Ethnic Segmentation, Western Education, and Political Outcomes: Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Society

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Abstract   During the process of late Ottoman social transformation, why did the minorities try to separate themselves from the Ottoman state, and the Muslims to alter it? This article analyzes the Ottoman social structure, arguing that it was the preexisting Ottoman ethnic segmentation which, polarized in the nineteenth century by new structural and cultural contexts, led to such disparate political outcomes. Ethnic segmentation is defined as the differential economic and social resource accumulation of social groups. In the Ottoman case, the religious differentiation between Muslims and non-Muslims created an ethnic segmentation which favored the former to the detriment of the latter. This segmentation was polarized in the nineteenth century as new structural and cultural contexts, which were introduced to alleviate segmentation, reproduced and reinterpreted it instead. Western-style educational institutions provided the new structural context within which ethnic segmentation was reproduced. The cultural translation from the West to the Ottoman Muslims and minorities created the new context within which social groups reinterpreted ethnic segmentation. Both the Ottoman minorities, who were educated in the foreign and minority schools established in the empire, and the Young Ottomans and Young Turks, who were trained in the Western-style educational system of the Ottoman state, launched political movements. Due to differing cultural interpretations, the political outcome of the first group's efforts took the form of independence movements, while the second group changed Ottoman political rule by deposing the sultan.

In 1894, Ahmed Zühdü Paşa, the Ottoman minister of education, con-
cluded his treatise[1] on the influence of foreign and minority schools
in the empire with two astute comments. One comment centered on
the inability of the Ottoman state to incorporate its Christian, Jewish,
and Armenian minorities into the new, Western-style educational sys-
tem. The second comment followed from the first: educated instead
by foreign and minority schools, these minorities mobilized against
the Ottoman state.

   Western education was indeed a significant intervening variable in
the Ottoman social transformation, and its introduction led to differ-
ent political outcomes. Both the Ottoman minorities, who were edu-
cated in the foreign and minority schools in the empire, and the Young
Ottomans and Young Turks, who were trained in the Western-style
educational system of the Ottoman state, started political movements.
Yet, while the political outcome of the first group's efforts took the
form of independence movements, the second group changed Otto-
man political rule by deposing the sultan. Why did one group attempt
to separate itself from the Ottoman state, while the other group tried
to alter it? This article argues that it was the preexisting Ottoman
ethnic segmentation which, polarized in the nineteenth century by
Western-style schools and cultural translation, led to different political
outcomes.

The Concept of Ethnic Segmentation

The existing literature on the concept of ethnicity[2] defines an "ethnic
group" as a social group identified as a distinguishable category
through self-ascription or ascription by others. In contrast, the term
"minority group" stresses the comparative power dimension of an
ethnic group and its position within society at large. Hence, "ethnic
group" emphasizes the cognitive identity of a social group, whereas
"minority group" elaborates its structural aspect; the terms distinguish
the subjective situation of the actors from the objective setting of the
action.

1. "Memalik-i Mahrusa-i Şahanede Mevcud olup Şimdiye Kadar Tahkik oluna-
bilen Mekatib-i Ecnebiyenin Mevaki'ini Mübeyyin Defterdir—Yıldız Arşivi Vesika
Koleksiyonu 1311" (The report on the current situation of the foreign schools
in Ottoman domains that have been surveyed, Yıldız Palace Archives, Document
Collection 1311 [A.D. 1894]), in Atilla Çetin (1981–82).
2. See, for example, Barth (1969); Schermerhorn (1970); Smith (1979, 1981);
Bonacich and Modell (1980); Okamura (1981); Yinger (1983). According to a re-
cent interpretation (Smith 1986: 245), ethnicity defines a sense of common histori-
cal culture and life-style; perceived common origin, common culture, and shared
activities are its main elements. It has a dual character in that the "common tradi-
tion" can be defined as such either from within by social groups or from without
by society at large.

Terminology

An ethnic group is "a named human population sharing common myths of descent, shared historical memories, a common culture, an association with a recognized territory, and a sense of solidarity" (Smith 1986: 245). Such a group is self-perpetuating; it also differentiates itself from other social groups through cultural elements, including kinship patterns, physical contiguity, religious affiliation, language or dialect forms, tribal affiliation, nationality, or any combination of these (Schermerhorn 1970: 12).[3] Ethnic groups are formed through the interaction of three conflicts: (1) the conflict within the group itself for control over its material and symbolic resources; (2) the conflict among ethnic groups for rights, privileges, and available resources; and (3) the conflict between the state (and its dominant groups) and the populations that inhabit its territory (Brass 1985: 1).

"Minority group" refers to the relative power that social groups have vis-à-vis one another. Such a group is formed when the cultural elements that identify ethnic groups acquire general political and economic characteristics.[4] The "ethnic group" is conceptually pertinent for studying, in and of itself, as a social group with shared cultural and economic characteristics; the "minority group," however, conceptually captures that same social or ethnic group within the context of other groups and emphasizes the unequal distribution of power in society.

Theoretical Context

Classical social theorists did not assign a significant role to the ethnic factor in contemporary social transformations; they assumed that the transformative power of social classes and of bureaucratic rationality would ultimately eradicate it. Yet the contemporary phenomenon of ethnic groups politically mobilizing against the state has demonstrated that it is now necessary to include the ethnic factor in the theoretical analysis of social transformations.

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3. The issue of whether these elements are natural or contextual is still debated. John Rex (1986: 26) and James McKay (1982: 396) define the two sides of this debate as the primordial view (embodied in the works of Clifford Geertz), based on assumed givens of social existence, which have overpowering coerciveness in and of themselves and cannot be shed, as class backgrounds can be, and the situational view, propagated by Frederik Barth, which agues that ethnicity is a resource that could be latent, ignored, or invoked, depending on specific contingencies.

4. These characteristics entail three properties (Van Amersfoot 1978: 233): first, a minority group is a continuous collectivity formed through several generations with membership requirements that have priority over other forms of social categorization; second, it does not effectively participate in the political process because of its numerically disadvantageous position; and third, it has an objectively disadvantageous position in the legal and educational systems and the labor and housing markets.

According to the Marxian paradigm,[5] ethnic identity is a form of false consciousness that disappears with the emergence of certain economic forces. Economic interests preempt ethnic identifications, and class mobilization obliterates ethnic divisions. Classes are the main actors in social transformations, with ethnic groups being configured only in relation to class categories and formations (ibid.: 10, 14). The Marxian paradigm does not emphasize internal class distinctions because these "take place under the imprint of purely national conditions and therefore lack those universal properties that characterize class struggle" (Parkin 1979: 29–30).

This dominance of class over ethnicity in the analysis of social transformations originated in Karl Marx's writings. Marx maintained that capitalism would eradicate all communal elements, including ethnicity, which interfered with the formation of class consciousness.[6] His subsequent analyses of class relations therefore assumed cultural and ethnic homogeneity in the societies he studied. Still, Marx was aware of the distinctions that existed within classes.[7] Lenin, following Marx, identified segments within classes, namely, labor aristocracies, cadres, and vanguards; yet these segments were again assumed to be ethnically homogeneous.[8] Rosa Luxemburg, one of the first social thinkers to note that people resisted ethnic forms of oppression with more intensity and violence than they did class exploitation, nevertheless believed that ethnic conflicts lacked the capacity to bring about social transformation (Luxemburg 1976 [1908]: 96–97). Early Marxist formulations downplayed the role of ethnic conflicts in structuring revolutions and their outcomes. Observing the realities of a Europe becoming industrialized, they emphasized instead the transformative capacity of social classes.

