the Balkans*, 23. The Americans participated in the reformation of local schools after 1833.
[69] Lancaster, *The British System of Education*. A number of the innovations were for economic purposes. This included a ciphering model of teaching arithmetic that gave the monitor a key, which transformed calculations into a system of reading, with which he simply had to follow for errors in the final result and 'reward' students on their correctness (47). The same applied for the use of slates instead of paper and even to directing the manner of holding a pen to reduce the use of space (23).

starting point for an undereducated population. And as a system it was naturally supplanted by state education after the new nation-states were set, where the teacher-pupil system became commonplace instead. But the experimental teaching practices made this the first reform-based schooling in the area, while its support for national character eliminated the cultural conflicts that the following section attributes to multiculturalism in schooling.

As a matter of fact, monitorial schools were an example of English Educationist influence against the unsuccessful application of French cultural standards, found in the following section of this chapter. Educationists from England were a main source of experimental schooling in the Ottoman Empire and if Joseph Lancaster was a rather late bearer of these theories, his practices were consistent with a particular approach to education, which can be seen with the inclusion of a statement from Thomas Secker on the cover of his patronage request:

> The absolute ignorance in which we are born, and the propensity we manifest immediately to receive impressions from what we see and hear, are an evident proof of our Maker's design, that we should be formed by education into what we are to be. The wisest and best of ancient legislators and philosophers have all prescribed a strict education of youth, as the foundation of every thing good.[70]

This may lead to a comparison with John Locke's use of education to "set the mind right,"[71] though Locke was an opponent of public education.[72] But Locke wrote over a century before Lancaster and it has been suggested that the retention of household

[70] Lancaster, *Outlines*, title page. The origin of the exact quote could not be found, though. But Secker did believe that "the whole of man's existence, it appears, is a state of discipline and progression." See Secker, "The Advantage of a Right Education," at Biblehub.com.
[71] John Locke, *Some Thoughts concerning Education*, ed. R.H. Quick. According to Locke, "the Difference to be found in the Manners and Abilities of Men is owing more to their *Education* than to any Thing else" (20).
[72] Leitch, 7-8. Locke was an advocate of private education and home schooling. He actually considered virtue and good manners as more important than school learning, which had been provoked by his experience of violence between children at Westminster.

influence on schools and the introduction of a mixed system with girls in fact solved the problems that Locke had seen at public schools during his time.[73]

Multicultural schooling

The Ottoman state was not oblivious to the limitations of traditional education either. So they involved some of these issues in the period of *Tanzimat* reforms. The educational gap was covered in part by the state recognizing its need to secularize education after 1846, but mostly by the state schools that were being opened.

These developments were the first centrally planned intent for secularization when a ministry of public instruction was founded in 1857, followed by an education law in 1869.[74] But while the state schools were supposed to be open for non-Muslims, their numbers of attendance remained low even at the death of the 19th century.[75]

And the school situation in Constantinople, despite the presence of a government and the necessary resources, was in fact no more advanced than it had been in Bulgaria and elsewhere. The societal strength of the *ulema* severely restricted the intended secularization of *Tanzimat* Ottomanism, which resulted in likewise conditions of scarcity – both in books and teachers. It had become clear, for instance, that education would have to be at the center of attention for the *Tanzimat* reforms to work after their initial failure.[76] So the Ottoman system also concerned with the preparation of teachers for both

[73] Ibid., 14. Leitch also suggests that the benefits of the mixed system were proven in his own assessment of David Stow.
[74] *A Cyclopedia of Education*, vol. 5, 639.
[75] Zabit Acer, "A Series of Studies for Providing the Integrity of the Ottoman Empire: The Reform Edict Sample," *Ozean Journal of Social Sciences* 2(2), 94. Non-Muslims were admitted after 1861, but in 1895 there was a total of only 80 (quotes F. Demirci from 1999, 101-113).
[76] "Education," in Ágoston and Masters, 202.

boys and girls. For that purpose they opened colleges in addition to the first teacher training school that had been in operation since 1848.[77]

The previously mentioned stubborn elites were also taken into account by replacing the education that prepared them. And while the change of primary and secondary school systems did not so much affect the *ulema* who continued to cause trouble, the earlier abolition of the Janissary corps had necessitated the creation of a new army. So after the massacres of 1826, the government of Mahmud II immediately established the 'Victorious Troops of Muhammad' and in 1831 built an Imperial Military Academy to prepare its future scientifically skilled officers.[78]

Though this was indeed a revolutionary measure and concerned military, rather than Islamic schooling, the title of this military unit suggests that it was not at all oriented toward secularization of schooling. Recruitment of non-Muslims in the army could not simply follow the abolition of the *jiziya*[79] and what happened to the standing army that had functioned since the middle of the 14th century was an unprecedented event. It simply highlighted the weakened government's inability to control classes like the *ulema* and Janissaries. The former kept exercising social control, while the only means to check the latter in any way had been by complete extermination.

Constantinople and the larger towns nevertheless managed educational developments in the second half of the 19th century – and not only those incited by the government. There was a new grading school system, though distributed similarly to the *medrese* – primary schools were being opened in the countryside, while high schools were in provincial

[77] Ibid., 203.
[78] Ibid., 201. This was on the French model, while military students were also sent elsewhere in Europe.
[79] Acer, "Ottoman Reform," 93.

towns.[80] A standardized curriculum began to take shape in middle schools, especially with the optional study of French,[81] which had become the Empire's language of higher education.

So the first substantial edict after 1839 to address any of the issues found in the preceding chapter – class and religious status – was the *Hatti-humayoun* of 1856. This document sanctioned replacing the ecclesiastical dues of patriarchs and bishops with revenues, and restricting the formation of class superiority based on religion, language, and race.[82] More importantly – it introduced the admission of all Ottoman subjects into state civil and military schools, while authorizing every community to establish public schools of science, art, and industry.[83] But because its practical application, as already mentioned, did not fully secularize education, the latter was achieved instead by the external influence of French diplomacy, administration, and approach to culture.

This happened with the opening of a French lyceum in 1868. The military school of Galatasaray – one of Constantinople's oldest schools – was modified for this purpose into a high school following a French official note to the Sublime Porte.[84] This state school offered liberal education to men from all nationalities of the Empire[85] and was ideally the kind of school that Midhat Pasha wanted to prevail. It brought together multiconfessional and multiethnic students under secular standards. But this clustering caused another problem – it could not prevent the religious and cultural conflicts of everyone outside the

[80] "Education," in Ágoston and Masters, 217.
[81] Ibid., 203. The curriculum included religious sciences, Ottoman grammar, composition, Arabic and Persian grammar, calligraphy, arithmetic, bookkeeping, geometry, world and Ottoman history/geography, physical education, and vernaculars.
[82] "Hatti-Humaïoun. Christian Privileges, &c," in Edward Herstlet, *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, vol. 2, 1244-5.
[83] Ibid., 1246.
[84] Acer, "Reform Edict Sample," 94.
[85] Panaretoff, 92.

classroom, where the study of natural science, history, literature, and classics, was supposed to bypass these differences.[86]

The French influence that produced this lyceum was consistent mostly with the period between the Crimean War (the Treaty of Paris) and the Franco-Prussian war, when the French defeat caused a decline of this tendency. To some, this period of French cultural influence meant an inflow of Enlightenment ideas, thus being a very important contribution in bringing 'Western civilization' to the Ottoman nations.[87] But it also produced allegiances to European powers and ironically – cultural conflict.

It is therefore interesting that, for a short period, the American missionaries considered the French lyceum and the whole French influence as threats to their own pursuits – in education or otherwise. They created a narrative where this school was the continuation of a struggle with the Jesuit missions of Constantinople, which had tried to prevent the opening of Robert College before 1863.[88] But this conflict of interest is to be discussed at greater length in the following chapter.

