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“MANASTIR MEKTEBİ İDADI-İ MÜLKİ” – A CIVIL HIGH SCHOOL IN THE MANASTIR PROVINCE: FROM ITS ESTABLISHMENT TO THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY

Abstract. – Until the preparation of the General Education Regulations "Maraif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi" of 1869, the educational system in the Ottoman Empire was predominantly Muslim-theological-centered. To eliminate these deficiencies the "1869 General Education Regulations" were prepared, where much attention has been given to the civil high schools, attended by students from different religious and ethnic background. One of these civil high schools was opened in Bitola (Manastir) in Ottoman Macedonia and this article explores the history of this school.

Key words. – Manastır, Ottoman Empire, Manastır Mektebi İdadi-i Mülki, High School, 1869 Education Regulation.

According to the Turkish Language Association's "Turkish Dictionary", the word "idadi" (high school) comes from the Arabic word "idad"¹ and is explained as: old name for secondary schools.² The term "idadi" was used for the preparatory classes of the Western-style schools opened until the first years of the Tanzimat period. However, this term was also used for those elementary schools which started operating in 1847, whose prime goal was to prepare the students for high school. However, from the second part of the

¹ Devellioğlu 1995, 409.

² Eren et al. 1992, 680.

19th century, by “*idadi*” we understand those schools which were opened as high school equivalents and were additionally divided into military and civil *idadis*.³

Until 1844 there were not any educational organizations in the Ottoman Empire which specialized in preparing students for military schools. Recognizing this deficiency, the commander and general, Emin, suggested in 1845 that in order to be admitted to military schools, students should be obligated to pass through some kind of a preparatory school. This proposition was assessed by the Ministry of Education. These new preparatory schools were intended to prepare individuals who wanted to work in administration, in the armed forces, naval forces, or as medics. Following this objective, on May 15, 1845, the Council of Education “Meclis-i Maarif-i Muvakkat” took some decisions on the improvement of the military schools. Until then, military education was taught for three years in the army centers. Following the decisions of the Council of Education, the education in military schools would be for vocational courses, while such schools were to be opened in twelve different places in the Empire, under the name of Military High School “Mekteb-i Fünun-i İdadiye”.⁴ One of these five-year military high schools was to be established in Istanbul and the others in the army centers in the provinces. All these schools would be under the administration of army marshals and the instruction period was set to five years. Those candidates who already took lessons in writing, Arabic and Persian would be taken to the military high schools directly, and the others would have to pass an exam in Persian and Arabic.

The first military high school was opened in Istanbul, in the old Mekteb-i Harbiyye building in Maçka was allocated. However, since the building was in need of repair, it was transferred to the Tiled Kiosk in Beşiktaş Beach until the necessary repairs were completed. In the following years, military high schools were opened in the provinces as well.⁵ One of them was the Military High School “Manastır Mekteb-i İdadi-i Asker” in Bitola (Macedonia).

Şevket Süreyya Aydemir mentioned this school in his work “Tek Adam”:

“The Manastır Military High School was a boarding school. In the old education system this school was equal to today's military high schools. Their curricula was pretty loaded. Military high schools were established in army

³ Öztürk 2000, 464.

⁴ Engelhart 1976, 172.

⁵ Öztürk, ibid, 464.

centers. They aimed to prepare students for military schools. In fact, military high schools were the training barracks. There was a complete military discipline and army atmosphere. The military staff of the country first got to know each other in military high schools. Since students came from every part of the region, they got to know each other better in these high schools. The teachers were also chosen very carefully... Among all the military high schools, the Manastır Military High School was to some extent the best and one of the most included in the affairs of the country.”⁶



Figure 1. “Manastır Mekteb-i İdadi-i Askeri”. View from Pelister mountain
(Istanbul University Abdulhamit Photo Archive)

Numerous significant names attended this school. Without a doubt, the most significant of these was Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the pioneer of the Turkish Republic. Fuat Bolca, Nuri Conker, Ankara Central Commander Demir Ali, and the well-known name of the Unionist Ömer Naci, were among the alumni of the school.⁷

Despite certain difficulties, the military high schools kept on preparing students and producing important military persons for a long time.

⁶ Aydemir 1976, 67-68.

⁷ Turgut (ed.) 2005, 510-511.

However, the principal subject of this article are the civil high schools which had modernization as a main goal and were open as a result of some deficiencies in the educational system in the Ottoman Empire.