Max Weber's assessment of ethnic groups was similarly inadequate. He excluded the concept of ethnicity from the realm of objectivity and rationality by emphasizing its "subjective" nature and consequently defined ethnic groups as "those human groups that entertain a subjective

5. Frank Parkin (1979) gives a fuller discussion of ethnicity within the Marxian and Weberian paradigms.
6. Large industry would destroy the individual particularities of communities and create in all instances the same relations between social classes (Marx and Engels 1970 [1846]: 78).
7. Marx distinguished, for example, industrial capital from finance capital and the lumpen proletariat from the working class. When analyzing Ireland in 1869 and 1870, he noted that industrialization could enhance the differences and conflicts between communities (Marx and Engels 1971 [1871]).
8. Drawing on Marx and Lenin's differentiations within classes, Maurice Zeitlin (1984) has recently focused on the rival fractions and factions of the appropriating class in studying the civil wars in Chile; in his analysis, a segment of this class succeeds in transforming its particular interest into the general interest of its class.

belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or customs or both or because of memories of colonization and migration" (Weber 1968 [1956]). For him, ethnic identity flourished only in the absence of rationally regulated action; as such, it was bound to be eradicated by industrialization and the modern bureaucratic state.[9] In explaining social transformations, classical social theory thus emphasized the transformative capacity of classes and bureaucratic rationality, failing to anticipate the capacity of ethnic conflict to bring about social transformation.

The persistence of ethnic groups in industrial societies and their mobilization against the state have necessitated a new interpretation, however.[10] Some have argued, for example, that nationalism in late eighteenth-century Europe was embedded in an ethnic revival, an ideological movement for identity, autonomy, and cohesion (Smith 1979, 1981).[11] Others have demonstrated how European industrialization also failed to replace intra-ethnic modes of interaction with intra-class modes (Hechter 1975, 1976; Hechter and Levi 1978); instead, existing political divisions within classes were translated into economic ones. The unequal distribution of power across ethnic groups in Europe thus resulted in a cultural division of labor, with some groups controlling the state administration and its resources to the exclusion of others.[12]

9. When contrasting the Greek city-state with Rome, Weber (1968 [1956]: 391) pointed out that "the low level of rationalization of Greek political life" had created ethnic fictions, which did not exist in Rome, where "rational organization was more widespread."

10. In contemporary societies, ethnicity and class intersect to redefine both concepts. Divisions within and among classes occur as the ethnic factor combines with particular political and/or economic conditions; specifically, nationalism and industrialization interact with ethnicity to divide classes along ethnic lines. These divisions are often referred to as intra-class situations, class fractions, and class segments (Zeitlin 1984).

11. Anthony Smith (1981: 383) states that "in the early nineteenth century, scholars, poets and priests, and later journalists among these (European) populations began to convince the wider strata that the population who spoke these dialects and possessed these customs and antecedents constituted an 'ethnic community' because they possessed a common origin, history, and culture; and hence that they belonged together in virtue of their common roots in time and place. Later they began to define their communities as 'nations,' i.e., ethnic communities who also possess, or should possess, a common territory with geographical mobility throughout, a common self-contained economic system, and the common political rights of citizenship."

12. These reinterpretations of ethnicity and class have produced the concepts of "middleman minorities" and "labor-market segmentation." Middleman minorities refer to ethnic groups specifically involved in the movement of goods and services in a society (Turner and Bonacich 1980: 146; Bonacich 1980: 215; Boswell 1986: 354). The differentiation of labor costs along ethnic lines produces labor-market

The intersections between ethnicity and class reveal the historicity and contextuality of the concept of ethnicity and ethnic groups. This article redefines ethnicity along these lines as ethnic segmentation. Ethnic segmentation delineates the process through which ethnic groups differentially acquire rules and resources from the existing conflation of class and ideology. These groups construct (or recon-struct) their "ethnic" character when faced with the forces of industri-alization and nationalism. They internally identify and become con-scious of a set of common characteristics distinguishing them from those promoted by industrialization and nationalism. They also inter-act with other groups going through the same process and negotiate the boundaries which separate them from others. The boundaries of this construction and reconstruction are set by structural and cultural parameters.

This paper empirically studies ethnic segmentation in a non-Western society, the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire, thus complement-ing prior research on ethnicity, which has been based almost exclu-sively on the experience of contemporary, Western industrial societies (Edwards, Reich, and Gordon 1975; Hechter 1976; Gordon, Edwards, and Reich 1982; Boswell 1986). Focusing on the role played by eth-nicity in the Ottoman social transformation from an empire in the nineteenth century to a number of nation-states in the twentieth, I argue that Ottoman ethnic segmentation, polarized by Western edu-cation and cultural translation, produced this political outcome.

Ottoman Ethnic Segmentation

Prior studies of the nineteenth-century Ottoman transformation have focused on the natural transformative capacity of external pressures on the empire (Heyd 1961; Berkes 1964; Polk and Chambers 1966; Inalcık 1972, 1980; Naff and Owen 1977; Wallerstein 1983).[13] Those scholars who, within a larger framework, have focused instead on the "internal dynamics" of empires (Moore 1967; Skocpol 1979, 1982) attribute their demise to the conflicts which developed among eco-nomic groups, specifically the peasantry, landlords, and state elites; they overlook ethnic divisions. In the Ottoman context, some scholars

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segmentation, in which class conflict between capital and labor translates into a market conflict between dominant and minority workers as employers replace higher-paid dominant labor with lower-paid minority labor (Gordon, Edwards, and Reich 1982; Boswell 1986; Wachtel 1975: 106–7; Edwards, Reich, and Gordon 1975).

13. A thorough critique of the assumed relationship between Westernization and subsequent social change is given in my dissertation (Göçek 1988), where I argue that internal dynamics, in addition to the much discussed external pressures, pro-duced the Ottoman social transformation as a result of Western contact.

(Karal 1982; Findley 1989) have downplayed the role of ethnic groups in the Ottoman social transformation by arguing that historical conjuncture (namely, the many wars and rebellions that occurred during the nineteenth century) accounted for the inability of the Ottoman state to incorporate ethnic groups into its polity. I argue instead that ethnic segmentation determined the structure of the Ottoman social transformation and, in the nineteenth century, further polarized existing social divisions to render such political unity impossible.

Ottoman society was stratified into two groups: the sultan and his administrators formed one group, the rulers, while the rest of society constituted the other group, the subjects. The rulers comprised all of those who were directly employed in the sultan's administrative service, all military groups, religious officers, and bureaucrats, as well as their families, other relatives/dependents, and slaves. All those who had no office in the sultan's service were subjects. Hence a political condition, the delegation of the sultan's authority, was responsible for social stratification. This was accompanied by another condition, namely, religion. In general, being a Muslim was a fixed requirement for entry to the ranks of the rulers and to the highest echelons of the social system.[14]

The Construction of Religious Communities

In the Ottoman context, religion demarcated ethnic groups and defined these as religious communities. The acknowledged rationale for this demarcation principle was the Koranic (49:13) statement that God had created and divided humans into "tribes" and "communities" so that they might be better able to recognize each other and so that no human being would be considered superior to another. Christians and Jews were considered to be, like Muslims, "People of the Book"; they had all received divine grace and guidance through the scriptures and the prophets. These people therefore had to be granted protection as religious communities within the Islamic state and the community of Islamic believers.