Nevertheless, if the fact of this Jesuit presence did not question the essential role of the lyceum for secularization, then the actual French influence did. For example, the new privileges to non-Muslims offered by the *Tanzimat* caused some of these non-Muslims to associate with European powers that represented their respective religion – such as

[86] Clara Clement, *Constantinople*, 297. This American missionary of course had her own cause, but her critique of the French lyceum was that the secular mixing of religions and cultures did not work. Muslims wanted to read the Quran, the Jews and Christians could not agree on food consumption, while the conflicts of Greeks, Armenians, and Bulgarians were obvious.

[87] C.E. Black, *The Establishment of Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*, 28. This was part of the widespread notion that a 'penetration of Western ideas' was one of the greatest influences on the creation of post-Ottoman nation-states, particularly Bulgaria.

[88] George Washburn, *Fifty Years in Constantinople*, 24. The Director General of Jesuit missions, a certain M. Boré, had apparently tried to prevent the opening of Robert College. Furthermore, sultan Abdul Aziz had visited Paris in 1867 where Ludwig Napoleon had convinced him to open the lyceum, for which he would personally appoint French teachers.

France for Catholics and Russia for Orthodoxes.[89] These were new forms of cultural heterogeneity with historically proven hostilities between each another – like the Schism and the Fourth Crusade, which were the permanent rift between Catholic and Orthodox Christianity. In places like Bulgaria, the practices of Catholic propaganda had caused the appearance of Uniate movements and incited negative reactions from the pro-Russian Orthodox community.[90] So the lyceum's fundamental association to a Catholic nation like France seriously disturbs its perception as a champion of secularism.

Furthermore, its multicultural approach to schooling proved maladaptive to the region and caused cultural conflict rather than prevent it. The same happened at the military medical school, modeled much earlier after its Paris counterpart in 1845, where religious and ethnic tensions were in fact intensified by close proximity.[91] Both schools were open to young men of all nationalities, but their principle was instruction in French and a faculty of French professors,[92] again caused by the dominating French standard of the Empire.

The 18th and 19th century military reforms, including those of Selim III, had been carried out or overseen by French military experts, which translated into an influence by the French government on school curriculum and also the imposition of French as an official foreign language of the Empire.[93] Selim's unprecedented approach to reformation was in fact the invitation of foreign influence, when the sultan decided to assimilate with his European enemies instead of waging war against them.[94]

[89] Acer, "Ottoman Modernization," 193.
[90] Meininger, 198-9. He acknowledges that this tension stopped after the Bulgarian church was formed in 1870.
[91] Thomas Meininger, *The Formation of a Nationalist Bulgarian Intelligentsia, 1835-1878*, 188-189.
[92] Panaretoff, 92.
[93] "France," Agoston and Masters, 224.
[94] Leopold von Ranke, *The History of Servia and the Servian Revolution*, 62.

But this phenomenon of external cultural influence was not limited to only foreign impact on military affairs and the inflow of French culture, since the Ottoman Empire was under equally as much influence from Greece as it was from France. In educational terms, the domination of Hellenism was in fact promulgated by the practical necessity to learn more relevant human activities, which minority subjects like Bulgarians could never learn in their *millet* and its respective Christian schools. So, where the church cell schools could not provide preparation in commerce, the alternative Helleno-Bulgarian schools could.[95] These were another secular attempt, where instruction in a foreign language could be seen as standardizing to the benefit of education, though not directly to a national character. Instead, this character emerged as rather the result of these Hellenic schools creating the same cultural conflict as did the French lyceum in Galata with its wishful enlightened cosmopolitanism.

As a matter of fact, Bulgarian nationalism was probably best cultivated in Hellenic schools and their environment. They were initially accessible to Bulgarians because of the institutional relevance of Greek Orthodoxy (in the absence of a Bulgarian church), but practiced a glorification of Hellenic culture, which provoked several young students to found a 'Slavo-Bulgarian Society for Studiousness.'[96] The same was valid for the patriarchal school in Constantinople, though the latter was an example of traditional schooling. It was nevertheless known as the Great National School, being 'national' for Greeks – therefore a series of anti-Greek sentiments provoked an outflow of Bulgarian students during the years after the Crimean War.

[95] Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans*, vol. 1, 337.
[96] Meininger, *The Formation of a Nationalist Bulgarian Intelligentsia, 1835-1878*, 183-4

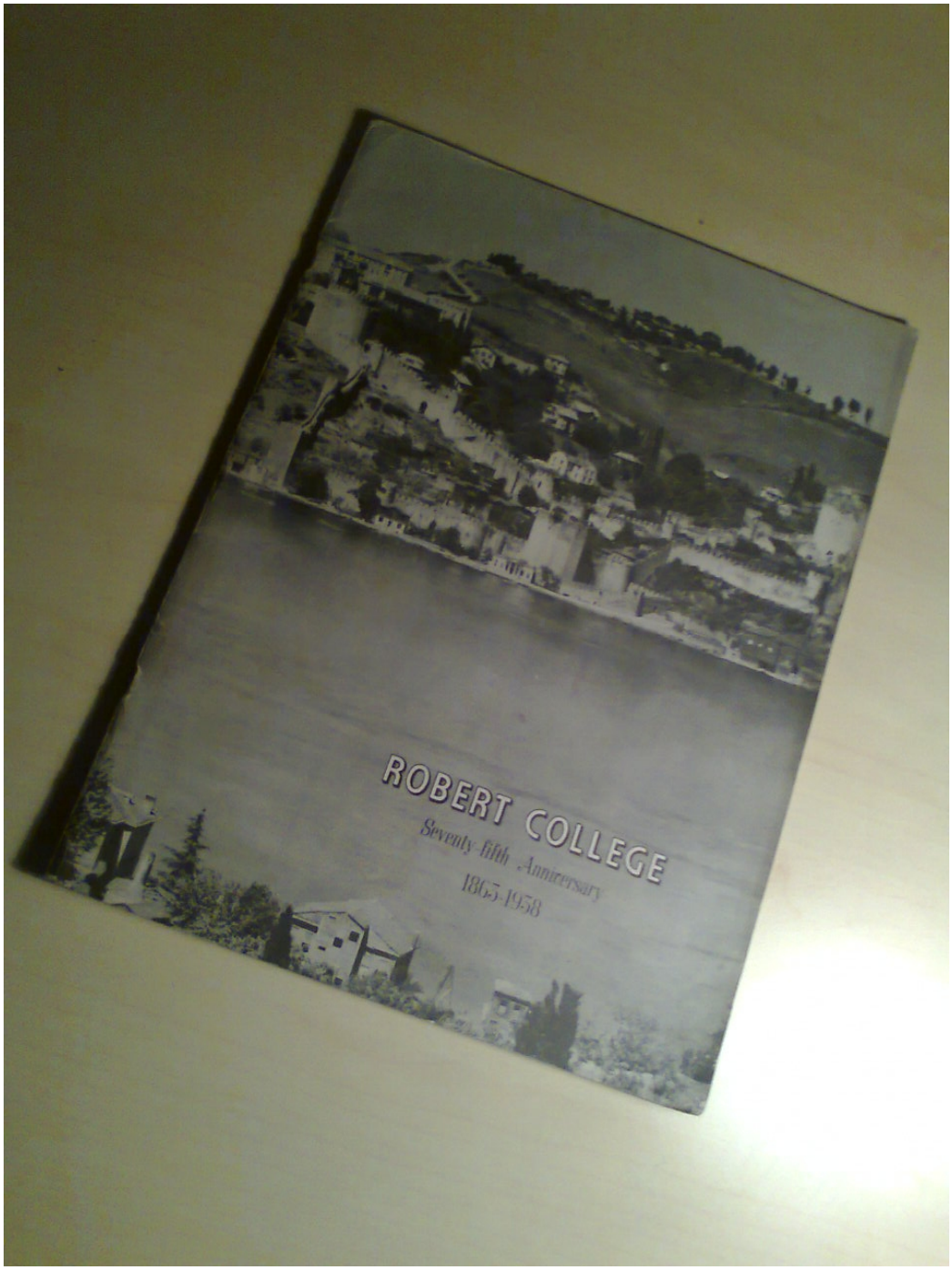
As with the French schools, this practice of multiculturalism caused less dominant cultures like the Bulgarian to be pushed aside by more dominant ones, which in the lyceum led to the creation of another student society named Истина (Truth)[97] and in the military medical school – Братство (Brotherhood).[98]

In the end the pursuit of secular education on Ottoman territory was the most significant application of reforms in the *Tanziamt*. It made no difference whether the application was top-down from the government in Constantinople or from the communities in the countryside, because both sides faced the same situation of backwardness and were held back by their traditional elites.

