Private University Initiatives in Turkey: The Bilkent Experience

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1. Introduction

How private are private universities in Turkey? The objective here is to address this question by focusing on specific issues using narrow but concrete examples. This will be followed by a case study on Bilkent University to examine what one such university attempted to achieve. First point: the current legal system in Turkey does not allow private universities like the ones in the USA. It does permit however something somewhat similar called foundation universities.

By the end of 2007, Turkey had a population of over 70 million, more than half of the people being no older than the age of 28. To provide higher education for this population the country had 85 state universities and 30 foundation universities. Foundation universities of Turkey are not as private as those of the United States. Legally, they are not corporations. Rather, the Turkish legal system states that foundation universities are “public legal entities”. Each one of them is established by an act of Parliament. Articles 130 and 131 of the Turkish Constitution require that only foundations establish such universities and permit these institutions to have certain administrative and financial freedoms subject to specific conditions: These universities are to be non-profit institutions. They are not to fall below the minimum academic and security standards of the state. They are annually inspected and audited by YÖK , Yüksekoğrenim Kurulu (in English, the Council of Higher Education of Turkey). In addition, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Education perform their evaluations on these institutions. Foundation universities as well as state universities in Turkey vary in terms of how they are perceived by the public in regard to their educational and research performances.

Privatization is a term that can be used in different contexts for different meanings. Consider a country in which the laws only allowed for state universities. Suppose that the prohibition later on is lifted allowing freedom for private institutions, foundations or people to establish non-profit private universities. Allowing for such private universities is the topic of this presentation and is different than modifying existing state universities as described by Priest et al. (2006).²

1 I benefited from the comments of Özalp Özer on an earlier version of this paper. Any remaining errors are mine.
2 Priest et al. (2006) define privatization in public higher education as “the process of transforming low tuition institutions that are largely dependent on state funding to provide mass enrollment opportunities at low prices into institutions dependent on tuition revenues and other types of earned income as central sources of operating revenue”.
Relationships between governments and higher education have been studied in diverse contexts for a long time (e.g. Neave and Van Vught, 1994, and Huisman, Maassen and Neave, 2001). The following section is not a comprehensive study in that sense, but rather an illustration of some of the forces in action, and their ensuing process of balance.

2. Admission to Undergraduate Programs

By being private, a university may be expected to have some latitude in determining the way it admits its students. For example, in the USA, Dartmouth may use an admission system that is considerably different than that of Bennington College. Not so in Turkey.

2.1 The ÖSYM System

Entrance to the undergraduate programs in the country, for state as well as foundation universities is administered by a state organization called ÖSYM. The letters stand for the Turkish equivalent of “Student Selection and Placement Center”. The entry of a high school graduate is not simply to a specific university, but also at the same time to one of its specific departments. The students in most universities thus have to choose their departments, i.e., majors (areas of study), at the time of entry to their universities.

Each year, the state and foundation universities inform ÖSYM of how many students they can admit to each of their undergraduate departments (majors). Later, in early summer, ÖSYM conducts its university entrance test. More than 1.5 million high school graduates take this state administered university entrance test. ÖSYM then matches each student’s score with his/her personal ranking of preferred universities and departments. Students with highest scores enter the universities and departments they wish. The ones with lower scores enter their second, third, or lower choices. Students with even lower scores do not enter anywhere at all. Thus it is not the universities that choose their students, but rather the opposite. The students decide where to go by their ÖSYM scores. They enter their most preferred university department among those that have not yet been filled by other students with higher scores.

Compared to foundation universities, state universities are almost free. Annual tuition and fees of state universities amount to several hundred dollars, while students admitted to foundation universities without scholarship have to pay amounts that can be more than twenty-fold. Foundation universities wishing to provide four or five year scholarships to entering students declare, prior to the entrance test, their quotas for each of their departments, and get such scholarship distributions settled at the ÖSYM level.