Yet religion in the Ottoman Empire also intersected with cultural, historical, and linguistic elements to redefine these communities as minorities (vis-à-vis the Ottoman state) and as ethnic groups (with respect to their historical experience and common culture).[15] Religious

14. There were a few instances where non-Muslims rose to high posts, particularly those to do with finance, but these were exceptions. There were usually two channels available for the ruled to join the ranks of the rulers: demonstrating outstanding skills, and forming alliances with ruler households through marriage.
15. Ethnic differences among the Muslims, such as those of the Arabs, Circassians, and Turks, did not affect the relative position of these groups within Ottoman society. The Koran did not allow ethnic loyalty to supersede Muslim/religious loyalty. The polarization of these Muslim ethnic groups occurred later, only after

demarcation had produced the separate communities of Christians, comprising subgroups of Catholics and non-Catholics (i.e., the Ortho-dox), and Jews. Historically, the identification of Ottoman religious communities as minority groups preceded their identification as ethnic groups; the Ottoman state had to define the position of such groups in Ottoman society as early as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. These centuries marked the initial social construction of the Ottoman state, as its rulers and administrators defined the social structure and worldview of the "Ottoman Empire." The delineation of the social and economic position of religious communities featured centrally in this construction process. The Ottoman state defined itself through its economic and social systems in general and its system of taxation in particular. As the Ottoman state organized the Greeks, Armenians, and Jews around their own patriarchates and rabbinate (respectively) in Constantinople, the character of the Greek, Armenian, and Jew-ish communities was transformed. Even though the law granted them freedom in terms of personal status and religious practice, the state's prohibiting them from performing public services "created two soci-eties, side by side, with unequal rights" (Karal 1982: 387).

From Religious Communities to Ethnic Groups

The transformation of these Ottoman religious communities into "ethnic groups," which segmented them and endowed them with a transformative potential, occurred in the nineteenth century. Two fac-tors combined to produce this transformation: (1) the reproduction of existing Ottoman structural and cultural divisions, and (2) increasing Ottoman contact with the West. The Ottoman ethnic groups repro-duced themselves in terms of their distinctive cultural manifestations, their collective sense of history, and their shared expectations of the future.

The Ottoman demarcation of religious communities, which was based on Islamic principles, translated into social practice as these communities endured and reproduced themselves within Ottoman society. In the process of reproduction, the members of each com-munity acquired a cognitive sense of their difference in relation to the other communities and to the Muslims (thus perceiving them-selves, and being perceived, as a minority group). This cognitive self-recognition intersected with certain cultural, historical, and linguis-tic elements as the Ottoman state formulated rules and restrictions pertaining to these religious communities, thus providing religious communities with the properties of an ethnic group.

The rules and restrictions which separated religious minorities from

the introduction of Western-style schools and the consequently changed nature of allegiance to state and society.

the rest of Ottoman society ranged from dress codes to legal limita-
tions (Baer 1970; Ercan 1983: 1143–46; Bozkurt 1989). Sumptuary
laws visually distinguished these minorities from the Muslims by speci-
fying in detail the range of acceptable clothing for minorities, from
the shape of their headgear to the color of their footwear. Legally
speaking, the minorities and the Muslims had the same inheritance
and land-use rights, according to Islamic law, yet each group benefited
from these rights only on an intragroup basis. Members of minority
groups could not inherit property or other possessions from the Mus-
lims, and vice versa. This separate-but-equal economic status did not
apply to taxation, however, as the minorities were required to pay
special poll taxes for the right to live as non-Muslims in a Muslim
society.

With respect to family law, the Muslim and non-Muslim commu-
nities were likewise separate and unequal. While a non-Muslim male
could not marry a Muslim female, a Muslim man could marry a non-
Muslim woman. In cases of adultery, assault, or murder, the Otto-
man minorities paid only half the monetary compensation required
of Muslims; their moral standards were assumed to be lower. Legal
opinions on matters pertaining to or involving social interactions be-
tween Muslims and minorities reflected a scrupulous effort to keep
these communities separate.[16] Legal restrictions extended to spatial
ones: the minorities living in urban centers were forbidden to build or
occupy houses near a Muslim place of worship. Their houses had to be
under a specified height (less than those of Muslims) and constructed
of some material other than freestone.

The Ottoman state gave the minorities administrative autonomy in
the execution of spiritual and certain administrative and judicial mat-
ters. The sultan only intervened to approve the religious leader elected
by the community[17] and to help enforce community decisions when
necessary. An internal government, guided by this religious leader
and assisted by a council composed of clerics and lay members, over-
saw discipline in the religious sphere. In the administrative sphere,
this body controlled education, churches, and cemeteries. In the judi-
cial sphere, it regulated the execution of dowry obligations, marriages,
and divorces as well as arbitrating alimony cases, civil rights issues, and
often testamentary dispositions. This administrative autonomy of the
religious communities also reinforced their status as separate social
groups.

16. Minority leaders had some punitive power over their communities; they also
officiated over divorces and marriages, although neighborhood Muslim judges
could perform these legal/ceremonial functions for the minorities as well.
17. Upon approval, these leaders acquired a right of audience with the sultan,
thus gaining access to his dispensation of justice.

These structural divisions had very significant cultural repercus-
sions in Ottoman society. The sumptuary, legal, spatial, and admin-
istrative restrictions confined the social interactions between Muslims
and minorities to professional and economic activities. The minorities
interacted with Muslim residents at the marketplace and in shops and
inns, but other centers of social life, such as mosques, bathhouses, and
often coffeehouses, were closed to them. These restrictions prevented
the Ottoman minorities from developing social ties that extended be-
yond their communities, limiting them to relationships only with other
minority groups or with their Western coreligionists in the empire.

The Ottoman minorities had access to most of the empire's eco-
nomic resources, but were restricted when it came to acquiring social
resources. They owned urban property and participated in business
and commerce equally with the Muslims, but they could not marry
Muslims or, as was mentioned earlier, inherit property or other posses-
sions from them. The practice of one group's maximizing its resources
at the expense of another is termed "social closure" (Weber 1968
[1956]: 341–42, 391).[18] Unlike Weber's formulation, however, this ex-
clusion was not primarily economic but social in the Ottoman case.
The Ottoman Muslims shared most of their economic opportunities
with the minorities—all social groups, to varying degrees, participated
in the empire's economic sphere, and through this participation, Otto-
man state authority was able to penetrate the broad range of social
groups in the empire. The long duration of Ottoman rule (over six
centuries) can be explained partly as a consequence of this economic-
inclusion policy. But it was the Ottoman social-exclusion policy that
started to destroy the social fabric of the empire in the eighteenth and
nineteenth centuries. When the Ottoman Muslims attempted to incor-
porate the minorities into the empire through Westernizing political

18. Weber (1968 [1956]: 341–42) explains the emergence of social closure as fol-
lows: "When the number of competitors increases in relation to the profit span,
the participants become interested in curbing competition. Usually one group of
competitors takes some externally identifiable characteristic of another group of
(actual or potential) competitors—race, language, religion, local or social origin,
descent, residence . . . —as a pretext for attempting their exclusion. It does not
matter which characteristic is chosen in the individual case: whatever suggests itself
is easily seized upon. Such group action may provoke a corresponding reaction
on the part of those against whom it is directed. The jointly acting competitors
now form an interest group against the outsiders." Weber differentiates open and
closed reltionships thus: "A social relationship . . . will be spoken of as 'open' to
outsiders if and insofar as its system of order does not deny participation to any-
one who wishes to join and is in a position to do so. A relationship will, on the
other hand, be called 'closed' against outsiders insofar as, according to its subjec-
tive meaning and boundary rules, the participation of certain persons is excluded,
limited or subject to conditions" (ibid.: 43).

and social reforms in the nineteenth century, they failed because of this policy of social exclusion. Instead, social inequalities and segmentation escalated within Ottoman society as different groups became Westernized at different rates—and for different political ends.

