

and general readers interested in learning more about Turkey's place in transatlantic relations.

Endnotes

1. Doruk Ergün, Andrea Dessi, Jacob Lindgaard, Dlawer Ala'Aldeen and Kamaran Palani, "The Role of the Middle East in the EU-Turkey Security Relationship: Key Drivers and Future Scenarios," *FEUTURE*, (May 7, 2018), pp. 1-33.
2. Simon Parkin, "Killer Robots: The Soldiers that Never Sleep," *BBC*, (July 16, 2015), retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20150715-killer-robots-the-soldiers-that-never-sleep>; Can Kasapoğlu, "The Rising Drone Power: Turkey on the Eve of its Military Breakthrough," *The Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies (EDAM)*, (June 1, 2018), retrieved from <https://edam.org.tr/en/the-rising-drone-power-turkey-on-the-eve-of-its-military-breakthrough/>.
3. G. John Ikenberry, "The End of Liberal International Order?" *International Affairs*, Vol. 94, No. 1 (January, 2018), pp. 7-23; Richard Haass, "How a World Order Ends and What Comes in its Wake," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 98, No. 1 (January/February, 2019), retrieved from <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2018-12-11/how-world-order-ends>.
4. "Emmanuel Macron Warns Europe: NATO is Becoming Brain-dead," *The Economist*, (November 7, 2019), retrieved from <https://www.economist.com/europe/2019/11/07/emmanuel-macron-warns-europe-nato-is-becoming-brain-dead>.
5. Daniel Boffey, "Majority of Europeans 'Expect End of EU Within 20 Years,'" *The Guardian*, (May 15, 2019), retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/15/majority-of-europeans-expect-end-of-eu-within-20-years>.
6. Kemal Kirişçi, "The Rise and Fall of Turkey as a Model for the Arab World," *Brookings*, (August 15, 2013), retrieved from <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/the-rise-and-fall-of-turkey-as-a-model-for-the-arab-world/>.

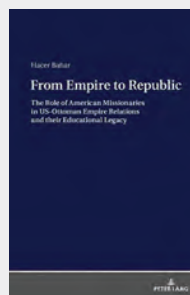
From Empire to Republic: The Role of American Missionaries in US-Ottoman Empire Relations and Their Educational Legacy

By Hacer Bahar

Berlin: Peter Lang, 2019, 86 pages, \$34.95 (Hardcover), ISBN: 9783631786703

Reviewed by Mustafa Onur Yalçın, Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University

In the history of Turkish-American relations, there have always been ups and downs. Turkey and the U.S. experienced many crises in the last century, and today, no one would deny that we are witnessing one of the most crucial moments with the Trump Administration. But when it comes to times of crisis like this, it is important to remember the history of relations and how they have deepened in the nearly one-and-a-half century-long history of the two countries. Because, whenever a problem occurs—small or big—somehow relations come back on track after a while. The reasons lie in the origins of the relations. Indeed,



Hacer Bahar's *From Empire to Republic* has important insights about one of the most important pillars of Turkey-U.S. relations: American missionaries and their educational legacy in Turkey, particularly Robert College. The college itself has a very important place in the history of relations because many important Turkish bureaucrats, even prime ministers such as Ecevit and Çiller, are alumni of Robert College.

From Empire to Republic was originally Bahar's master's thesis, written under the supervision of Dr. Jan Stievermann at the