To counter this, an English model of schooling was applied in Greece and then Bulgaria, while Constantinople maintained its dependency on French influence. The former was beneficial for national education, while the latter indirectly provoked a new form of nationalistic impulse – in particular among Bulgarians. While it was not a significant mass of the population that had become Hellenized by mere attendance in Greek secular schools,[99] this continued the Bulgarian narrative of opposition to dominant Greek culture.[100] On the other hand this was a demonstration of a more pronounced need for national education, which state Ottomanism could not provide, because its secularization was difficult enough to apply in Constantinople.

[97] Ibid., 192. He cites from Nacho Nachov, *Tsarigrad*, 149.
[98] Ibid., 191.
[99] Stavrianos, 339. Because there was no imperial education system for Christians, and no Christians attended Turkish schools, there were in the end 'Slavs' and Albanians who were culturally absorbed as a result of their Hellenic education.
[100] This is a reference to the Enlightenment myth of 1762, written by Paisii from Athos, who argued, amongst other things, against the surrender of Bulgarian history and culture to Hellenism.

Chapter III
The Reversal of Missionary Priorities



While the inflow of Western intellectual currents is a widely accepted understanding for underdeveloped places like Bulgaria or even the Ottoman Empire itself, it is difficult to overlook that these ideas and currents were not only being absorbed from the West. Very often Westerners actually brought their values with them. And the most active Westerners in the Ottoman Empire during the 19th century were missionaries who involved themselves with education – for the most part Jesuits and Americans.

These missionaries also perceived the limitations of religious and state schools from the previous two chapters. So as the main topic in this master thesis, the performance and perceptions of American missionaries are assessed through the remainder of this chapter. The particulars of missions and schools are put into a context where local circumstance pushed the missionaries to apply themselves in the late Ottoman Empire and for Bulgarians. A peculiar 'reversal' of missionary priorities between conversion and education is therefore seen as the third main reason for the success of American education in late Ottoman Bulgaria. However, half the chapter does not deal directly with schools, because this reason has to be developed through the narrative of the American missions, the spread of printed literature, and an understanding of the conflicts that these missions encountered or provoked.

Missionary priorities

There exists an actual 'grand narrative' of the American missions in late Ottoman Bulgaria. It was accomplished in 1938 by William Webster Hall with his PhD thesis *Puritans in the Balkans*. Educational institutions certainly occupy a considerable space in this work, but most of it was based on the archives of the evangelical organization responsible for most American missions in the Ottoman Empire – the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (A.B.C.F.M.) – and set the Christian missions in a place long absorbed by Christianity, as opposed to the Muslim or 'heathen' world.

This author in fact saw a 'triple division' of the missionary approach – literary, educational, and evangelical. And according to this application in Bulgaria, the 'literary' function was most successful, while the 'evangelical' was least.[101] He also noticed that the opening of a boys' school in Philippopolis and a girls' school in Eski Zagra was closer to the original goals of these missionaries than would have been the establishment of an evangelical church.[102] The latter was done in Armenia, where the missionaries ultimately failed.

This classification is partially borrowed for the purposes of the chapter at hand, but the more reserved perspective of this thesis allows for a classification of just 'conversion' and 'education.' Even if the main lines of this narrative are followed, the success of the literary division had been mainly because the New Testament editions that the missionaries printed in Bulgarian were at a time the cheapest books available.[103] So the change of focus from Greece/Armenia into Bulgaria, as the rest of the chapter shows, is

[101] William Webster Hall, trans. Elena Simeonova, *Puritans in the Balkans*, 24-5.
[102] Ibid., 49.
[103] Ibid., 42.

the turning point where conversion and education became observable as distinct from each other, and the latter seems to become a priority.

And it is difficult to overlook conversion as the pervading original goal of American missions.[104] Their priorities had been with the colonized population of India and its Asian vicinity. [105] But their Ottoman adventure underwent a decline in these grand designs – from converting Muslims, through converting Greeks and Armenians, to satisfying with establishment of schools as Christian institutions. And they had indeed conceded the early conversion plans of evangelist missions in turn for a role in better education for the local people. This was not done purposefully, but was rather the outcome of adaptation.

Robert College, as the ultimate success of American education in this region, also refrained from converting the local churches and accepted students from all religions, but it was nevertheless, by its constitution, "founded and administered on the principles of the Bible."[106] Furthermore, its American standards were adapted to better match those of the East, or rather those of Europe – while teaching a multitude of secular subjects in English, the curriculum maintained Latin and Greek, adding also the study of vernaculars.[107]

The American scholars were good enough demagogues to explain how their rules of religious behavior in a boarding school were not in fact a process of conversion. The latter was during an interesting exchange of letters in 1873 between then-president

[104] Rufus Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, 1. From his first page, the missionary historian declares how the missions had "the avowed expectation and purpose – for the first time since the apostolic age – of laboring for the conversion of the whole heathen world."
[105] Ibid., 14. The first report issued by the Board in 1816 claimed its mission in India was "to make them English in their language, civilized in their habits, and Christian in their religion" (quoted, 97).
[106] Quoted in George Washburn, *Fifty Years in Constantinople*, 16. It was supposed to be "a scientific and literary institution" where "God and His word shall be distinctly acknowledged and honored." They would also use the Biblical literature printed by the American missions.
[107] Ibid., 97. Latin was necessary so that the A.B. degrees awarded at Robert College could be recognized elsewhere in Europe.

George Washburn and concerned Armenian parents who demanded that their sons be excused from the obligatory bible classes and religious services. The religious daily routine that Robert College demanded had made them fear that their sons were being converted to Protestantism.[108] To this Washburn gave the standard response that if they made this exception, they would also have to do the same for everyone else. In addition, he claimed that they were "no longer in the dark ages" and everyone was free to judge on their own.[109] Whether these claims were right or not – the scholars were defending their point and did it well – offering a superior form of education, which remained rooted in its patronizing missionary origins, but also took some positives from the Protestant practice of supporting local languages.

Early chronology and purposes of the American missions

The first American missionaries were sent from Boston to the 'churches of the Orient' with a prime objective to spread Christian literature among the Christians in Palestine and Syria.[110] As the later paragraphs show, they followed instructions about evangelizing the local population, particularly the Jews, before discovering a more appropriate host with the Armenians. The story then continues with a sequence of success and failure in Armenia, followed by the transfer to Bulgaria.

The origin of American missions may explain the particular drive for this kind of activity. This origin is with the A.B.C.F.M., which was founded in Boston in 1810 and had a

[108] Ibid., 80-4.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Ibid., 19.

priority to convert the colonized population of India and its vicinity of Asia.[111] But their mission in the Ottoman Empire underwent a decline in these grand designs – from converting Muslims, through converting Greeks and Armenians, to satisfying with establishment of secular schools, which is further seen as the point of priority reversal.