The Polarization of Ottoman Ethnic Segmentation

The Ottoman imperial decrees of 1839 and 1856 attempted to make all subjects, regardless of religious or ethnic affiliation, equal before the law. The Ottoman state assiduously applied these decrees to incorporate minorities into the government service and the educational system. Yet such measures could not arrest the structural polarization of the Muslim and non-Muslim communities. Ottoman towns became further segregated into Muslim and non-Muslim neighborhoods (Fındıkoğlu 1940: 653). Ottoman minorities dominated Ottoman trade, industry, and finance to the exclusion of the Muslims (Issawi 1982: 262–70), yet had very little representation in government service. According, for example, to the 1885 statistics on the distribution of professions in Istanbul by religious affiliation (Eryılmaz 1990: 107), minorities comprised over 60 percent of the merchants and artisans of the city, but fewer than five percent were in the service of the Ottoman state.[19] The educational institutions sponsored by the state also had difficulties in retaining minority enrollment.

The different reactions of the Ottoman Muslim and minority populations to the imperial decrees demonstrate the nature of the emergent cultural polarization. Neither the Muslims nor the minorities could escape the consequences of ethnic segmentation. Ottoman statesman Ahmed Cevdet Paşa described in great detail the disparate reactions of the Ottoman Muslims and minorities to the 1856 imperial decree:

> According to this decree, Muslim and non-Muslim subjects had to become equal before law. This affected the Muslims particularly hard. Many of the Muslims started complaining, saying, "Today, we lost our sacred rights as a religious community, [those rights] which had been won by the blood of our fathers and forefathers. The Muslim community, which had been the dominant community, has been deprived of such a sacred right. This day is a day of mourning and despair for the Muslims." For the minority subjects [instead], this was a day of joy.   (Ahmed Cevdet Paşa 1986 [1872]: 67–68 [translation mine])

Cevdet Paşa further recounted violent incidents in Mecca, such as what occurred when some Muslims, upon hearing of the decree, incited others to riot by informing them that "the Turks have become Christians and Franks, you should carry out a holy war against them.

19. Minorities comprised approximately 45 percent of the total population of Istanbul in 1885 (Eryılmaz 1990: 85).

There is no doubt that those who die among you in such an endeavor will reach heaven and those you kill will go to hell" (ibid.: I–XII/113). Some other Muslims went to the residence of the Ottoman governor, where they insulted him by calling him a "Christian" and a "Jew" and by spitting at him (ibid.: I–XII/129). Similar incidents had also occurred earlier when Mahmud II initiated Westernizing reforms. Once, when Mahmud II was riding on horseback in Istanbul, a man had grabbed his horse's reins and shouted, "You infidel sultan! God will come after you for this infidelity. You are destroying Islam and bringing all of us under the wrath of Prophet Muhammad!" (Ahmed Rasim 1987 [1924]: 162). Antagonism between the Muslim and non-Muslim communities continued to escalate throughout the empire during this period (Maoz 1982).[20]

Such incidents revealed how the cognitive maps of all Ottomans contained ethnic parameters which were difficult to overcome. These difficulties persisted throughout the nineteenth century, as when, for example, long after the reforms had been initiated, an educated reformist Muslim still used social-segmentation categories in describing his father. He stated that his father "had such an attachment to his religion from the heart and respected it to such a degree that he looked upon people of other religions, if not as evil, as inferior. . . . He always separated those religious communities from the Muslims" (Ali Kemal 1985 [1913]: 14).

Why was it impossible for the Ottoman state to effectively eliminate the Muslim/minority division and create a unified Ottoman polity? Ethnic segmentation became polarized in the nineteenth century through two intervening variables, one structural and the other cultural. Structurally, the very institutions introduced to reform and reproduce the empire, namely, the Western-style schools, further segmented Ottoman society, as the Muslims were educated in state schools and the minorities in foreign and minority schools. Culturally, the interaction of the Ottoman Muslims and minorities with the West created a cultural translation in which ethnic segmentation became reinterpreted along disparate parameters. While the Ottoman Muslims attempted to apply Enlightenment ideas to the processes of state reformation, most Ottoman minorities used those same ideas to transform their communal identities into broader systems. These disparate structural and cultural components thus suggested very different modes of political action, ranging from reform to rebellion.

20. Tensions within the religious communities also increased as a consequence of these reforms since the religious hierarchy had to accommodate the participation of their members in governance (Maoz 1982; Ortaylı 1983: 83).

The Reproduction of Ethnic Segmentation: Western Education

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, education was the main structural framework within which Ottoman ethnic segmentation became polarized. Western-style education in the Ottoman Empire was bifurcated to reflect this segmentation: two sets of educational institutions came into being, one established by the Ottoman state and the other by the Ottoman minorities and the Western powers. It was this structural bifurcation which reinforced Ottoman ethnic divisions and prevented the formation of a unified educational system that could have produced, in principle and religious differences notwithstanding, an educated "Ottoman" subject. Instead, the Muslim and non-Muslim students educated in these different institutions interpreted and applied their acquired knowledge differently, separately seeking solutions to the common problematic of the future direction of Ottoman social transformation.

1. Ottoman state schools. In the eighteenth century, the Ottoman sultans began to introduce Western-style educational institutions, with the idea of improving the empire.[21] Prior to the adoption of Western models, the Ottoman educational system had consisted of Islamic religious education for society at large, with specialized administrative training for Ottoman officials in particular. The new Western-style education altered the context and content of the earlier Ottoman educational system.

Religious endowments had provided education for Ottoman Muslims in mosques and the educational complexes attached to them. Their students learned to read and recite the Koran and attended lectures on the Koran, Islamic law and traditions, Arabic philology, history, and medicine (Szyliowicz 1973: 52–68). The elementary school curriculum included elementary mathematics, reading, writing, and reciting brief excerpts from poems, practicing writing, memorizing parts of the Koran, and mastering fundamental religious practices, such as prayers and ablutions. After completing elementary school, an Ottoman Muslim student attended the lectures of a religious scholar in a mosque, joined the scholar's intimate circle, and usually apprenticed

21. The main external force which induced the sultan to establish similar training centers was increasing Western military pressure, while internal pressure came from the Ottoman state structure. At first, all state affairs had been conducted from the sultan's palace and executed from the residences of his administrators. As the Ottoman state expanded, however, its administration expanded with it and shifted away from the palace. By the end of the eighteenth century, the sultan's authority had devolved upon his administrators and he retained only his symbolic power. He introduced Western-style schools to train a new social group that would counter the political challenge of his administrators (Göçek 1988).

himself to that scholar or another learned man. He could also go on to a system of tertiary education,[22] which emphasized logic, mathematics, geometry, astronomy, music, the natural sciences, medicine, literature, and rhetoric and grammar, along with the Koran and Islamic law and traditions. The Ottoman Muslim graduate could then either obtain a lectureship in an Islamic educational institution, head a mosque, or be apprenticed to a judge and dispense justice throughout the empire in God's name and under the sultan's authority.

The specialized administrative training of Ottoman officials included instruction in religious subjects, Ottoman, Persian, and Arabic literature, history, music, math, and physical training and vocational tutelage. The origins of this training can be traced to the palace-school education of pages in the sultan's household. These pages were either sons of minor Muslim rulers or Ottoman Muslim officials or they were young Christian boys converted to Islam. The Ottoman sultan used this training to recreate the social identities of his pages and to inculcate a sense of total loyalty and obedience to himself as their sole provider (Uzunçarşılı 1984: 308–39). Royal eunuchs strictly disciplined these pages, supervising their activities and refining their manners. They noted the pages' personal qualities and capabilities and developed their aptitudes. In addition to their training and socialization, these pages attended lectures given in the palace not only by the palace teachers and officials, but also by scholars from the mosques and religious schools in the city (Ergin 1939: 2–16, 209). Ottoman administrative training as such emphasized the mastery of an elite discourse (including proficiency in literature, music, and manners) as much as formal administrative training. When the sultan's officials formed their own separate households in the capital and the provinces, they imitated and replicated the administrative training they had received in the sultan's palace.[23]

The members of these officials' households who were trained in their residences soon began to compete for Ottoman administrative posts with the sultan's household members who were trained in the

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22. The physical sciences comprised those philosophical and rational sciences based on observation; the communicated sciences included such branches of knowledge as the Koran, traditions, law, and theology, all of which owed their existence to Islam.