For example, if a student interested in studying industrial engineering related topics in the city of İstanbul submits her ranking as:
1st choice: Boğaziçi University, Industrial Engineering (state univ)
2nd choice: Koç University, Industrial Engineering, with scholarship (foundation univ)
3rd choice: İstanbull Technical University, Industrial Engineering *(state univ)*

4th choice: Koç University Industrial Engineering without scholarship *(foundation univ)*

5th choice: Boğaziçi University, Department of Mathematics *(state univ)*

then her fourth and fifth ranking would imply that she is willing to pay about $19,000 a year to Koç’s industrial engineering department rather than attend Boğaziçi’s almost free mathematics. Furthermore in this hypothetical example, her top three choices in the list imply that when industrial engineering departments of all three universities are not discriminated by tuition fees, she prefers first Boğaziçi, then Koç, and after them, İstanbull Technical University.

As mentioned above, each year, among the more than 1.5 million students take the university entrance and placement test. Consider the top 100 students with the highest quantitative score. These students can enroll into their university and department of their first choice. The universities they chose for the last five years (2003-2007) are listed in Table 1.

**Table 1. The universities chosen by the top 100 students in “Quantitative Segment of the Test” each year for 2003-2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>State versus Foundation</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boğaziçi</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilkent</td>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METU</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hacettepe</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabancı</td>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatih</td>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Istanbul</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koç</td>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Çukurova</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ege</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gülhane Tıp</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>İstanbul Tech</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows that from 2003 to 2007, 170 of the 500, i.e. 34% of the top students chose foundation universities. This percentage is not far off from the percentage of foundation universities to total number of universities in the country. From this perspective one may venture to say that foundation universities do not seem to be any less popular than state universities in Turkey. Comparisons can also be made with respect to other measures such as size. Most foundation universities are smaller in size compared to state universities. For example, in 2005, the total number of students enrolled in all foundation universities in

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3 Ranking of the universities would be different for other test categories such as scores in the “Verbal Segment of the Test” which is used in placing students into departments such as Archeology and Turkish Literature.
Turkey was 95,782. In the same year, the corresponding number for state universities was 2,055,973 students. Since most foundation universities provide scholarships to the top 100 students, preferences in Table 1 are made under comparable affordability conditions. However, had these students not been offered scholarships from foundation universities, then many more would have had to choose the almost free state universities.

2.2 Choice of Majors at the Time of Entry to the University

The number of students taking the university entrance test far exceeds the number of places available in the Turkish universities. Due to the severe competition, a large number of applicants try to better prepare for this test by spending considerable money and time at private test preparation centers. Many of these centers advertise their performance by announcing how many of their customers were placed in the most difficult places to enter. Such advertisements create incentives for preparation centers to advise their best students to rank the most difficult to enter majors as their first choice, even if the student might have had in his/her heart a different area of study. Thus, areas of study not in high demand have a difficult time increasing their intake of good scoring students.

One indicator of popular majors is the choices made by the top scoring students. Taking again the top 100 students with the highest quantitative score for the years 2003-2007, the areas of study they chose is displayed in Table 2.

Table 2: Majors chosen by top 100 students with highest quantitative scores 2003-2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Engineering</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Sci / Engr</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Engineering</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engr &amp; Natr Sci with major to be declared later</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molecular Bio &amp; Genetics</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Engineering</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Design</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmaceutical Sciences</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL NUMBER OF TOP 100 STUDENTS IN FIVE YEARS</strong></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3 Perceptions of Institutional Freedom versus Public Fairness

If a university is private, should it have to conform to the state system for university admissions and placement? Compare the requirement of choosing one’s major at the time of entrance to the university, to the American practice of often doing it at the end of the
sophomore year. At Bilkent University we have allowed inter-departmental transfers to achieve flexibility in this area. Sabancı University in Istanbul went one step further and declared that students admitted to their Faculties of Engineering and Natural Sciences shall have to choose their majors in their second year. This is the reason why Table 2 above has 19 students classified to the category of “Engr & Natrl Sci with major to be declared later”. This line of Table 2 corresponds to the 19 students of Sabancı University in Table 1. This is an example of a foundation university challenging the standard practice of the powerful YÖK (Council of Higher Education of the country) and its affiliated ÖSYM, and getting away with it.