During the 1820's the first American missionaries arrived in several waves, which coincided with the Greek War. A station was established in Malta, where the British mandate offered a safe ground from all the unrest.[112] The first three men were sent to Smyrna in late 1819 – early 1820, but did not remain for long and, unlike their successors who were all accompanied by their wives and families, were more or less considered passing travelers.[113] Nevertheless, they provided early research on the region, in addition to meeting local pilgrims about the possibilities of Armenia as a missionary ground.[114] After two of them died, the third moved to Constantinople in 1826 and was joined by another two, before political tensions forced them to leave for Greece.[115]

In 1828, regional hostilities and the continuing Greek War drove the missionaries back to Malta,[116] where their station remained until 1833. But they still traveled in the Ottoman Empire, after in 1830-31 finishing 8 years of what they considered the necessary groundwork – learning Turkish and Armenian, Oriental customs, and generally a regional self-reliance.[117] The missionary station in Constantinople was established in 1831 when

[111] Rufus Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, 14. The first report issued by the Board in 1816 claimed its mission in India was "to make them English in their language, civilized in their habits, and Christian in their religion" (quoted, 97).
[112] Joseph Greene, *Leavening the Levant*, 136.
[113] William Goodell, *Forty Years in the Turkish Empire*, 81. They were unmarried, while the later missionaries all settled as members of a foreign culture that arose interest and inquiry among the local population.
[114] Barton, 149.
[115] Greene, 66.
[116] Hall, 19.
[117] Greene, 68-9.

one of them – William Goodell – arrived and settled with his family, having also brought his peculiar translation of the New Testament – in Turkish with Armenian letters.[118]

With this turn of events the Muslims and other non-Christians actually stopped being a target. Instead, a peculiar case of Puritanism developed toward those who were already Christian. And Puritanism is an appropriate label for this because of the way it has been used in this case and the early actions of missionaries.

In character the American missions were profoundly evangelical – meaning that they preached the Christian gospels where they were unpopular, unknown, or unavailable in modern languages. But conversion was not out of the question as a fundamental goal, because even as late as the 1860's the preacher historians of these American missions maintained a sentiment for the 'Apostolic' goals of converting the 'heathen' world.[119] Similarly, in 1819 before the first missionaries set sail from Boston, another such sentiment was expressed that the possible destruction of the Ottoman Empire would lead the Jews back to their ancestral home.[120] Then in 1820 the first missionaries explored the sites of the seven churches of the Apocalypse as potential missionary sites,[121] having originally landed at one of them in Smyrna. Yet the A.B.C.F.M. evangelists never went further to the East than Beirut and Armenia, which is how their focus on Christians began to gradually shape.

They expressed the same attitude toward the old churches of the 'Orient' as Protestantism itself had against Catholicism. The 'Eastern Church' was therefore criticized for being

[118] Ibid. This translation was prepared in Beirut and, if it was a print version, it must have been brought from Malta, where the printing press remained until 1833. It was a very successful edition for the next 40 years, though frequently revised.
[119] Anderson, 1.
[120] James Barton, *Daybreak in Turkey*, 86. It seems that these two men – Levi Parsons and Pliny Fisk – were sent to the Ottoman Empire with particular interest in the Jews of Palestine (87).
[121] Ibid., 120.

governed by individuals' pursuit of power and by theory as opposed to the practice of Western churches.[122] It was compared to the Caesaropapism of Byzantium when observing that people "still confuse Church and State."[123] And this also included the Armenian Church, which had been using Christian literature written in the forgotten old Armenian – it had lost its 'vital power' because not even the preachers knew the scripture anymore.[124] The first American missionaries in fact considered this submission to church hierarchy to be sinful.[125] So the intent of American missionaries was indeed to 'purify' Eastern Christianity by taking it back to biblical teaching.

Preaching before teaching

This meant that the missionaries' approach to preaching was to first themselves study the local languages and then translate scriptures into them. So in the setting of Beirut in 1823 they had to learn Turkish, Arabic, and Armenian before printing into these languages.[126] The case of Armenia developed then as a priority and had success during the subsequent decade, particularly after new missionaries were sent to the East in 1830 and produced a study on Armenia and its vicinities.[127] After 1833 biblical teaching had become essential in Armenian schools due to missionary influence on several monitorial graduates.[128] The missionaries also took pride in a new-found call for education among the Armenians, because biblical teaching in the native tongue seemed to have allowed the Armenians to

[122] Henry Otis Dwight, *Constantinople and its Problems*, 130.
[123] Ibid., 132.
[124] Barton, 70.
[125] Hall (22) quotes Eli Smith, who wrote in *Missionary Herald*, vol. XXXIV, 125.
[126] Goodell, 81. The printing itself was funded by the British and Foreign Bible Society.
[127] Hall, 19-20.
[128] Ibid., 23. In 1833-4 hree young men named Sahakyan, Sarkis, and Kevork began to teach in schools both founded by the American mission, and unrelated to it.

take educational matters into their own hands.[129] So the evangelists became instrumental in an educational reform, which also included monitorial schools. Through this they became increasingly well accepted in the Armenian churches, from even as high up as their patriarch in Constantinople.[130]

But in 1839 the conditions changed when the latter was deposed on accusation that these evangelical influences had threatened the scattered Armenian people whose only national unity had been their church.[131] At that point the Catholics in Armenia had been opposed to biblical teaching and apparently provoked an anti-reform party, which in turn elected a new patriarch who began to banish evangelists from the church and confiscate books printed by the Americans, including arresting people for reading the bible.[132] But the Americans had been building this narrative since their early days in Malta when one of the first – Goodell – described the local Catholic priests who "pretend to forgive all sin except the unpardonable sin of reading the Scriptures."[133] This element of conflict with the missions of other creeds is to be revisited further in this chapter with the case of schools in Constantinople and Bulgaria.

The banishments happened in the same year when the Ottoman loss to Mohammed Ali at Nezib, together with the death of Mahmud II, provoked the issuing of the *Hatt-i-Sheriff*. So it is no wonder that these Protestant persecutions could not last in such a period of instability. Even the old Armenian patriarch was reinstated, while the evangelists continued their process.

[129] Barton, 162.
[130] Hall, 23-4.
[131] Ibid., 34 quoted from another missionary historian – Julius Richter, *A History of Protestant Missions in the Near East*, 112.
[132] Barton, 162-3. The same happened in Greece.
[133] Goodell, 74. In a few letters from February 1823, included in this volume, Goodell describes the multiethnic composition of Valetta as a schooling for the missionaries, including for this Catholic attitude.

To conclude this background, the 1840's saw a new rise of missionary evangelism in Armenia, followed even sooner by another, more severe wave of persecution. A so-called 'bull of excision' was read in 1846, again condemning all evangelists in Armenia, which in turn provoked the foundation of an Armenian evangelist church.[134] But this drove matters further away from the educational scope of this thesis. It simply showed that the missions had involved themselves with a local reformist movement, which had an impact on education, but its interests were predominantly ecclesiastical.

A second Counterreformation

It was mentioned in Chapter II that an opposition between Jesuits and Americans in Constantinople may have caused conflict of interest between the French lyceum and Robert College. But these secular schools were not sponsored by missionary orders. The lyceum was a state school while Robert College had famously become a self-supporting institution early on and its founder Cyrus Hamlin had effectively ceased his employment at the A.B.C.F.M. upon starting this project. But the latter had nevertheless maintained service for them in the decades before and with the college considered himself "more of a missionary than ever."[135]

Therefore it remained important for the American missionaries of education to stress on their conflicting relationships with Roman Catholic missions. The conflict itself is traceable to the time of the Protestant Reformation and subsequent Protestant perceptions of Catholics as a counterreformation. It has been claimed that the latter was done with the agency of several orders – Jesuits, Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, and the

[134] Barton, 166-7.
[135] Cyrus Hamlin, *My Life and Times*, 415.