CIVIL HIGH SCHOOLS

Until the preparation of the General Education Regulations "Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi" of 1869, the educational system in the Ottoman Empire was predominantly Muslim-theological-centered. This does not imply that there were not any western-style educational institutions – in fact there were – but they had many deficiencies. To eliminate these deficiencies the "1869 General Education Regulations" were prepared, where much attention has been given to the civil high schools. The number of junior high schools, opened in order to constitute the first level of secondary education, was increased both in Istanbul and the province. However, although many vocational schools were opened in Istanbul, the Galatasaray Mekteb-i Sultani was the single newly established educational institution in the second level of secondary education. For this reason, in the 1869 General Education Regulations "Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi", it was planned to open schools with the name of *idâdî*, which would follow after high school, but would not be on the same level as the universities. The opening of these schools was also necessary for the implementation of the principle of ottomanism, which was the basic element of the educational system in the Tanzimat era.⁸ According to this principle, Muslim and non-Muslim children who graduated from secondary schools were educated together in *idâdîs*. One of the most important conditions for opening an *idâdî* was the settlement where the school was opened to have more than 1000 households. The construction of these schools, the expenses for personnel and other expenses would be covered by the Provincial Education Fund. Each of these schools would have six teachers, and six assistants, all of them selected from among those who graduated from the Dârülmuallimîn-i Âliye in Istanbul. The annual cost for an *idâdî* would be 80,000 kuruş (Ottoman currency). The educational period of these schools was three years, and these were the subjects taught: "Türkçe Hitâbet ve İnşâ, Fransızca, Kavânîn-i Osmaniye, Mantık, İlm-i Servet-i Milel, Coğrafya, Târih-i Umûmî, İlm-i Mevâlid, Cebir, Hesap ve Defter Tutma, Hendese ve İlm-i Mescîha, Hikmet-i Tabiyîye, Kimya, Resim". During this education period, the holiday and exam calendars of the staff and students of the schools would be

⁸ Öztürk, ibid, 465.

simultaneous with military high schools. At the same time, the holidays would be distributed equally according to the holidays of each segment, since the students of the schools were of different religions (Muslim/ Non-Muslim).⁹

Although the general rules of the high schools were clearly defined, the civil high schools could not be opened for a long time due to the lack of financial budgets, buildings, teachers, and textbooks.¹⁰ In 1872, the Minister of Education, in the memorandum he sent to the Grand Vizier, stated that the high schools should be opened as soon as possible and foreign language courses such as English, French and German should be taught. He also stated that in order to prepare teachers for these schools, a high school branch should be opened in the Faculty of Education "Darülmüallimin", and its graduates should be paid 200 kuruş more than the secondary school teachers, while the teaching staff should be at least 10 people according to the importance of the courses, and if necessary, a principal and two janitors should be appointed.

Following the decree from the Minister of education, in 1873 the "Dar'ül-Maarif" school, which prepared students for state work, was transformed into an *idâdî*. Hence the first civil high school was opened. In August 1873 it was decided to open three or four other high schools in Istanbul. Afterwards, this modernization movement in education was transferred to the provinces as well. The first such school opened in the provinces was the "Mora Yenişehir High School". Despite this, the number of high schools opened in the Ottoman lands until 1876 did not exceed five in total. Moreover, there were not enough school buildings and teachers for these schools to function properly. In the following years, however, many understood the importance of the *idâdî* high schools so some provincial revenues were allocated for the spread of these schools in the provinces. In 1884 this enabled the establishment of many civil high schools all over the Ottoman Empire.¹¹ One of these was the Manastır (Bitola) Civil High School "Manastır Mektebi İdadi-i Mülki".

⁹ Mahmud 1338, 478.

¹⁰ Cihan 2007, 64.

¹¹ Cihan, ibid, 72.

**MANASTIR CIVIL HIGH SCHOOL
(MANASTIR MEKTEBİ İDADI-İ MÜLKİ)**

Manastır Civil High School “Manastır Mektebi İdadi-i Mulki” was opened on 5 December 1885 according to the Gregorian calendar, or 23 November “Teşrinisani” 1301 according to the Julian calendar.¹²



Figure 2. The Opening Ceremony of Manastır Civil High School “Manastır Mektebi İdadi-i Mülki” (Istanbul University Abdulhamit Photo Archive)

More than four years after its foundation, on February 15, 1889, a boarding house was opened in the school.¹³ After this, on August 22, 1889, the Ministry of Education was requested to establish a local hospital in Bitola and to buy the necessary materials for the treatment of the “Manastır Mektebi İdadi-i Mulki” students.¹⁴ This demand was proof of the desire to meet all the needs of the school and to meet the needs of the students.