23. As in the sultan's palace, starting at the age of twelve, the sons of officials and household members were privately taught to read and write in the official's residence. They then attended the courses offered in the educational complexes of the local mosques; those interested in learning Arabic and Persian took lessons from local instructors who came periodically to the residence. This training for future Ottoman official posts culminated in the administrative quarter of the official's residence, where the apprentices mastered bureaucratic correspondence, bookkeeping, and other occupational skills.

palace. This competition became intense in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Hence, one could argue that this internal political competition, in addition to the increasing military pressure from the West, induced the Ottoman sultan to introduce Western-style education into Ottoman society. In theory, the sultan could have replicated the success of his palace training in these Western-style schools by creating a body of officials who, trained at his schools, owed their allegiance to his person. To foster this loyalty, he recruited the top graduates of the new Western-style schools into his palace retinue (Mardin 1983: 58).

Ottoman sultans first applied Western-style education in the eighteenth century to the training of military officers, later expanding the scope of application to cover the entire Ottoman educational system by the end of the nineteenth century. The establishment of the naval (1776) and army (1793) engineering schools was followed by that of the medical school (1826), a school specifically for surgeons (1831), and another school for military sciences. The original instructors for these schools were recruited from throughout Europe, especially from France and Scotland, with these instructors later being gradually replaced by their Ottoman students. Once the sultan's original Western-style military schools began to be followed by others, the number of different types of Western-style schools in the empire grew rapidly, especially in the mid-nineteenth century (Göçek 1988).

Training Ottoman bureaucrats on the Western model commenced with the founding of the Bureau of Translation and continued with the establishment of a law school in 1838. The curricula of many primary and secondary schools were then restructured to prepare candidates for this new, Western-style higher education. After 1827, the sultan sent large numbers of Ottoman students to the West, particularly to France. In 1856, forty-six students were dispatched to Paris and a school was established for them there the following year. The mounting expenses of this school, in contrast to the success and economy of the Western-style schools established in the Ottoman Empire,[24] led to its being closed in 1864. Nevertheless, the French model imprinted itself on Westernized Ottoman education as more and more state schools were founded throughout the empire.

24. Western-style schools in the empire were structured on the French model. For example, the courses at the School of Military Sciences in Constantinople were modeled on those of the French military academy of Saint-Cyr; the course outline for the general staff was based on that of the Ecole d'Etat-Major. The need for schools that would prepare students for military academies led, after 1863, to the formation of high schools, again following the French model.

2. Foreign and minority schools. Not all members of Ottoman society were trained in the sultan's new Western-style schools; in fact, Ottoman Muslims received an education to the detriment of Ottoman minorities. This disparity occurred despite the sultan's persistent attempts to redress the balance by recruiting Ottoman minorities for his Western-style schools,[25] as attested to by the student selection pattern of the first and only Ottoman school founded in Paris in 1857 (Chambers 1968: 313–29; Şişman 1986).

This school was founded in the wake of the 1856 Imperial Reform Edict, which conferred upon Ottoman minorities legal rights to education in the Western-style Ottoman schools and to posts in the Ottoman government.[26] In order to fulfill this legal commitment to the Ottoman minorities, the sultan sent a substantial number of minority representatives to the Ottoman school in Paris. Twenty-four of the ninety-four students (25 percent) educated at the school between 1857 and 1864 were members of Ottoman minorities: eleven were of Greek origin, nine were Armenians, and four were Bulgarians. Yet few of these minorities were able to secure Ottoman administrative posts upon their graduation. Of the thirty-five minority graduates whose occupations are known, only four (11 percent) joined the Ottoman government. Nor was there an increase in the number of minority students in the empire's Western-style schools. The Ottoman structural division between Muslims and minorities (ensuing from social closure) inhibited the participation of minorities in the sultan's new educational and administrative system (Findley 1980, 1989).[27] Instead, the Ottoman minorities were educated in their own schools or in the foreign schools that were established in the empire.

Information concerning the modes of education for Ottoman minorities prior to the advent of Western contact is very sparse, coming mainly from accounts given by the few members of minorities who rose to high positions within the Ottoman administration and re-

25. Although many efforts were made to incorporate minorities in the administration of the empire through their election to local advisory councils and their appointment as local or central administrators, these attempts remained the exceptions to the rule (Davison 1954).
26. The sultan attempted to incorporate minorities into Ottoman society through the Imperial Reform Edicts of 1839 and 1856, by which he demonstrated his acceptance of the principle of security for the lives, honor, and property of all his subjects (Inalcık 1964: 56). Minority participation in the Ottoman social system and minority representation changed from a corporate basis to an individual one with the first Ottoman constitution, enacted in 1876.
27. There certainly were attempts to incorporate minorities into the Ottoman educational and administrative systems, and a number of these were successful; quite a few instructors and administrators were eventually recruited from among minorities—but this practice did not develop into a structural pattern.

corded their experiences (Göçek 1988). Demetrius Cantemir, an Ottoman Greek who was appointed Prince of Moldavia by the sultan in 1720,[28] and Muradcan Tosunyan (better known as Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson), the Ottoman Armenian who became the Swedish ambassador to the empire in 1796,[29] were two such minority members. Their education seems to have been similar to that of members of the households of Ottoman officials: they took private lessons in music, literature, and the arts and attended lectures offered by the schools in their own communities.

The Ottoman minorities also had access to another significant source of education from which Muslims were initially excluded, namely, the foreign schools established by the Western powers in Ottoman lands in order to protect and train their coreligionists. Although Christian missionaries had been active in the empire from its very inception, schools were incorporated into their efforts during the seventeenth century with the advent of French missionaries, particularly the Jesuits (Szyliowicz 1973: 116). Competition among the European states for economic and political control in the Middle East escalated concurrently with increased Western efforts to establish schools throughout the Ottoman Empire. In the nineteenth century, the Western powers began to compete with one another over educating their coreligionists in the Ottoman Empire. In Lebanon, for example, French Catholic missionaries competed vigorously with American Protestant missionaries to recruit Ottoman minority students.

The Western powers were able to establish missions, and subsequently schools, thanks to the legal rights granted them by the Ottomans to protect their coreligionists in Ottoman lands. The upkeep of sacred sites in Jerusalem (which was within the Ottoman domains) and the frequent Christian pilgrimages to that city necessitated such legal provisions. The French, whose relations with the Ottomans were initially the best of all the Western powers, were the first to acquire the right to protect European Christians who lived or traveled in the Ottoman domains. Through a series of agreements, this right was gradually extended to cover the Christian subjects of the Ottoman Empire as well. The Russians began claiming a similar right to protect the sultan's Orthodox subjects in the late eighteenth century, while

28. Prince Demetrius's father had been Prince of Moldavia before him; the whole line came from the Greek dragomans (translators) in Constantinople, who served the sultan in the administration of the Balkan provinces.
29. The fact that an Ottoman Armenian became the Swedish ambassador to the Ottoman Empire demonstrates the fluidity of social identities before the advent of nationalism. He had, following in his father's footsteps, obtained a post in the Swedish embassy as a translator (dragoman) early on and then had risen through the ranks.

the Austrians and Italians voiced their own interests in the Catholics
and the Uniates. The British, not to be outdone, expressed their con-
cern for the welfare of all Ottoman minorities. In the course of the
nineteenth century, these powers all asked for, and obtained, the right
to improve the position of the "protected" minority communities, to
intervene when necessary, and to open schools in which the languages
of the "protecting" Western powers would be taught.