Seminary for the Education of Missionaries – as well as French institutions for foreign missions.[136] But the Catholic orders were extending the political and spiritual authority of the pope,[137] with the Jesuits supported by central states like Rome, France, and Austria.[138] Furthermore, Hamlin claimed that the Ottoman Empire would provide a setting for "the greatest struggle between Protestantism and Rome since the age of the Reformation."[139] He did realize that Catholic and Orthodox presence had preceded his mission, and located it among the papist loyalty of English, Prussian, and Dutch consuls, as well as the strength of the Greek Archbishops, all of whom were expected to oppose Protestantism.[140]

On the other hand, the American missions tried "first to resurrect knowledge of the Gospel and its spirit, and second to influence the Mohammedans that way."[141] In fact, the missionaries of the A.B.C.F.M. were considered a 'people without a country' in terms of their civic relations, before successive Sultan's *firmans* between 1847 and 1853 recognized them as a Protestant *millet*.[142] This happened due to the influence of the British ambassador at the time,[143] but not for a greater state support. It was simply the result of the last wave in Protestant persecutions, which had forbidden them to trade in bread and goods, or to marry and be buried.[144] Two decades after the general scope of this thesis, when the missionaries reported the Armenian massacres of 1895-6, there were

[136] Rufus Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, 271.
[137] Ágoston and Masters, 385.
[138] Richard Davey, *The Sultan and his Subjects*, 103-4. Larger religious centers in the Ottoman Empire like Smyrna, Pera, and Mossul also held missions by Dominicans, Franciscans, Capuchins, Lazarists, Brothers of the Christian Doctrine, and Maronites.
[139] Quoted from *Missionary Herald*, vol. LIII, 78-9, in Hall, 40. These pages from the same edition of *Mis. Herald* were unavailable.
[140] Hamlin, letter from 1857, *Missionary Herald*, vol. LIII, 297.
[141] William Webster Hall quotes Cyrus Hamlin from *The Missionary Herald*, vol. XXXV, 39-44. See *Puritans in the Balkans*, 22, footnote.
[142] Ibid., 30.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Dwight, 269-70.

apparently attempts from the United States government to withdraw them, but they still did not have enough power to influence their decision.[145]

Robert College, as already mentioned, tried to look beyond its missionary conflicts with Jesuits and thus exerted its increased focus on education. Its operation was still not unlike the rival French lyceum as both were contemporary classical gymnasiums, keeping routine religious behavior such as praying.[146] But Robert College was neither a state school, nor was it 'officially' a missionary school in that it was founded as a private organization and moved quickly into self-sustainability.[147] Although this is debatable, Robert College may be seen further as an indication of the proposed reversal of missionary priorities – from conversion to education. This understanding was an improvement on the negative experience of Catholic propaganda, which had previously caused the appearance of Uniate movements in Bulgaria and a respective increase of hostility from the pro-Russian Orthodox community.[148]

Robert College was nonetheless run by people rooted in the American missionary movement and the constant references to the struggle with Catholix/Orthodoxes, particularly of its founder Dr. Hamlin, were simply a sign of competition. And the educational conflict of Catholic and American missionaries was already expressed as early as 1840 with the seminary of Bebek. That boarding school also had a rival

[145] Ibid., 29-30.

[146] The lyceum also taught theological courses and required attendance of daily prayers (Meininger, 184-5), while at Robert College there were morning prayers every day except for Sunday, the instructors also acting as preachers. For the latter – George Washburn, *Fifty Years in Constantinople*, 85.

[147] Opened in 1863, with the patronage of Christopher Robert – an American railroad president who had become interested in Christian mission after being converted as a young sugar-merchant's clerk. He was the benefactor and exerted a degree of influence on the curriculum, though the college was organized by Cyrus Hamlin, the first missionary pedagogue in the Empire. For the short story of Robert's conversion and Hamlin's Bulgarian students in Malta – a preaching article by a certain Alfred L. Long (it cannot be estimated with the available materials whether it was not rather Albert Long), found in *The Friend*, vol. 59, 1886, pp. 299-300.

[148] Meininger, 198-9. He acknowledges that this tension stopped after the Bulgarian church was formed in 1870.

institution in the same district, held by Jesuits and Lazarists, again on the French cosmopolitan standard of culture.[149] And this was yet another case of poor curriculum and short-lived success, which the Americans saw as reactionary to their activity.[150]

Growth of American schools

There was one American missionary who probably most represented the proposed reversal of priorities. His name was Cyrus Hamlin and he was the first pedagogue employed at the Maltese station. The Americans in Armenia had requested early on that the Board would send him, and after they opened a gymnasium in 1834 they needed someone to do the same in Constantinople.[151] So in 1840 he arrived and founded a boarding school at the Constantinople suburb of Bebek. In order to meet the expenses and move into self-sustainability, he incorporated industrial work into the school and tasked his students with the production of sheet-iron stoves, rat-traps, and baked yeast bread.[152] During the Crimean War, the same bread was provided for the wounded British soldiers in the military hospital of Florence Nightingale.[153]

Three decades later the same method of opening an industrial department in his school was applied by Henry House, who worked at the American boys' school after it was moved to from Philippopolis to Samokov in 1871. Believing that he would improve the boys' self-respect if they could earn money, he added hours of work to the daily

[149] Meininger, 199.
[150] [150] Cyrus Hamlin writes in his memoir *My Life and Times* how this 'French college' was a supposed reaction to the American school and evidence for this was the French institution's poor curriculum and ultimate failure.
[151] Hall, 26.
[152] Greene, 80.
[153] *Robert College Seventy-fifth Anniversary*, 1.

schedule.[154] This was especially unheard of in missionary schools, which otherwise "tried to turn out good Christians, not good carpenters."[155]

And the establishment of an evangelical church in Bulgaria was indeed not a priority, since it happened only in 1871, after the Bulgarian church had already been set. This was decided in 1863 at a missionary council in Eski Zagra,[156] in the same year and place where the girls' school had been founded. That town had already become the main center of conversion for the evangelists. In fact, before its movement to Samokov in 1871 the girls' school seems to have produced more cases of successful evangelization than of scholarly success. In 1869, for example, they had girls already familiar with biblical texts in Slavonic, from their town priests, but read them in Bulgarian as if for the first time and were deeply touched by them.[157] This was despite the fact that Eski Zagra also became a setting for the persecutions to which missionaries were accustomed from their ventures with Greeks and Armenians. However, there was no Bulgarian church to excommunicate them. Instead, the local population and municipal council – both there and in the nearby Merichleri – restricted the access of converted evangelists to basic needs like pastures, bakeries, and even the use of their own ploughs.[158]

It is difficult to rally talk about the practices of American schools if one relies on Robert College as a reference point. The boys' school in Philippopolis was founded in 1860 and the American College in Sofia still today chooses to trace its own history back to that date, even if it has become an elite institution of the Robert College type. The roots of the

[154] J.M. Nankivell, *A Life for the Balkans*, 97-8.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Hall, 46.
[157] "Woman's Work," *Missionary Herald*, vol. LXV, 301.
[158] Hall, 46.

Philippopolis school were in the mission as well, so in 1860 the founder of that school took credit for teaching the peasants how to think critically:

> … and the Bulgarian peasants, who are now thinking, and are learning more to think for themselves, feel that that religion which has for its teachers only an ignorant priesthood is not the right religion for them. Thus far the masses have been blind followers of blind leaders, while the educated, despising the priests, have feared to take an open stand in opposition to their empty forms, but have worshipped, and devoted themselves to, education.[159]

Conclusion

On the surface, American education in late Ottoman Bulgaria succeeded greatly because the missionaries were industrious and adaptive. The limitations of their original 'Apostolic' mission led them to concentrate on matters more important in their host region – education instead of puritan evangelization. But the patronizing and self-proclaimed 'Apostolic' attitude toward people different from their creed remained despite all this. If the biblical interpretations of missionary historian Rufus Anderson[160] were also perceived by the educators of Robert College and other American schools, then it is quite difficult to talk about advancement in this case, where education was the same tool for conversion, though not expressed in words as such. Common schooling seems to have been proposed as a way to make churches an 'effective agency' and a remedy for 'heathenism' – a dreaded state of 'mental degradation.'[161]

[159] "Letter from Mr. Clark, December 5, 1860," *Missionary Herald*, vol. LVII, 70.
[160] In 1823 when the missions began to gain speed, he was elected Assistant Secretary in the department of Corresponding Secretary at the American Board. See *Missionary Herald*, vol. XIX, 333.
[161] Anderson, 114. He also thought that, in 'heathenism,' the "mind is vacant, crushed, unthinking, enslaved to animal instincts and passions; earthly, sensual, terribly debased."

