

Ali Arslan



Turkish Education System from Islamic Civilization to Western Civilization

Due to either living of Turks in large areas from East Asia to Europe in 3000-year period or resulting interactions it is necessary to separate Turkish education system into three periods: Eastern and Interior Asian Civilizations Period; Islamic Civilization Period; Western Civilization Period

Eastern and Interior Asian Civilizations Period: Before the Turks has accepted Islam there was an education system which inherited by living in family and tribe. Usually master-apprentice method was applied. The Turks who used alphabet in 5. century BC improved old Turkish calendar and produced writing in period of Kök Turks. This should be a proof of the existence of the education system. Digging of ideas to stone inscription for people to draw a lesson refers to plenty of literate people among Turks. This application demonstrates the existence of a common educational approach.

Islamic Civilization Period: In 7th century Turks have encountered Muslims who came to Turkistan and some Turkish tribes and states had adopted Islam. However the Turks had adopted Islam in the 10th century usually. This transformation changed religious, social, legal and educational percept of Turks. The madrasah which constitutes the main element of the education system of Islamic civilization emerged in the late 9th century. The Great Seljuk institutionalized the madrasah by developing them. The Nizamiyyah madrasah that founded in 1067 with government support set a model for the Ottomans in terms of curriculum, instructor, administration, housing and recognition of diplomas by state. Ottoman-era educational institutions are as follows.

Primary School or Neighborhood School, These are schools where all children up to 9-10 years learn basic read-write and religious knowledge. ***Ottoman Madrasah,*** Ottoman madrasah is an institution which is above primary education and contains secondary school, high school and higher education institution. These madrasah are founded only with an endowment which states level of education, functioning and sources of income. The madrasah which contains secondary school, high school and higher education institutions were divided into different levels according to the periods. Mehmed the Conqueror separated madrasah into 7 levels. Although some changes were made in these levels of Ottoman madrasah in later, a change in substance did not occur in fact until 20th century. The madrasah graduates can act in all levels of Ottoman bureaucracy and education institutions, except in army. ***Palace School(Enderun):*** It is a political school which founded by Murat II in Ottoman Palace and continued until 1908. Until the period of Suleiman the Magnificent non-Muslim recruiting children were registered for school and then the Turks were also registered. This school was founded in order to meet needs of the palace, army and bureaucracy.

Western Civilization Period: While Ottoman State declined the madrasah had its share of decline. The madrasah which had been operating since establishment of the Ottoman State could not afford expected over time. From 18th century onwards Ottoman administration started to

open European education institutions. In 19th century Ottoman State had founded new style European education system by having discarded the madrasah.

Western-Eastern Mixed System: In 18th century European institutions began to take over in field of education-culture. Despite this, madrasah continued as a basic education institutions until 1838. Although improvement of madrasah was mentioned, this issue could not be put on the agenda until 1909. From 1839 European-style arrangements were made in formal education in Ottoman State and madrasah were left as they were.

a. Improvement of Primary Schools; in the process that began in 1838 with improvement of neighborhood schools the state started to open primary schools.

b. Opening of Western Type Secondary Education Institutions; In 1838 apart from madrasah it was decided to establish second-degree (Sınıf-ı Sani) education stage on primary schools and these schools, are called Middle School, came into operation. With Ministry of Education Regulation in 1869 education, except madrasah, was put in an order as a whole.

c. The Establishment of Western University; In 1845 it was decided to found European style university (Darülfünun) and it was put into practice. However the university was able to start continuous education in 1900. In periods of Tanzimat Reform Era and Abdul Hamid II the classic educational institutions were discarded in Ottoman State and european style formal education system was founded.

Full-Western Period in Education System: The administration which wanted to establish a western regime after the proclamation of the Republic put Unification of Education Law into effect to end the dual training system. Thus implementation of the Western education system was introduced by having put an end to education system which had been implemented as either western or eastern since 1838. Although from elementary school to university many regulations have been undertaken in Republican era it remained in western education system in essence.

Conclusion; This paper will attempt to examine the transition from the Islamic civilization to Western civilization in details.

Ali Arslan was born in 1961 in Yayladağı-Hatay. He completed elementary and secondary education in Yayladağı. He graduated from the department of history in Istanbul University in 1985. In the same year he has started graduate education in history and completed M.A. degree with the thesis “Academic Relations Between Ottoman Turkey and Turkestan (XIV-XIX. Century)” in 1988. He started his Phd in 1988 and successfully and became a doctor with the thesis “Transition from Darulfunun to the University” in 1992. He started to work as research assistant in the department of Modern Age and The History of Turkish Republic in 1987. With the establishment of The History of Turkish Republic as a new branch in 1989 he preferred to study in this department. In 1990 he went to UK to improve his foreign language and to study in the Archives and Libraries of England. Between October 1992- December 1993 he worked as an education consultant in the Turkish Cooperation and Development Agency in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1995 he has started to deliver classes as an Assistant Professor in the department of The History of Turkish Republic. In November 1997 he became an Associate Professor in the same department. He became a professor of history in 2005. He was the chair of Department of History in Istanbul University between the years 2011-2014.