The Western-style education of the Ottoman minorities, provided
both by their own communities and by Western powers, proceeded at a
much faster pace than that of the Ottoman Muslims (Issawi 1982: 277).
In 1896, for instance, within the Ottoman domains, 83,000 (predomi-
nantly non-Muslim) students were being educated in the foreign and
minority middle schools, while the comparable sultan's schools were
providing an education for only 31,000 students; moreover, 19,000
students were attending foreign and minority high schools that year,
when only 5,000 were enrolled in the sultan's schools.[30] Zühdü Paşa's
treatise (Çetin 1981–82) provides additional information concerning
these foreign and minority schools in the Ottoman Empire; accord-
ing to his assessment, there were 4,547 minority and 413 foreign
schools operating by 1894. The number of foreign schools had risen
rapidly during the second half of the nineteenth century, specifically
between 1830 and 1880, paralleling the Western powers' growing eco-
nomic and political interests in the Ottoman Empire. The French, the
British, the Americans, the Germans, and the Italians were all found-
ing schools in the Arab provinces.[31] The Russians, the Serbs, and the
Romanians focused on the Balkans, the Greeks and the Americans on
Asia Minor. Among these states, France took the lead in 1894 by estab-
lishing 115 schools in Ottoman lands, followed by the United States,
which founded 83 schools, England 52, Russia and the Balkan states

30. More specifically, for example, in the early 1870s, 15,000 students were en-
rolled in the 150 schools of the Greek community in Constantinople alone, with
the enrollments in Armenian schools not far behind. In Egypt, the Greeks opened
their first school in 1843; Jewish schools also opened in the 1840s. As a result, the
1907 census indicated literacy rates in Egypt of 44 percent for Jews, 10 percent
for Copts, and only 4 percent for Muslims (Issawi 1982: 277). By 1914, a French
Jewish organization, the Alliance Israelite Universelle, had established a network
of 183 Jewish schools in the empire with a total student population of 48,000. This
organization played a leading role in the development of Ottoman Jewish educa-
tion. The education provided was essentially French, with French as the language
of instruction, supplemented by Jewish instruction in Hebrew, the Bible, and Jew-
ish history. Attention was also paid to improving the proficiency of Ottoman Jews
in the Turkish language (Rodrigue 1986: 1–6, 27).
31. Foreign schools in the Arab provinces accounted for 48 percent of the foreign
schools founded in the Ottoman Empire. The enrollment figures given for some
schools reveal that almost twice as many males as females were being educated.

(of Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria) 50, Austria and Germany 32, and Italy 25 schools.[32] The number of minority group members educated in these foreign schools increased throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

However, even with an education, the minorities were not readily incorporated into the Ottoman polity.[33] Ethnic segmentation persisted, and patronage practices in the Ottoman bureaucracy favored the Muslims. Some minorities were dismissed due to "special circumstances," which sometimes meant (when the records were explicit) that their contacts with foreigners would "entail difficulties in confidential matters" (Findley 1982: 354). Their salary entitlements and access to other monetary gains remained limited, and there was some reluctance to promote them to higher office: for instance, at the time of the appointment of the first non-Muslim minister, Ottoman statesman Fuad Paşa told the British ambassador that "some positions, including ministries of war and foreign affairs, and the grand vezirate would have to remain in Muslim hands" (Findley 1980: 206–9). By the late nineteenth century, almost all of the Ottoman governmental agencies had reduced their minority representation, and the marginal position of the minorities persisted (Findley 1989: 113, 269). Although the minorities were eager to participate as delegates in the first Ottoman assembly (Karal 1982: 397) and even voted for the elimination of all references to religious differentiation and for replacing these with the term "Ottoman," the parliament could not survive the strains of war. Why was it that Western education not only failed to overcome ethnic segmentation, but ended up structurally reproducing it? It was the cultural translation of Western, Muslim, and minority meaning structures within the Ottoman society at large, and particularly within the Western-style educational system, that reinforced ethnic segmentation.

The Reinterpretation of Ethnic Segmentation: Cultural Translation

The concept of cultural translation is based on the notion of literary interference, which is defined as "a relation(ship) between literatures, whereby" one "may become a source of direct or indirect loans for another" (Even-Zohar 1990: 54). "Literature" in this context signifies the totality of activities in a literary system, including all sources of

32. On the eve of the First World War, there were, in the Ottoman Empire, 500 French schools, with 59,414 students; 675 American ones, with 34,317 students; 178 British ones, with 12,800 students, and many other German, Italian, and Russian schools (Szyliowicz 1973: 149).
33. Carter Findley (1980, 1982, 1989), who has worked extensively on the issue of minority incorporation into the Ottoman polity, argues that historical conjuncture, namely, the frequent Balkan revolts and wars with the West, rendered such an incorporation impossible (Findley 1989: 34).

social knowledge, such as the contexts of history, culture, language, and society. Interference becomes indirect when a source literature is intermediated through some channel, such as translation. By analogy, then, cultural translation refers to the mediation of meaning structures within and among social groups. In the case of the Ottoman Empire, Western conceptions of society and social behavior became the cultural source from which the Ottoman Muslims and minorities drew, and with which they redrew, their interpretations. Although some cultural translation occurred through the print media of newspapers and novels, Western knowledge reproduced within Western-style schools became its most significant medium. Cultural translation sets the boundaries of social behavior and controls the nature of political action; hence, acting within the new parameters created by such cultural translation, the Ottoman Muslims attempted to reform the state, while the minorities sought political autonomy.

Eighteenth-century Western social thought centered on the issues of legal equality and legal rights,[34] liberty, self-determination, and the sovereignty of the people. The revolutions in North America and France demonstrated the social power of these issues and advanced a reexamination of social groups in terms of who the "people" were and what rights they should possess. Three particular kinds of legal rights were discussed in depth: (1) civil rights, such as personal liberty, including freedom of speech, opinion, and religion; the right to own property and to enter into binding contracts; and the right to justice; (2) political rights, such as enfranchisement and the right to seek and hold public office; and (3) social rights, ranging from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share fully in the social heritage and to attain a reasonable standard of living relative to one's society (Van Amersfoot 1978).

These rights gave new meaning to such words as "liberty," "equality," and "nationality" in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Lewis 1953: 107–8), and their subsequent translations into Ottoman similarly gave new meaning to such concepts as *vatan* (fatherland) and *millet* (nation). Both concepts acquired, as did many others, political significance extending beyond the religious and regional boundaries, and nineteenth-century Ottoman newspapers reflected the power of such cultural translations. Ottoman thinker, playwright, and poet Namık Kemal, who was the first to popularize the word "vatan" as a geographical term that implied an emotional bond, galvanized the Ottoman public around this term. He defined "vatan" as "a sacred idea resulting from the conglomeration of various noble feelings, such

34. The eradication of economic inequality became a central issue in Western social thought in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Schermerhorn 1970: 44).

as the people, liberty, brotherhood, interest, sovereignty, respect for one's ancestors, love of the family, and childhood memories" (Mardin 1962: 326). His Ottoman audience then evoked, and constructed, these feelings in their own social experiences.