American education was managed so successfully also because it touched into the roots of native schooling. The 'Apostolic' mission was probably a governing myth for American missionaries, and thus the source of their determination for success. It was also their life and their behavior, which they brought with them from their homeland and applied onto the weak nationalities that welcomed them. Stronger nations with powerful churches like Greeks and Armenians persecuted them, after which they maintained a degree of suspicion. But a less identified nation such as the Bulgarians turned out a prosperous ground, because of an existent call for education and a deviancy from traditional church organization, as well as the reactionary nationalism, which the multicultural French/Greek schools had produced. The missionaries were able to apply on their new host not only their immediate experience from Armenia, but also their own culture.

As the chapter at hand has argued, the means for this was to reverse missionary priorities from conversion to education, even if it was not intentional. But, even considering how successful Christian missions have been in their goals throughout the world in centuries, this formulation still looks too theoretical to fully explain the success of American schools in late Ottoman Bulgaria. There was indeed a very practical application, which could be observed even after the focus period of this thesis – the application of family values into schooling, which the Americans had brought from their country not only as a method, but as part of their own upbringing – as themselves.

Chapter IV
Imported Values in Teaching

The fact that American missionaries settled in the region the way they did had its repercussions in education just as much as did the curriculum of their schools and the quality of their teachers. Much of the development in women's education, especially for Bulgaria, happened because of this peculiar aspect in missionary behavior. And their schools for girls essentially did what monitorial schools were already doing – create teachers. But this practice continued towards feminization of the teaching profession. On the whole this added to an already present attraction to the region from British female travelers whose criticism of Ottoman women's education was a provocation for its improvement. The reversal of missionary priorities continued the experiment in education by infusing it with early 19th century American household values, which are the subject of the current chapter. As a result, even in Robert College, which was an expensive and elitist institution, there was an attitude of upbringing brought into education.

The reason to develop the final chapter in this direction is that the available study topics, which so far related American education with the overall late Ottoman and Bulgarian condition of schooling, has not provided a satisfactory explanation of how the American schools could have possibly succeeded over the alternatives. It has been unclear how an education can change the lives of people, when this has been its constantly repeated goal. In a way, the church schools and *medreses* did not themselves affect the lives of students, which had been rather the duty of their respective communities and *millets*. Likewise, the secular French and Greek schools were intentionally removed from such responsibility. Monitorial schools, on the other hand, resembled a more totalitarian system where the agency of student monitors governed by reward and punishment. But the monitorial system did not remain.

So this final chapter at hand explores the American household values and brings more focus on women's and girls' education, though it has been present in the rest of this thesis. Very much in the spirit of other such comprehensive essays, the 'gender' aspect is left for the very end. As a side note, this 'tradition' is probably traceable to one of the major Enlightenment influences on women's education – Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In his *Treatise on Education*, also known as *Emile*, the Frenchman too introduced his ideas about women's education in the last chapter, claiming that he had continued where John Locke had left off – the completion of a gentleman's education followed by matrimony. Dissatisfied with this, Rousseau constructed the character Sophie after claiming what the purposes of women's education should be:

> …the whole education of women ought to be relative to men. To please them, to be useful to them, to make themselves loved and honored by them, to educate them when young, to care for them when grown, to counsel them, to console them, and to make life agreeable and sweet to them – these are the duties of women at all times, and what should be taught them from their infancy.[162]

Even before him, Daniel Defoe had sparked interest in these 'matters.'[163] But the origins of transferred ideas and culture are not nearly as important as observing the unique progress that occurred in the late Ottoman Empire, and in an unformed nation-state like Bulgaria. This expansive context of the story is often overlooked, which is made clear by the difficulty with which material can be assembled about the topics discussed. It is nonetheless important when looking at influential institutions of education, that their own influences are also located.

[162] Rousseau, *Emile*, abridged, Trans. William Payne, 262-3.
[163] In Defoe's essay "The Education of Women," written in 1719.

Family values in teaching

It was mentioned in the previous chapter that the first American missionaries who went to Smyrna were to some extent considered passing travelers and this was because they were unmarried. On the other hand, for their successors it was commonplace to have their wives and children with them. Cyrus Hamlin's wife was also there in the fall of 1845 when a female boarding school was commenced in Constantinople. And she accepted her first seven Armenian students in what was at the time a 'school-room.'[164] The schools for girls that the missionaries opened were indeed school-houses and it has been said about Mrs. Hamlin that she approached her job as a 'maternal duty' and her values were shared between her school and her family.[165]

And in the case of Henry House from the farm school in Salonika, his wife was the benefactor of a memoir for his life and work with Bulgarians. Soon after marrying, they traveled first to the station in Eski Zagra when the missionary board had decided that the need for a mission there was the strongest.[166] There were apparently few foreign families there at the time, because their culture clash was more than being unfamiliar with the local language. Their neighbors would sometimes misinterpret the Americans' behavior as a married couple.[167] But since the girls' school in Eski Zagra had been recently moved together with the boys' school of Philippopolis to their new location in Samokov, Mr.

[164] Mary Benjamin, *The Missionary Sisters*, 98.
[165] Ibid., 330.
[166] J.M. Nankviel, *A Life for the Balkans*, 32-3. They even built a new house for their settlement with the mission (46-7).
[167] Ibid., 57-8. She followed the 'American custom' to hold her husband by the arm, which their neighbors interpreted as keeping him from running away.

House was further stationed there into the company of more than a few missionary families.[168]

And in terms of education Anglophone women traveling in the Ottoman Empire at the time generally seemed more interested in family compared to their male counterparts. For example, the Islamic basis of *medrese* schools made them consider it in terms of other Islam-specific societal institutions like the harem, which may have caused not only stagnation of learning, but also a detriment in upbringing. Clara Clement saw from her perspective that tradition was producing ill-tempered mothers, despotic fathers, and a male/female relationship of superiority already from early childhood.[169] In addition to this exercise of gender inequality, the way in which boys were being brought up resulted in their lack of discipline at the most basic level – with regards to sleep, diet, hygiene, and clothing.[170]

Of course, one did not have to be a woman to see this when it was in such dissonance with Western culture. Henry Barkley who travelled in Bulgaria around the uprising of 1876 approached his observation from the position of pride with the English way of upbringing. In comparison to how mothers and sisters were able to turn boys into honorable men and even transfer this from higher to lower classes, the Turkish women of higher class had no education and believed themselves "created solely for the pleasure of man."[171] This criticism was directed exclusively to Muslim society where polygamy meant that many young men had no chance of experiencing women's society after

[168] Ibid., 66.
[169] Clara Clement, *Constantinople*, 294
[170] Ibid.
[171] Henry Barkley, *Between the Danube and Black Sea*, 91.

leaving their father's harem.[172] It was not relevant to the education of Bulgarians, but it strikes that the criticism was not so much on the grounds of class issues in Muslim society as it was about mothers' lack of education.

Children's lack of discipline would have normally found remedy from a more involved female parent and western critique became accustomed to looking at education for this role in the improvement of character among women. In the countryside, westerners would sometimes argue with locals whether women were capable of thought. This was exactly what one of the early missionaries – Henry Otis Dwight – reported about a Turkish chief named Yusuf Bey who had pointed to him a couple of women driving a herd of buffaloes for their husband, proving that they were devoid of minds.[173] To this claim the missionary responded with his own agenda – that it would have been different if these women had been born after the sultan started building schools for girls. Such cases may seem exaggerated now, but with schooling in the late Ottoman Empire they offered a good level of discussion for what was essentially an interest brought by women of the West.