Does this mean that foundation universities have complete freedom to depart from the ÖSYM system? The answer at the present time is not a complete yes, but exceptions continue. Another foundation university in Istanbul wished to give preference to the students graduating from a specific private high school. They tried to achieve this by charging lower tuition fees from students admitted from this high school. YÖK, which annually inspects the finances of every university, observed the practice and intervened. The inspectors declared that the university had no right to use its funds to subsidize students just because they came from a specific private school. As a response the founders of that university decided to provide scholarships to the same students via one of their foundations, which, being an institution separate from the university, was not under the jurisdiction of YÖK. Hence the high school continues to receive preferential treatment.

The intervention of YÖK may be explained in terms of an attempt to provide equal opportunity to graduates of other high schools. Should YÖK bring the case to court, it could find some support in the Turkish judiciary, which is known to lean towards fairness and equality based on headcount rather than qualifications. Nevertheless, YÖK has chosen not to do so.

The two examples stated above show that a certain degree of variations in the ÖSYM system might be possible\(^4\). They also indirectly (by absence of any larger deviations from YÖK - ÖSYM standards) show that, to a large extent, the terrain is dominated by the centralized system.

The concept of equal opportunity and the desire to assist people with lower income prevails in the country and especially within the judicial system. This may be one of the reasons why the ÖSYM system has remained in operation for decades. Challengers of the system are busy preparing new alternatives that can be justified in terms of benefits to the overall student body (rather than any new freedoms it may provide to some universities). The chances of adoption of such proposals are likely to depend on their degree of fairness and perceived overall educational benefit to the large body of Turkish high school students.

Belfield and Levin (2003, 2005) define governance of education as “overall authorization for operation of schools and responsibility for schooling decisions as vested in the domains

\(^4\) Another exception is that allowed to Galatasaray University providing some flexibility to a small number of graduates of certain French language based high schools.
of private or public control.” They point out that even in private institutions governance is jointly carried out by both public and private authorities. The benefits of privatization such as freedom of choice, allowing alternative modes of organization and new opportunities for innovation, and efficient use of resources, need to be balanced against dangers such as segregating the educational system by income, religion, race or ethnicity. Turkey’s experience in private education is older than post-communist Europe which is in search of legitimacy (Slantcheva and Levy, 2007). While the state’s control establishes limits to the freedom of foundation universities, it also provides them legitimacy. In the course of time the balances between state control, institutional freedom, fairness and equity and performance may be readjusted as we learn from experience.

3. Bilkent: The Oldest Foundation University in Turkey

The oldest foundation university in Turkey is Bilkent. It admitted its first students in 1986. It was followed by Koç in 1992, and the others followed shortly thereafter.

Bilkent University was legally founded on October 20, 1984 by my father İhsan Doğramacı, through the joint resolution of his foundations. The establishment of this university was later approved by an act of Parliament. The aim was to create a center of excellence in higher education and research. The name “Bilkent” exemplifies the founder's aim, since it is an a compound of "bilim kenti", Turkish for "city of science and knowledge."

It had long been an objective of the founder to establish a private university distinguished by its high quality of education and research. The founder, himself an academic by profession, had earlier contributed to the establishment of numerous public institutions of higher learning and served as rector of Ankara University, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Middle East Technical University, founder and first rector of Hacettepe University, as well as the founding president of YÖK.

The establishment of Hacettepe University in the 1960’s involved a radical departure from conventional medical education in Turkey. In those years, the Turkish constitution, modeled along the lines of those in central Europe, prohibited private universities. As a state university, Hacettepe flourished due to its novel structure, permitted by a special law, which the founder convinced the members of Parliament to adopt, and also due to the support of the endowments created by the founder. Hacettepe remains to date a state university with a very prominent medical school. For example, of the 94 top students in Table 2 who chose to study medicine in Turkey, 84 of them enrolled in Hacettepe.