The Ottoman Muslims also cultivated social behavior and practices based on Western models. Some medical students, for instance, had group photographs taken, with each of them holding a signboard bearing the words "liberty," "fraternity," and "equality" (Ali Kemal 1985 [1913]: 105). Others emphasized their shared social experiences across diverse cultural contexts. In an 1870 editorial, Mehmed Bey emphasized the universal brotherhood of human experience: "Brothers across the ocean, as well as across the desert, let us give one another our hand: Let us unite to conquer Liberty/Let us associate to arrive at equality/Let us cherish one another so that fraternity/might reign on earth" (Mardin 1962: 23). The Ottoman Muslims all agreed upon the principle of uniting Muslims and minorities of the empire in order to create a unified "Ottoman" state. Yet while this idea was inspiring in principle, it ran into many problems in practice. Ahmed Cevdet Paşa remarked on how difficult the real incorporation of the Ottoman minorities would be, most notably when he discussed the possibility of creating a joint Muslim-minority Ottoman military unit. His opinion on the issue shows how reluctant some of the Ottoman Muslims were to abandon the cultural parameters of ethnic segmentation:

> They asked my humble opinion on the matter. I said that if ordinary soldiers are mixed with Muslim ones, in each battalion a priest would be needed in addition to an imam. Also non-Muslims are divided into multiple groups . . . so they will require different sorts of priests, and the Jews would want a rabbi. Hence one would need an additional battalion of clerics. In addition, Christians have dietary restrictions; how would the meals be adjusted [to accommodate these]? The commanders increase the ardor of their soldiers through provoking their Islamic zeal, saying, "Either conquest for a holy cause or martyrdom: forward, my children, for the sake of Islam!" . . . What would the commander of a mixed battalion say? . . . Furthermore, in a difficult moment, would Private Hasan obey Captain Hristo's orders, which might send him to his death?   (Ahmed Cevdet Paşa 1980 [1880]: 113–14 [translation mine])

Hence, even though in theory the Ottoman Muslims subscribed to the Western principles of equality and fraternity, in practice they envisioned a society formed ultimately along ethnic lines.

The type of society envisioned by the Ottoman minorities differed, in turn, from that of the Ottoman Muslims: it included only the community members. The Ottoman minorities translated Western knowledge differently as they used it to redefine their social boundaries.

The discussion of this issue by the founder of the Armenian cul-
tural revival movement, Abbot Michitar (1676–1749), illustrates what
such an alternative minority vision entailed. He wanted "to bring the
Armenian nation into contact with Europe without extinguishing the
national spirit, to love his nation, and, for that very reason, to borrow
from European science and [the] Enlightenment that which might not
prove antithetical and injurious to the spirit of the nation" (Sarkiss
1937: 442). Hence, the products of cultural translation from the West
had to fall within those parameters acceptable to the spirit of the
Armenian "nation."

These disparate cultural translations among the Ottoman Mus-
lims and minorities became fully articulated within the context of
education. Western-style education systematically translated Western
knowledge, structuring it and giving it substance in the Ottoman con-
text. The curriculum often embodied the political philosophy under-
lying the European historical experience of the eighteenth century,
namely, the Enlightenment.[35] The first Western curriculum adopted
for Ottoman military training included military strategy, mathemat-
ics, geometry, and French language and literature. These subjects
exposed Ottoman military cadets to another way of conceptualizing
their society and the world at large and to the Western way of orga-
nizing knowledge. This worldview would have complemented their
own had it not been for the specific information they obtained on one
Western society in particular, France. Niyazi Bey, one of the gradu-
ates of a Western-style state school, recalled how his introduction via
French literature and history to such concepts as progress, loyalty,
humanity, and love of one's country changed his vision of the future
of his society:

> They used to tell us stories about the patriotism of the old Ottomans and
> the French. . . . Would it not be our duty to defend the fatherland and
> repel the attacks of the enemy? Why then is there no trace, in our courses
> and syllabuses, of fatherland or of training of the mind? Why do they force
> us to conceal a whole set of feelings that by religion, reason, and logic are
> sacred to us?   (Lewis 1961: 195)

Hence, familiarity with French society provided Ottoman students
with a concrete model that went beyond the abstract parameters of
Western learning. By comparing their own societies with concrete ex-

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35. The Western-style education introduced into the Ottoman Empire was based
on the French model, which contained these ideological products of the West. For
example, in the military academies, the textbook used for French instruction in-
cluded Fénelon's *Fables* and Voltaire's *Histoire de Charles XII, Roi de Suede* as well as
translations from his *Dictionnaire philosophique* (Mardin 1962: 213). A lively ensuing
debate on the adequacy of translations argued that even though the language was
foreign, meaning was universal (ibid.: 244)—a truly Enlightenment idea.

amples of Western ones, they were able to conceptualize a reformed Ottoman society.

The students often acquired significant social and cultural knowledge from their courses in Western science and technology. Ottoman medical students, for example, analyzed Ottoman societal processes by means of the science they learned, arguing that even though medical students, "as professional physicians, are requested not to extend their hand to the pulse of politics, [such a condition is impossible to keep]. If the nation becomes ill, to whom will it entrust its pulse? To the physicians, of course" (Hanioğlu 1981: 22). The educated students also assumed that, following Gustave Le Bon's suggestions, they would assume the intellectual leadership of Ottoman society in order to educate and rule the populace (ibid.: 162–63). After all, they said, both the elites and the masses needed guides like themselves to bring out their best qualities.

Western-style education also entailed the analysis of history and culture in terms of the separate origins (and perhaps the separate destinies) of different social groups. Hence, the Ottoman students could not avoid an assessment of where they stood in their respective contexts. The Ottoman religious minorities must therefore have become more conscious, through Western education, of their minority status, notably, their subordination, their limited access to social resources, and the structural imbalances in their relations with the Ottoman society at large. They were also probably made more aware of their "separateness," that is, their ethnic status, or their own shared culture, heritage, and identity as a social group. Western values thus assumed a politicized ethnic form in Ottoman society as the Ottoman minorities aspired to more legal rights. When state attempts to incorporate the minorities into the Ottoman polity failed, the minorities looked to their own communities for guidance and inspiration. They began demanding the right to self-determination in their relations with society at large, thus transforming themselves into ethnic groups, which could potentially extend beyond the Ottoman societal boundaries.

Political Outcomes: Autonomy, Independence, or Intervention?

The Ottoman Muslims trained in state schools based on the Western model acquired new skills, formed networks with each other, and, most significantly, were exposed to new, alternative models by which society could be organized. They did not, as might have been expected from earlier palace-school experience, develop an overriding allegiance to the sultan who initiated this system of education.[36] These

36. It is telling that the students of these Western-style schools were originally recruited from among the sons (some of them orphans) of soldiers and retired officials (Adıvar 1970 [1943]: 184) in order to foster such allegiance to the sultan.

Western-style schools fostered, among the Muslim students, allegiance to the ideas of social equality, liberty, and legal rights as well as to the abstract concept of the state. Personal allegiance to the sultan was therefore eclipsed by a patriotic allegiance to the Ottoman "state." In order to reorganize Ottoman polity around this new conception of the state, students began to form secret organizations, such as those of the Young Ottomans and the Young Turks. Most of their meetings were raided by the Ottoman security forces, and many were taken into custody or exiled (Hanioğlu 1985: 177). Nevertheless, this organized political challenge to the sultan from within the empire culminated in 1923 with the establishment of a Turkish republic, which irrevocably ended the sultan's rule over what was left of the Ottoman Empire.[37]

What kind of society did these secret organizations envision and how willing were they to incorporate the Ottoman minorities into their political enterprise? The image of Western science informed and legitimated the course of action taken by these organizations, as it made the roots of rebellion appear natural. Medical students studying chemistry argued, for example, that in "chemistry . . . when two potent substances combine, they translate into valuable matter that contains all types of strong elements. Let us unite and a phenomenal force will result. Then let us attack. Let us demolish, with our own hands, the tower of despotism erected against us" (Hanioğlu 1981: 12). Applying such scientific-sounding principles to their political activities should, in theory, have united all opposing "potent substances," including minority groups, against a common enemy. These organizations also drew upon their newly acquired Western knowledge when deciding how to mobilize in unison against the sultan. They followed the organizational guidelines of Western clandestine cells in forming their secret organizations and in discussing membership policies. For instance, the Union and Progress Committee (which eventually deposed the sultan) used the principles of Greek and Italian independence cells to structure their organization, whose founding members were all Ottoman Muslim medical students. However, the membership issue raised the question of minority participation, which the committee could not resolve. While some members, such as Ibrahim Temo, wished to include Ottoman minorities in the committee's membership, others argued against their inclusion. This ambivalence persisted throughout the history of the organization, and even after it had evolved into a political force in the empire, the committee still could not shake off the insufficient quota system that had been developed by the former Ottoman administration to assure some degree of minority participation in the Ottoman polity (Temo 1987 [1939]: 17).