Among these women were of course not only the wives of missionaries, but also travelers and novelists. Their appearance coincided with what Vesna Goldsworthy labeled 'literary colonization' at the beginning of her *Inventing Ruritania*.[174] And the perception of Anglophone authors had begun around the time when the 'Balkans' had become popularly known under that name in the 1870's and 1880's, which before had been

[172] Ibid., 93.
[173] Henry Otis Dwight, *Constantinople and its Problems*, 94.
[174] Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania*, 2.

'European Turkey' or the 'Near East.'[175] The literary tool of 'imagined geography' therefore flourished, because England had no geopolitical or scientific interests in that region.[176] But since the evangelical missions were also not supported by the United States or British governments, these somewhat independent missionaries were able to practically apply themselves into what they considered a backward setting. Then if they were as much part of the educationist tradition as were the founders of monitorial schools in Chapter II, they also acted from the point of view that education was the basic means to form an individual.

Surrogate mothers for the natives

Anglophone westerners were clearly comfortable with their construct of the Ottoman educational setting already before 1876. And American missions in particular had a success on female education in Constantinople and elsewhere in the Empire, because they approached schooling for girls and women in the same boarding method as had Cyrus Hamlin or Henry House. Since the Americans brought with them their perceptions and their culture, they also brought their methodology.

So their success may be also down to the application of a gender-related education theory rooted in American common schooling from the first half of the 19th century. Its was still observable in the United States at the time of the Civil War, when Americans were becoming inclined on extending the societal role of schools in order to subsidize family

[175] Ibid., 3. Just as Maria Todorova (25), she notices the first use of 'Balkans' by German geographer August Zeune in 1809.
[176] Nikolay Aretov, „Образи в авторитетно огледало. Стереотипите за балканите в английската литература," *Литературна мисъл*, vol. 2. Aretov gave a topical review of Goldsworthy's research.

values.[177] The point was to achieve for children a balance of individual growth and social harmony, but what followed was an interpretation of profession through gender categories. Regardless of whether teachers were male or female, they were considered as practicing a feminine profession – "Surrogate Mother to the State's Surrogate Father."[178]

In this period the household had been a prime unit of American social organization – uniting home, workplace, church, and school,[179] and this was the setting in the first half of the 19th century when the American missionaries were themselves being raised. Compared to Europe, this period was not revolutionary and, likewise, its rapid urbanization was not seen so much as a problem as it was in the Old World.[180] But missionary activity of the educational and christianizing kind was practiced even on the territory of the United States. Aside from all the conversion still going on at Native Americans, there were also 'urban' missionaries who observed whether the poor population was attending church or was in possession of bibles.[181]

So the "days of large families" were still fresh at the youth of these American missionaries who brought their culture to the Ottoman Empire. The large and strong household had still been the rule, for example, in the generation before Cyrus Hamlin. He was born in 1811 and was not one of many children, but his father had been one of seventeen.[182] And in these households it was commonplace for girls as well to be educated. This was of course not unheard of in Europe, if one considers individual,

[177] Audrey Thompson, "Surrogate Family Values: the Refeminization of Teaching," *Educational Theory*, vol. 47, Spring 1997, 315-16.
[178] Ibid., 317.
[179] David Nasaw, *Schooled to Order*, 10.
[180] Ibid., 13. Migration of the rural poor had flooded English cities like Manchester, but the corresponding situation in New York was different due to the possibility of economic independence.
[181] Ibid., 19.
[182] Hamlin, *My Life and Times*, 11-12. Hamlin, who was born in 1811 in a Massachusetts town, was not one of that many children, but his father was one of seventeen.

highly educated and 'enlightened' resident noblewomen of Constantinople such as the Ottoman *valide sultan*, or Phanariot ladies. But their education had been consistent with maintaining class, rather than improving it.

On the other hand, the female missionaries in Constantinople and elsewhere in the East were dedicated to "Christian education of their neglected, ignorant sisters in the East."[183] They saw some of these 'Eastern' (higher-class) women as comparable to American children with regards to their levels of education. That was the report of Seraphina Everett – one of the 'missionary sisters' – who evaluated the religious knowledge of a pious Armenian's wife less than a child of four back in the United States.[184] Therefore it is understandable that female visitors to Constantinople highlighted the success of the girls' counterpart to Robert College, which was founded in 1871.[185] But this was for the most part the satisfaction that their job had been done.

And the metaphoric language for the surrogate female parent had become clear since the early years after the missions moved their center from Smyrna to Constantinople. Missionary women were anyway expected to perform a mother's task of teaching Christianity,[186] but they were also assigned a matriarchal organizing purpose for the school campus.[187] The consequence of higher erudition was probably seen as a victory for these imported feminization values, but it does ask the question whether this would have occurred without the infiltration of foreign missions for conversion and the competition that followed. It certainly would not have happened if the American missionaries did not

[183] Harriett Warner Ellis, *Our Eastern Sisters and their Missionary Helpers*, Intro ix.
[184] Mary Benjamin, *The Missionary Sisters*, 118.
[185] Clement, 298-301. She reflects concurrently on the boys' and girls' boarding schools.
[186] Ellis, 133. This was philosophized for a mission in Burma.
[187] Benjamin, 95. A letter of correspondence between the missionary sisters also discusses organization matters.

fully understand the present conditions of education in the Ottoman Empire in order to adapt the practices in which they were well trained.

The practices of women's education in late Ottoman Bulgaria were not invented by the resident missionaries either. In fact, the girl's school at Eski Zagra is seen as a replica of Mount Holyoke – a female seminary founded in Massachusetts in 1837. There is even a scholarly connection between these two institutions, since the school of Eski Zagra was founded by a missionary named Theodore Byington whose wife was a Holyoke graduate.[188] And the Massachusetts school was founded by an influential missionary woman named Mary Lyon. Her philosophy had been that women were the cornerstones of home, church, school, community, and nation,[189] which originated in her own critique of the current state of educational affairs. Not long after her death, William Thayer summarized her situation as follows:

> Boys are taught to think that they must live to some purpose, and attain to some distinction in definite callings. Hence one is educated for a clergyman, another for a lawyer, another for a physician, another for a merchant, another for a farmer, and thus on. Not so with a multitude of girls. There is so much indefiniteness in their plans, and in the system of education under which they are taught, that it cannot be said they are interested to be teachers, or housekeepers, or seamstresses, or even wives and mothers. Of course society must share the blame for such a state of things. If its rule is, reading rooms for males, and carpets and plumes for females, it must reap accordingly.[190]

The application of Holyoke teaching models by the American missionaries in Eski Zagra brought Bulgarian women into the public sphere by educating them to be teachers.[191] It was a matter of professional awareness as much as societal self-awareness, because in the

[188] Barbara Reeves-Ellington, "A Vision of Mount Holyoke in the Ottoman Balkans," *Gender & History*, vol. 16, No. 1, 146-7.
[189] Ibid.
[190] William Thayer, *The Good Girl and True Woman*, 34.
[191] Reeves-Ellington, 149.

Ottoman Empire teaching was the only intellectual occupation available to women.[192] But the rise of women's education in Bulgaria before 1876 was also seen as a support for the national project. It cannot be said, however, whether this created a call for special education of women or equal education between men and women.[193]

The outcomes of this are nevertheless deterministic – the teaching profession has been feminized. Whether this is an evaluation depends on attitude, experience, or the moment.

[192] Krassimira Daskalova and Georgeta Nazarska, *Women's Movement and Feminisms in Modern Bulgaria (1850s-1940)*, 7.

[193] Ibid. Petko Slaveikov had wanted a woman "to become man's good comrade," while Lyuben Karavelov argued for the "full physical, moral, and intellectual accomplishments." Exact citations are not available in that text.

Conclusion

The 19th century was probably the most turbulent period in Ottoman history. The state's belated involvement into the process of education left them vulnerable to enemies within, such as their educated classes, but also their dissatisfied subjects who called for education. Even then the state schools were operated on a questionable multicultural secularism, with foreign influence on the curriculum. An imported standardized school system turned more successful, particularly for the Bulgarians. This was the situation found by American missionaries, which gave them incentive to act and infuse their American family values into schooling and that way integrate into the environment to an extent allowing them to be the first ones who reported the Bulgarian massacres of 1876. It must be understood that this particular brand of education was intended to 'form' individuals and thus it accomplished lasting success.