Heidelberg Center for American Studies. A master's thesis or doctoral dissertation are very different from a book in terms of their formats. This means that reorganizing these pieces requires careful attention. In this context, some flaws can be seen in Bahar's work. She begins with a short introduction about the internal political situation of the Ottoman Empire and the problems in its vicinity when the first American missionaries arrived in the early nineteenth century (pp. 11–12). In the first chapter, the origins of the missions and how they were established are explained thoroughly. The most striking part of this chapter is its argument about how missionary activities involve much more than the dissemination of religion. Bahar states that particularly protestant missionaries were not only spreading their religions but also the economic and social policies of their countries (p. 14). This argument is important because the second chapter of the book is mainly based on the Ottoman Empire's *millet* system, which roughly stands for the socio-political structure of the empire and the *Tanzimat* and *Islahat* decrees. These concepts are mentioned briefly in the second chapter to build a base for the next chapters, which are about early Ottoman-U.S. relations and Robert College. But the author choose not to go in details about these topics. As the book's primary aim is to explain the role of Robert College in Turkey-U.S. relations, this can be understood. But since the *millet* system and the *Tanzimat* and *Islahat* decrees are very crucial for understanding the empire's socio-cultural and political structure in eighteenth and nineteenth century, these topics need more attention. Another flaw that follows from the previous one involves the variation and diversification of the sources in chapter two. Although many archival records, theses and other sources are used in the book, they are mainly about the missionaries' educational activities, and not specifically about

the Ottoman history of the period. There are many well-written sources about this topic that would have enriched the second chapter of the book.

With the third and fourth chapter, early Ottoman-American relations and the first arrival of the American missionaries are explained in the context of how U.S. interests in the empire originated. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries of the empire are generally considered important cornerstones in terms of revisioning minority rights. As the author mentions in the second chapter, the Ottoman's *millet* system was based on religious community (pp. 22–23). Since Islam was the official religion in the empire, minority separation was not ethnic but religious. As Bahar states throughout the third and fourth chapter, the expansion of minority rights created a space for missionary presence in the empire. The narrative of how missionaries settled in Ottoman lands during this period offers a less-known perspective about the debates that focus on Ottoman foreign relations involving minorities; this makes these chapters valuable.

The fifth and largest chapter of the book focuses on Robert College and the educational legacy of the missionaries; this is where the book shines the most. Bahar successfully observes the pragmatic causes of the construction of the college. The author states that it was not only about the approved educational standards of Americans but also the Ottoman's needs for reforming their educational system (pp. 53–54). What makes this chapter valuable is not only its well-written narrative about the construction and historical development of the college; the educational standards, how to enroll, the requirements for being a tutor and the curriculum of the college are mentioned broadly in the chap-

ter. The college's historical development shows the reader how it adapted to local and global changes. For instance, a course about 'evidence of Christianity' was removed after the 1924 regulations were established in the Turkish Republic and a 'military' course entered the curriculum after WWII (p. 65). Also, by observing the historical progress of the college, it is possible to see the important political events during the transition of the empire to a republic in the background and how the college adapted to these events. In this sense, the fifth chapter offers more than the history of the college and indeed explains a lot about the crucial period of the transition that the empire and the Republic of Turkey experienced.

In addition to its strengths, the book also has some flaws. As mentioned above, a book differs from a thesis in terms of format, and to revise a work to make it a book requires a great deal of attention. In this context, *From Empire to Republic* may not be counted as one of the best examples. As a master's thesis, Bahar's work addresses a specific literature; in the process of re-publishing it as a book, some

chapters could have been gainfully revised to make the text easier for readers to follow. In particular, the parts about the socio-cultural and political structure of the empire could have been explained more broadly. There are insightful sources about the topic that are easy to access, such as Halil İnalçık and William Eton's works, that are also important for the relevant literature.¹ In terms of writing performance, Bahar's plain and simple style make the book easy to read. However, in some parts, long paragraphs cause distraction.

Overall, Bahar's *From Empire to Republic* is a good addition to the relevant literature that specifically focuses on the American missionary activities in foreign lands; readers from different disciplines such as political history, international relations and political science can learn a lot from this study.

Endnote

1. See, Halil İnalçık, *Devlet-i Aliyye: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Üzerine Araştırmalar 4*, (İstanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2016); William Eton, *19. Yüzyılın Başında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu*, translated by İbrahim Kapaklıkaya, (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2009).