Preparations for Bilkent University had begun as early as 1967, with the purchase of a large tract of land to the west of Ankara. In the late 1970s and early 1980s the above-mentioned foundations undertook construction, on the future site of Bilkent. In the early 1980’s, İhsan

5 There was a much older and very successful private university, Robert College established in the 19th century by Americans. It was nationalized in 1970’s and converted into a state university called Boğaziçi University.
Doğramaci convinced the lawmakers that articles 130 and 131 of the Constitution that addressed higher education should also include provisions permitting the establishment of foundation universities. Shortly thereafter he founded Bilkent.

The endowment of the university was donated by its founder and consisted of large tracts of land and full ownership of more than forty companies. In the USA, endowments of universities include corporate stocks, but rarely that of a whole company. Compared to the USA, in Turkey the stock market was thin and more volatile. A young university needed a steady flow of income, especially in view of the heavy capital expenditures involved in building up the campus and its facilities. Owning whole companies allowed the university to demand and obtain support even during the low ebbs of business cycles. Some of the endowment companies later formed partnerships with other (i.e. outsider) regular companies and grew considerably. Thus for example the university today is the largest shareholder of TAV company, which builds and operates major airports in Turkey in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir, and elsewhere. Other companies owned by Bilkent's endowment operate in diverse sectors including furniture manufacturing, manufacturing of various construction materials, construction companies, paper companies, retail chains and shopping malls.

From the time of its founding, the university structure provided for student union representatives to be voting members of the administrative committees of various schools, as well as of the University Senate. Beginning in the second year of instruction, the practice of student evaluation of courses and instructors, at the time not a common practice in Turkey, was instituted.

During the last twenty years in Bilkent, income from tuition fees have accounted to approximately half of the total university expenditures. For example, measured in U.S. dollars, in the calendar year of 2007, annual cash inflow (and also total expenditures) amounted to $202 million. Income from tuition fees for the same period was $96 million, which amounted to 47.5% of the total. Research projects and state grants and supports added up to about 18% of the annual income. Approximately 30% of the annual income came from the endowments of the university. The remaining 4.5% was income from dormitories and other campus operations and small external donations.

During the last decade, Bilkent’s annual library expenditures for new books and journals exceeded $3 million/year. While this value is modest in North American standards, it is the largest in Turkey. Turkish state university libraries are not open to public in general. Bilkent Library is open to public seven days a week, 362 days a year.

The medium of instruction in Bilkent is English. Compared to other research oriented foundation universities in Turkey, Bilkent has a larger student body: about 12,000 students, of which slightly more than 3,000 are on full university scholarship (i.e., pay no tuition fees, and also receive some stipend). For example, during the 2005-2006 academic year, the total enrollment in two other research oriented foundation universities, namely Koç and Sabancı Universities were 3,270 and 2,847 respectively. Koç and Sabancı families own massive business empires and are well known for their large scale and diverse philanthropic activities through their family foundations. Universities such as these, by their mere
existence, provide support for one another, because they have self-interest in defending a concept that is novel to the country. Namely, the raison d’etre for private non-profit research universities.

At Bilkent, about 30% of the teaching staff are from countries other than Turkey. Those from Canada+UK+USA add up to 206. The rest come from forty other countries. Of all the assistant professors, associate professors and full professors in Bilkent, about 75% are reverse brain drain. They were mostly in North America or Western Europe when they received the Bilkent job offer. Some of the remaining 25% recruited within Turkey have stated that they might have left for positions abroad, had the Bilkent option been not available.

4. Diversity of Activities in Bilkent

Why would so many people in North America and Europe choose to come to Ankara and work in Bilkent? The answer may lie in the kind of things they hope they might be able to achieve on the Bilkent platform.