The history of education is a valuable inquiry that can uncover alien origins to even the most inconspicuous aspects of daily life.

Bibliography

Ágoston, Gábor and Bruce Masters. *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire*. New York: Facts on File, 2009.

Anderson, Rufus. *Foreign Missions: Their Relations and Claims*. New York: Charles Scribner & Co., 1869.

Aretov, Nikolay. „Образи в авторитетно огледало. Стереотипите за Балканите в английската литература." *Литературна мисъл*, vol. 2, 2000.

Baker, Edward. *A Brief Sketch of the Lancasterian System, intended as a Companion in visiting a Lancasterian School, with advice to Committees on the Establishment, management and examination of such Schools*. Troy, NY: F. Adancourt, 1816.

Barkley, Henry. *Between the Danube and Black Sea*. London: John Murray, 1876.

Barton, James L. *Daybreak in Turkey*. Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1908.

Bashford, John. *Elementary Education in Saxony*. London: Sampson Law, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1881.

Benjamin, Mary. *The Missionary Sisters: A Memorial of Mrs. Seraphina Haynes Everett, and Mrs. Harriet Martha Hamlin, late Missionaries of the A.B.C.F.M. at Constantinople*. Boston: American Tract Society, 1860.

Black, C.E. *The Establishment of Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*. Princeton: University Press, 1943.

Creasy, Edward. *History of the Ottoman Turks: From the Beginning of their Empire to the present Time*. Vol. 2. London: Richard Bentley, 1856.

Davey, Richard. *The Sultan and his Subjects*. London: Chapman and Hall, 1897.

Dasskalova, Krassimira and Georgeta Nazarska. *Women's Movement and Feminisms in Modern Bulgaria*. Sofia: Bulgarian Association of University Women, 2006.

Dwight, Henry. *Constantinople and its Problems: its Peoples, Customs, Religions and Progress*. London: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1901.

Ellis, Harriett Warner. *Our Eastern Sisters and their Missionary Helpers*. London: Religious Tract Society, 1880.

Gladstone, William. *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*. London: John Murray, 1876.

Goldsworthy, Vesna. *Inventing Ruritania. The Imperialism of the Imagination*. New Haven: Yale, 1998.

Goodell, William. *Forty Years in the Turkish Empire*. New York: Robert Carter, 1876.

Greene, Joseph. *Leavening the Levant*. Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1916.

Hall, William Webster, Jr. *Puritans in the Balkans* (Bulgarian Translation). Sofia: Nov Chovek, 2008. First Ed.: Studia historico-phillologica serdicensia series. Sofia: Kultura, 1938.

Hamlin, Cyrus. *Among the Turks*. New York: American Tract Society, 1877.

---. *My Life and Times*. Second Edition. Boston: Congregational Sunday School and Publishing Society, 1893.

Hertslet, Edward. *The Map of Europe by Treaty*. Vol. 2 and Vol. 4. London: Butterworths, 1875.

Jelavich, Barbara. *History of the Balkans: Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century*. Vol. 1. Cambridge: University Press, 1995. cc1983.

Jireček, Konstantin. *History of the Bulgarians*. Petar Petrov, Ed. Sofia: Nauka i Izkustvo, 1978. cc1876.
Konev, Ilija. *America in the Spiritual Space of the Bulgarian Renaissance*. Sofia: St. Kliment Ohridski, 1996.
Lancaster, Joseph. *Outlines of a Plan for educating ten thousand poor children, by establishing Schools in Country Towns and Villages; and for uniting Works of Industry with useful Knowledge, under Royal Patronage*. London: Free School, 1806.
---. *The British System of Education*. Georgetown: Milligan and Cooper, 1812.
Lancaster, Ruth. *The Ottoman Empire and the Reforms of Selim III*. Thesis for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in History, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences of the University of Illinois, 1916.
Leitch, James. *Practical Educationists and their Systems of Teaching*. Glasgow: James Maclehose, 1876.
Locke, John. *Some Thoughts concerning Education*. Ed. R.H. Quick. Cambridge: University Press, 1889.
Lyon, Mary. *Memoirs of Miss Mary Lyon, of New Haven, Conn*. New Haven: A.H. Maltby, 1837.
Meininger, Thomas. *The Formation of a Nationalist Bulgarian Intelligentsia, 1835-1878*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1987.
Midhat, Ali Haydar. *The Life of Midhat Pasha: a Record of his Services, political Reforms, Banishment, and Judicial Murder*. London: John Murray, 1903.
Monroe, Paul, Ed. *A Cyclopedia of Education*. Vol. 1, Vol. 3. New York: Macmillan, 1911-12.
Nankivell, J.M., Ed. *A Life for the Balkans. The Story of John Henry House of the American Farm School Thessaloniki, Greece*. *As told by his Wife*. New York: Fleming H. Revell.
Nasaw, David. *Schooled to Order: a Social History of Public Schooling in the United States*. Oxford: University Press, 1981. cc1979.
Panaretoff, Stephen. *Near Eastern Affairs and Conditions*. New York: Macmillan, 1922.
Pears, Edwin. *Forty Years in Constantinople*. *The Recollections of Sir Edwin Pears 1873-1915 with 16 Illustrations*. London: Herbert Jenkins, 1916.
Punch. Vol. LXX, August 5, 1876. London: The Office, 1876.
Reeves-Ellington, Barbara. "A Vision of Mount Holyoke in the Ottoman Balkan: American Cultural Transfer, Bulgarian Nation-Building and Women's Educational Reform, 1858-1870." *Gender & History*, vol. 16, April 2004. pp. 146-171.
Robert College. *Seventy-fifth Anniversary*. Istanbul: Robert College, 1938.
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Rousseau's Émile or Treatise on Education*. Abridged. Trans. William Payne. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1918. cc1892. Rousseau's text 1762.
Stavrianos, L.S. "Antecedents to the Balkan Revolutions of the Nineteenth Century." *The Journal of Modern History*. Vol. 29, No. 4. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957. pp. 335-348.
Stoyanoff, Zachary. *Memoirs of the Bulgarian Uprisings* Sofia: Bulgarski pisatel, 1976. c1884.

Somel, Selcuk Aksin. *Historical Dictionary of the Ottoman Empire*. From *Ancient Civilizations and Historical Eras*, No. 7. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003.
---. Trans. M.W. Potter. *Pages From the Autobiography of a Bulgarian Insurgent*. London: Edward Arnold, 1913.
Thayer, William. *The Good Girl and the Woman*. New York: T.Y. Crowell.
The Friend. Vol. 59. Philadelphia: William H. Pile, 1886.
The Missionary Herald containing the Proceedings of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Boston: Press of T.R. Marvin & Son, 1861.
---. Vol. 62, January 1866. Boston: Missionary House, 1866.
---. Vol. 65, 1869. Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1869.
---. Vol. 69, 1873. Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1873.
Thompson, Audrey. "Surrogate Family Values: The Refeminization of Teaching." *Educational Theory*. Vol. 47, No. 2. University of Illinois, 1997.
Todorova, Maria. *Imagining the Balkans*. Oxford: University Press, 2009.
Tschureneff, Jana. "Diffusing Useful Knowledge: the monitorial system of education in Madras, London and Bengal." *Paedagogica Historica*. London: Routledge, 2008. pp. 245-264.
van Dyke, Henry. *The Poems of Henry van Dyke*. London: Arthur F. Bird, 1925.
von Ranke, Leopold. *The History of Servia and the Servian Revolution*. Trans. Mrs. Alexander Kerr. London: Henry G. Bohn, 1853.
Washburn, George. *Fifty Years in Constantinople and Recollections of Robert College*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1909.
Waters, Clara Erskine Clement. *Constantinople: the City of the Sultans*. Boston: Estes and Lauriat, 1895.