¹² Mahmud, *ibid*, 221.

¹³ Manastır Vilayet Salnamesi 1305, 154.

¹⁴ BOA, MF. MKT., 112/40.



Figure 3. A Side View of Manastır Civil High School “Manastır Mektebi İdadi-i Mülki”
(Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Atatürk Library Photo Archive)

We learn about the administrative and teaching staff of the school in these years from the provincial yearbook of 1305. According to this, the principal of the school was master İsmail. Various courses were given in the school. The names of these courses and the instructors who went to the courses were the following:

Name of the course:	Teacher:
Hesab ve Cebir	Receb Efendi
Tarih	Yüzbaşı Tevfik Efendi
Hikmet	Said Bey
Hukuk-ı idare	Rüstem Bey
Hendese	Halid Bey
Coğrafya	Faik Bey
Müsellesat	Halid Bey
Arabi	Hacı Mehmed Efendi
Farisi	Amr Efendi
Tarih-i tabii	Kolağası Davud Bey
Fransızca	Mülazım Tahir Bey

Resim	Mülazım İbrahim Bey
Ameli ve Lisan-ı Osmanî	İsmail Efendi
Hüsni Hattı Türkî	Malik Efendi

Table 1. Courses Given at the School According to the Manastir Provincial Yearbook of 1305 and the Teachers teaching These Courses (Manastir Provincial Yearbook 1305, 154)

İsmail Efendi (Master), a professor of Turkish language, was also the principal of the school. These duties of İsmail were officially approved by the Provincial Directorate of Education on March 13, 1889.¹⁵ The curriculum of the school was as follows:

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
1. Sene "First Year"					
Fransızca	Hüsni Hattı Türkî	Hendese-i Hattiyé	Farisi	Resim	Hendese-i Hattiyé
Hesab	Coğrafya-i Osmani	Sarf-i Arabi	Sarf-i Arabi	Hüsni-i Hattı Fransevi	İmla-i Türkî
İmla-i Türkî	Hesab	Tarih-i Osmani	Tarih-i Osmani	Fransızca	Farisi
2. Sene "Second Year"					
Hendese-i Musattaha	Tarih-i Tabii	Kavaid ve İmla	Hendese-i Musattaha	Kavaid ve İmla	Coğrafya-i Umumi
Fransızca	Nahv-i Arabi	Coğrafya-i Umumi	Farisi	Fransızca	Resim
Hesab	Tarih-i Umumi	Nahv-i Arab i	Tarih-i Tabii	Hesab	Tarih-i Umumi
3. Sene "Third Year"					
Belagat-ı Osmaniye	Hendese-i Mücesseme	Tabakat-ül- arz	Tarih-i Tabii	Tarih-i Tabii	Resim
Maani	Fransızca	Usul-i Defteri	Hendese-i Mücesseme	Maani	Hikmet-i Tabiiye

¹⁵ BOA, MF. Mkt., 108/12.

Tarih-i Umumi	Coğrafyanın ziraat, sanat, ticaret kısımları	Nahv-i Arabi	Belagat-i Osmaniye	Coğrafyanın ziraat, sanat, ,ticaret kısımları	Fransızca
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4. Sene “Fourth Year”

Cebr-i Adı	Kavanin-i Mülkiye	Cebr-i Adı	Müsellesat	Fransızca	Müsell esat
Tarih-i Umumi	Lisan-i Osmani	Hikmet-i Tabiiyye	Kimya	Kimya	Tarih-i Osmani
Mantık	Fransızca	Resim	Mantık	Kavanin-i Mülkiye	Hikmet-i Tabiiyye

Table 2 Curriculum of the School according to the Manastır Provincial Yearbook of 1305 (1889-1890).