In 1986, the year Bilkent admitted its first students, I became a member of the board of trustees of this university. I traveled to Turkey for each meeting, while living and working in the USA. In the following three years it became clear to me that making recommendations at board meetings was not enough to get things done on the ground. The Bilkent platform as established by its founder was a unique means of introducing new facets to education in that part of the world. But this could only be achieved by being there, i.e., not via remote control. Hence I moved to Ankara. Such an attraction was strong not only to the administrative cadres, but even more so to a large number of educators, researchers, and artists coming to Bilkent to achieve their scholarly or artistic aspirations. In this part of the world where breakthroughs in education are urgently needed, the Bilkent platform provided a new and unusual environment for self-actualization and service.

The university provided its faculty members furnished apartments on campus for free as well as a reasonable salary to meet their responsibilities to support their families. The research and educational facilities and support to the faculty members to carry out their scholarly (or artistic) ambitions were coupled with the presence of good students and competent colleagues.

The reverse brain drain from North America and Western Europe could be facilitated if the children of the newcomers could attend a preK-12 school that met internationally recognized high standards. The local regulations however prevented imposition of international standards to national schools. Bilkent on the other hand was founded to initiate new approaches in the country. The legal platform on which the university rested, and the financial resources available, allowed the university to initiate a new kind of pre-kindergarten to 12th grade school, beyond the existing framework (limits) of the National Ministry of Education. This was achieved by declaring the school as an integral part of the university, and in a subtle way by burying it under the blanket of academic freedom of the institution. This Bilkent University Preparatory School (BUPS) became accredited not only
by the local authorities but also by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, and by the European Council of International Schools. With its International Baccalaureate (IB) and IGCSE programs, it served as a magnet for attracting families of scholars abroad. Providing the new coming professors an environment that strives to meet their family needs allows the professors themselves to fully devote their energies to their educational and creative endeavors.

There are two leading research groups in nanotechnology in Turkey. They compete with each other, yet both grew and reside in Bilkent. The Department of Physics has 17 faculty members. Appendix A at the end of this paper provides an incomplete list of their publications in 2007 illustrating their research interests and intensity. Being a small university, instead of addressing a large number of fields, Bilkent’s strategy has been to address narrower areas, but with the intention of hitting deep. This can be seen in Appendix A: The research of our physicists does not focus on nuclear power or high-energy physics. But they are world class in certain areas of nanotechnology and materials.

Concrete measures of international recognition have been integrated to the performance evaluation system of the university. Departments of Bilkent’s School of Engineering routinely get evaluated by ABET, the agency involved in accreditation of engineering schools in the USA. Bilkent graduates wishing to pursue academic careers often receive offers to join various universities (see Appendix B). Bilkent’s Business School is the only AACSB accredited such school in Turkey. Some of the recent CDs of Bilkent Symphony Orchestra that were released through international labels are listed in Table 3 below.

### Table 3. Recent CDs of Bilkent Symphony Orchestra on international labels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orchestra</th>
<th>Conductor</th>
<th>Performers</th>
<th>Works</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilkent Symphony Orchestra</td>
<td>Emil Tabakov</td>
<td>Jean Philippe Collard, piano</td>
<td>P.I.Tchaikovsky/ Piano Concerto No.1 in B flat minor, Op.23</td>
<td>EMI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilkent Symphony Orchestra</td>
<td>Alain Paris</td>
<td>İdil Biret, piano</td>
<td>J. Massenet / Concerto for Piano</td>
<td>Alpha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilkent Symphony Orchestra</td>
<td>Patrick Gallois, flute</td>
<td>Philippe Bernold, flute</td>
<td>E. Tabakov</td>
<td>Naxos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As stated earlier in this presentation, each year more than 1.5 million students take the national university entrance test. Each year at least 20 of them choose Bilkent’s Electrical
Engineering Department. After they graduate, many of this crème de la crème group are likely to become leaders in the society, whether in academia, industry or government. They are likely to be involved in matters far more than just engineering. In the 1990’s, their curricula at Bilkent was revised to include compulsory humanity courses conducted in small classes.