37. Ethnic divisions developed among Muslims as well: Turks, Arabs, and Albanians all eventually forged their own social movements.

   The Ottoman minorities hit upon political independence as the principal goal of their political activism through a complex process. They determined their course of social action by reinterpreting their relationship with the Western powers (including their Western-style education) and their changing relationship with the Ottoman state. Two important external factors led the minorities to gravitate toward political independence as a possible course of action: the nature of their interactions with the Western powers, and the impact of the notion of nationalism generated in the West. The Western powers, through their protection of Ottoman minorities, had fostered an ideology of separateness.[38] Western protection had originally been extended to embassy and consulate personnel, who were often recruited from among the Ottoman minorities. Yet, as the Western powers secured better trade terms with the Ottoman Empire in the mid-eighteenth century, many Ottoman minorities tried to obtain Western protection in order to improve their own trade terms. The Western nations used this protection as a political means of increasing their influence and power over that of other, competing nations.[39] The protection of minorities by foreign powers expanded during the mid-nineteenth century as Western consuls undertook to protect whole communities (Issawi 1982: 274). At the same time, the new ideology of nationalism that was overtaking Europe began to spread eastward to the western boundaries of the Ottoman Empire (Gellner 1983: 1; Chirot and Barkey 1983).[40] The transitions from communal to territorial autonomy and then to political independence gained momentum in the Ottoman Empire through this new ideology of nationalism.

   The large number of foreign and minority schools enabled the Ottoman minorities to generate and regenerate resources within their communities along Western lines. The minorities acquired, through the

38. Ahmed Cevdet Paşa (1986 [1872]: XIII–XX/98–99; 1980 [1880]: 20) noted one such incident that demonstrated the extent of Western political power. When Ottoman minority merchants and artisans could not collect their debt from the palace, they complained first to the government, then to the palace, but without success. Eventually, "a couple of hundred minority artisans who were creditors commissioned a boat, went to the French, English, and Russian embassies, and submitted a petition after screaming and shouting their grievances."
39. At one point, for example, Austria had 200,000 such protectees in Moldavia and 60,000 in Wallachia alone (Bozkurt 1989: 140–41).
40. It is significant that the demands of the various Ottoman minorities for autonomy or independence spread through the empire from the Ottoman provinces closest to the West, the Balkans. The Greek revolt of 1821 led to the founding of the Greek state in 1830 and to the recognition of Serbian autonomy. The 1848 revolts of the Wallachians and Moldavians culminated in the recognition of their autonomy in 1859 and led to their union as the state of Rumania in 1861. The Bulgarian rebellion succeeded, with Russian help, in the 1870s. The movements in the Balkans were more successful in gaining autonomy or independence for these minorities than were those in other parts of the empire.

emergent system of Western-style education, new insights into their social position within the empire, and demands for autonomy soon followed. "Autonomy" meant something very different to the minorities than it did to the Ottoman state. In defining autonomy, the minorities drew on their socially segmented historical past as well as on their Westernized present. Most Ottoman minorities defined autonomy in "communal" terms as the freedom to structure and regulate their relations with the Ottoman society as a whole; initially, this did not necessarily imply political independence from the Ottoman state. The case of the Ottoman Jews, for example, substantiates this point. The existing Jewish schools and those established by the Alliance Israelite Universelle, based in Paris, aimed to educate, civilize, and regenerate the community. Their goals were legal emancipation, moral improvement, and better citizenship—not political independence (Rodrigue 1986: 5–9).

Ahmed Zühdü Paşa's discomfiture with the exclusion of minorities from the state educational system, however, illuminates the very different way in which the Ottoman state conceptualized "autonomy." The Ottoman state regarded the religious communities of minorities as already enjoying "communal" autonomy since, after all, they had control over their own administrative, legal, and internal political matters. The only other autonomy-related cases, which pertained more to the Ottoman state and society at large, were "territorial." In these cases, autonomy was granted (Inalcık 1973) to such faraway provinces as Egypt, Baghdad, Abyssinia, and Basra and to the frontier provinces of Tripoli, Tunisia, and Algeria out of geographical necessity. The subject principalities, such as the Khanate of the Crimea and the Sherifate of Mecca, the hereditary chieftainships in some areas of eastern Anatolia under the control of Ottoman garrisons stationed nearby, and the Christian vassal principalities of Moldavia, Wallachia, Transylvania, Dubrovnik, Georgia, Circassia, and the Cossack hetmans were all likewise granted autonomy out of geographical necessity.

According to the Ottoman state's collective memory, the only demand by minorities for any other type of autonomy was that initiated by the Ottoman Greeks. Although they had initially demanded communal autonomy, this soon became a demand for "territorial" autonomy and ultimately led to the formation of an independent Greek state. Thus, the Ottoman state perceived all minority attempts to attain communal autonomy in this vein, that is, as demands for an actual territorial autonomy that would rapidly progress to political independence. This view of autonomy adopted by the Ottoman state became the most significant internal factor to polarize those Ottoman minorities whose political agendas did not already include territorial autonomy or political independence.

Ottoman ethnic segmentation was thus to reproduce itself through Western education and cultural translation, further polarizing Ottoman Muslims and minorities. Each group sought, within these parameters, a different future. For the Muslims, the future lay in reforming the Ottoman state, while for the minorities, it coalesced outside the boundaries of the Ottoman state.

Conclusion

Why, however, did only certain Ottoman minorities have successful independence movements? Why did the others fail? One can conjecture that this was primarily due to the structural transformation of the Ottoman state during the nineteenth century. The state and its minorities failed to establish a shared discourse on autonomy, which they perceived very differently. The failure of the Ottoman state to address the issue of communal autonomy, together with the increasing diffusion of nationalist ideologies from the West, soon polarized the Ottoman minorities in the Balkan provinces. The Ottoman state was unequipped to forestall these independence movements.

As the Ottoman administration became increasingly staffed by Muslims trained in Western-style schools, the structure of the Ottoman state began to change. These Western-educated officials tried to remodel the Ottoman state along Western lines of political and economic centralization, a policy that was not congenial to autonomous provinces. In order to achieve this centralization while also containing the minorities within the empire's boundaries, these officials attempted to actively break down the existing segmentation. This could perhaps account for the Armenian movement's failure to win autonomy. Since the Turkish Muslims had solidified their rule at the sultan's expense by the end of the nineteenth century, the Armenians were, in effect, faced with a new, structurally changed and solidified Ottoman state.

In conclusion, then, the study of the nineteenth-century Ottoman transformation illustrates the significance of ethnicity to the process of social transformation. The concept of ethnicity in nineteenth-century Ottoman society has been problematized here and its redefinition under the influence of Ottoman structural and cultural divisions and Western-style education has been demonstrated. The term "ethnic segmentation" has been used to describe the polarization of Ottoman society as a consequence of this redefinition, illustrating how the Ottoman Muslims and minorities both sought the same political ends (autonomy and participation), but achieved different political outcomes as a result of ethnic segmentation and the disparate cultural translations that it produced. Ottoman religious minorities were polarized and thus sought political independence, while the Muslims set about (and succeeded in) transforming the Ottoman Empire into a republic.

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