In regards to the religious or ethnic distribution of the students in the boarding house: 20 were Muslim, 4 were Christian and 1 was Armenian. As for the other 13 students who attended this school, 11 were Muslim, 1 was Christian, and 1 was Jewish.¹⁶ Only 30 boarding students were allowed in the school. After a while it became clear that this number is insufficient, due to the high number of students who graduated from the military school in Bitola and their intention to enroll in the civil high school. Hence, a letter was sent to the Ministry of Education, with a request to increase the number of boarding students from 30 to 50. The request was rejected on September 4, 1889, and it was reported that the number of boarding students would remain 30.¹⁷ However, it seems that this number did not meet the demands, so the quota was increased to 50 students.¹⁸ Later it was decided to allocate 1,500 kuruş to the pharmacy opened for this school.¹⁹

By 1892, there was a change in the teaching staff of the school. Tayfur Efendi (Master) was appointed as teacher for Turkish language. But when he failed to appear for duty, an appointment of a new teacher was requested

¹⁶ Manastır Vilayet Salnamesi 1305, 154.

¹⁷ BOA, MF. MKT, 113/22.

¹⁸ BOA, MF. MKT, 127/17.

¹⁹ BOA, İ.ŞD, 104/6211, 17.

from the Ministry of education and master Mustafa was appointed to replace Tayfur Efendi (Master).²⁰

In 1894, the 7th grade of the school was opened.²¹ The large number of students attending the school created some needs, one of them being the increasing of the number of desks in the classrooms. A budget of 500 kuruş was allocated for their construction.²² The decision to increase the number of students in the school, taken a few years ago, not only increased the need for desks but also brought along the problem that the school building was insufficient. In order to solve this problem, the classrooms from the İnas Girls High School "İnas Rüşdiyesi", located near the İdadi were "borrowed" to the "Manastır Mektebi İdadi-i Mülki".²³ There were a total of 106 students in the school in the 1897-1898 academic year, 50 of which were boarding students. Exactly 96 were Muslims and 13 were non-Muslim, mostly Christian. The school had a principal, 3 vice principals, a clerk, a doctor, a warehouse clerk, an imam, 15 teachers, and 6 janitors. The teachers of the school were Muslims and non-Muslims, just like the students.²⁴

The number of students in the school gradually increased until the end of the 19th century. In 1902, however, the number of newly enrolled students reached its zenith. A total of 90 students were enrolled in the first year. This resulted with a demand to divide the students into two groups, since they could not fit in a classroom. The demand was rejected due to insufficient funds in the budget.²⁵ During the same period, the school administration requested from the Ministry of Education to allocate funds for the renovation of the school building, since it was in a more dilapidated condition than the high school buildings of other nations.²⁶ While no information could be obtained about whether this request was approved, it was seen that branches of provincial high schools were opened in different areas throughout the Ottoman Empire shortly after this event. Manastır province also kept up with this development and in 1903, the official opening of the agriculture branch of the Manastır Civil High School "Manastır Mekteb-i İdadi-i Mülki" was carried out.²⁷

²⁰ BOA, MF. MKT, 189/164.

²¹ BOA, MF. MKT, 196/16.

²² BOA, MF. MKT, 196/16.

²³ BOA, MF. MKT, 249/28.

²⁴ Salname-i Nezaret-i Maarif-i Umumiye, 1316, 1182-1183.

²⁵ BOA, MF. MKT, 596/35.

²⁶ BOA, TFR.I.. MKM., 1/1.

²⁷ BOA, MF. MKT, 684/25.

Even though we do not have enough data about the last years of this school, it is known that by 1910 there were seven official and private civil high schools in the Bitola area:²⁸

<i>Categories</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Number of Schools</i>
<i>Official Civil High Schools</i>	670	5
<i>Private High Schools</i>	80	2

Table 3. Total Number and Distribution of Official and Private Civil High Schools and Students in the Manastır Province

CONCLUSION

Civil high schools, which were opened in the mid-1870s based on the 1869 Education Regulations “1869 Maarif Nizamnamesi”, assumed a significant part in the modernization of the Ottoman school system. One such school in Ottoman Macedonia was the “Manastır Mekteb-i İdadi-i Mülki”, opened in Bitola (Manastır) in 1885. This school helped the intended modernization and westernization of the Ottoman Empire, and Macedonia as part of the Empire. The school was attended by students from different religious and ethnic backgrounds and the continuous increase of the number of newly enrolled students shows that the population in Bitola and its surroundings accepted the school and the tendencies to modernize and westernize the Ottoman Empire.

²⁸ Tevfik 1327, 108.

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