Table 4 below lists their curriculum for the sophomore year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4. Electrical and Electronics Engr Dept 2nd Year Curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Autumn Semester</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 225 Linear Algebra and Differential Equations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEE 211 Analog Electronics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUM 111 Cultures Civilizations and Ideas I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURK 101 Turkish I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Electives (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring Semester</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 206 Complex Calculus and Transform Techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEE 202 Circuit Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEE 212 Microprocessors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUM 112 Cultures Civilizations and Ideas II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURK 102 Turkish II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Elective (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class sizes in HUM 111 & HUM 112: 15 to 22 students.

The required readings in these small classes include English translations of the primary texts as listed in Table 5 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5. Main textbooks for the courses HUM 111 &amp; HUM 112</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sigmund Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, Strachey (tr.), Norton, 1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homer, the Iliad, Fagles (tr.), Penguin, 1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophocles: Theban Plays, Watling (tr.), Penguin, 1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plato, Republic, Grube (tr.), Hackett, 1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machiavelli The Prince (Penguin);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shakespeare, Tempest (Pelican) or Macbeth (Oxford) or Hamlet (Oxford);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descartes, Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy (Everyman);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolf, A Room Of One’s Own (Harcourt);</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These two courses are required for all departments of the engineering school. The importance given by the university for an encompassing education is reflected in the
diversity and qualifications of the teaching staff that is devoted primarily for HUM 111 and 112, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Faculty Members Teaching HUM 111 and HUM 112

| *David de Kanter Arndt.* B.A. Yale Univ.; Ph.D. in Comparative Literature, UC Irvine. |
| *Louise Barry.* BA (hons) Trinity College Dublin; DEA, Univ. of Lille III, France; PhD, French Literature, Emory Univ |
| *Gabriel Noah Brahm Jr.* BA in English from UCLA; Teaching Certificate in Rhetoric from San Francisco State Univ.; MA in American Literature; PhD in Literature and Cultural Studies, UC Santa Cruz. |
| *Duncan Chesney.* B.A. Columbia Univ; M.Phil. Cambridge Univ; Ph.D., Yale. |
| *Julie Chung In Park.* B.A.; Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the UC Irvine. |
| *Costantino Costantini.* Ph.D. Emory Univ. Undergrad degree from Univ. Bari. |
| *Daren Ivan Hodson.* Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the Univ of Utah. |
| *Martina Kolb.* Ph.D. & M.Phil. in Comparative Literature Yale Univ; M.A. Univ. of Oregon, also a graduate degree in Philology and an undergraduate degree, Tübingen Univ. |
| *Mustafa S. Nakeeb,* B.A. Northwestern Univ, Ph.D. in Philosophy, SUNY Buffalo. |
| *Andrea Rehberg* BA (Hons) in Humanities from the Univ of North London; MA in Continental Philosophy Univ. of Essex; PhD in Philosophy from the Univ of Warwick. |

As mentioned above, Bilkent’s strategy has been to concentrate on a limited number of fields, so that in each, greater depths may be achieved. Nevertheless, the university tries to maintain diversity to attain a wider perspective. This for example is reflected in the teaching staff of Bilkent’s small History Department as shown in Tables 7 and 8 below.

Table 7: Nationalities of Faculty Members of Bilkent’s History Department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turkey</th>
<th>Bulgaria</th>
<th>Greece</th>
<th>Britain</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>Iran</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M. Kalpakli</td>
<td>E. Radushev</td>
<td>E. Kermeli</td>
<td>C. Leighton</td>
<td>T. Roberts</td>
<td>A. Miandji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O. Ozel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A. Thornton</td>
<td>E.P. Cohn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O. Ergenc</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D. Thornton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Simin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P. Latimer</td>
<td></td>
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<td>K. Emiroglu</td>
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<tr>
<td>H. Inalcik <em>(Prof Inalcik is recipient of honorary doctorates from U. Bucharest, U. Sofia, Athens Univ., Hebrew Univ of Jerusalem, Ankara University, and more...)</em></td>
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Table 8. Sample Publications of Members of the History Dept.

Inalcik, Halil and D. Quatert. *An Economic And Social History of the Ottoman Empire*. Cambridge University Press. 1994


5. Extension Beyond the Conventional Borders of the University

What are the basic root causes that drive people to devote considerable amounts of their wealth, time, or effort for improvements in higher education? Whatever these reasons, would they not also cause some of the same people to consider devoting their resources for the improvement of secondary or primary education? The answer is likely to be affirmative especially in environments where significant numbers of students admitted to universities turn out to be not well prepared.

Our motivation in Bilkent to address pre-university education in the eastern regions of the country began to take shape in the late 1990’s. If one could build and operate exemplary schools that would strive to meet international standards, then others might also follow, and even the state schools might be positively stimulated from the wake up call.

The eastern regions of Turkey are mostly low in income. Private schools that serve the middle class and the wealthy families of central and western Turkey have no market in the east. Still, throwing out money does not solve the problem alone. First one needs to train good teachers who might consider serving in eastern Turkey. Bringing in good international teachers to the Bilkent school (BUPS) in Ankara had been possible. However extending this flow to Eastern Turkey did not seem feasible. Thus in 2000, we started a two-year Masters program at Bilkent for teacher training. All the students admitted to the program received full tuition scholarship from Bilkent. Finding the faculty to teach in this program was a challenge in itself. Unfortunately many of the professors serving in faculties of education in the country lacked teaching experience in outstanding secondary or primary schools. To prepare the leading teachers of the future involved recruiting faculty members who had served as schoolteachers. About half of the names in Table 9 below have backgrounds with considerable teaching and administrative experience internationally in leading schools.
Table 9. Faculty Members for the Teaching Training Program

- H. NECMİ AKŞİT, Ph.D., Educational Sciences, Middle East Technical University, 1998.
- RASİM ÖZYÜREK, Ph.D., Turkish Language Teaching, Baku State Univ., 1998. Turkish lang. teaching methods.
- MARGARET SANDS, Ph.D., Science Education, University of Nottingham, 1983.
- ENGİN SEZER, Ph.D., Linguistics, Harvard University, 1991
- ERIC WILLIAMS, Ph.D., University of Illinois, 1996

The first year of this Masters program for teacher training contains 5 regular courses each semester. In addition, during the autumn semester students spend one day a week at Bilkent’s high school gaining experience in internationally accredited practices in education. The spring semester of the first year is similar, except that they attend other leading Turkish schools to get a wider view. With the generous support of the Fulbright Program of the US Department of State, in their second year they spend two months in Midwest USA taking courses and teaching practice classes in the schools of Iowa.

Bilkent’s first high school in Eastern Anatolia started in 2007 in the city of Erzurum (Boland, 2007). The curriculum, teaching methods and external exams are structured according to the model of Bilkent’s school (BUPS) in Ankara. However, in Erzurum, more than 80% of the students receive full Bilkent scholarship. When totally completed, the school will have 1000 students from Kindergarten to 12th grade.

Incentives to recruit good teachers to Erzurum include the following. Salary is reasonably high. Teachers are provided furnished apartments on campus, free of charge. The students are exceptionally good because they are selected from a large number of applicants, thanks to Bilkent scholarships. The curriculum with IB and IGCSE is world class, and provides professional satisfaction. In addition, a Bilkent Graduate School of Education exists in the campus, where most teachers attend evening classes toward a doctoral degree (again on Bilkent scholarship). Using the summer semesters as well, teachers may be able to get their doctorates in six years. This not only can open up new horizons in their careers to becoming university professors, but also inject a new breed of professors to the country’s faculties of education: Professors with solid teaching experience in top schools. Close to half of the teachers recruited were graduates of Bilkent’s teacher training program. The others were teachers from well-known schools of the country.
This initiative is designed to introduce new colors to Eastern Anatolia. For example, the school with its concert grand Steinway piano and music hall has brought classical music to this remote city.

After making some headway in Erzurum, the project is to be replicated in three other provinces of the region: Malatya, Şanlıufra, and Van.

Figure 1. Erzurum School Campus Plan
**Figure 2. Back view of the first classroom building in Erzurum**

Construction started April 2007, completed September 2007
(Until April ground is frozen in Erzurum, delaying start of the construction. Owning a construction company helps complete the building in time)

This building also has a fully equipped videoconference classroom that conducts joint classes with Bilkent-Ankara, and Bilkent-New York

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**Figure 3. Faculty Housing for Teachers of the School in Erzurum:**

Construction started & completed: summer 2007

All teachers are provided with furnished apartments on campus, free of charge
Figure 4. Bilkent Symphony Orchestra Serving Erzurum with an all Mozart Concert at Bilkent’s Erzurum High School Music Hall (December 2007)
6. Final Remarks

State Universities are not alike in Turkey. They vary considerably from one to another. The same applies to foundation universities. Indeed, the differences between the leading universities of the two groups may be smaller than the difference between the top and the bottom ones within each group.

A thorough understanding of the terrain requires investigation of different ways of organizing for higher education. Studying different types of university organizations in terms of what makes them move, and what makes them different, involves more than drawings of the organizational structures or collections of data on numbers of students and professors in diverse divisions of the university. Analysis of such data should be supported by a deeper understanding of the purposes and processes of the organization. Furthermore, education cannot be summarized by course descriptions alone. The actual course contents and concrete measures on the educational richness of the faculty make a big difference, but do not necessarily show in national statistics.

Micro-studies such as the one in this presentation may provide supportive information to conventional statistics. In this sense, the presentation made here is one of the small pieces intended to contribute towards such an overall objective. Small pieces such as this one, when collected for a variety of institutions may contribute towards a richer comparative perspective.
Appendix A

An incomplete list of publications of members of the Department of Physics of Bilkent University in 2007

An incomplete list of publications of members of the Department of Physics of Bilkent University in 2007 – continued –

An incomplete list of publications of members of the Department of Physics of Bilkent University in 2007 – continued –


Appendix B

Graduates of Bilkent’s industrial engineering department who currently teach in North America (an incomplete list)

Bilkent is a young university. Academic instruction started in 1986, and Bachelor’s degrees were awarded beginning in 1990. From 1990 to 2007, 1163 students graduated from Bilkent’s industrial engineering department, Most of them work or teach in Turkey and perform extremely well. Those who choose to go international also succeed spectacularly. The incomplete list below presents some of those who as of autumn 2007 were faculty members of universities in North America.

- **Oğuzhan Alagöz**: Univ of Wisconsin-Madison
- **Aydın Alptekinolu**: University of Florida
- **Barış Ata**: Northwestern University
- **Alper Atamtürk**: University of California, Berkeley
- **Murat Bayız**: University of Southern California
- **Bahar Biller**: Carnegie Mellon University
- **Metin Çakanyıldırım**: Univ of Texas, Dallas
- **Cenk Çalışkan**: University of Delaware
- **Sıla Çetinkaya**: Texas A&M University
- **Abdullah Daşç**: York University
- **Savaş Dayanik**: Princeton University
- **Serdar Dinç**: MIT
- **Feryal Erhun**: Stanford University
- **Mustafa Karakul**: York University
- **Pınar Keskinocak**: Georgia Tech
- **Gürhan Kök**: Duke University
- **Erhan Kutanoğlu**: University of Texas Austin
- **Özalp Özer**: Stanford University
- **Özge Şahin**: University of Michigan
- **Eylem Tekin**: Texas A&M University
- **Tolga Tezcan**: University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
- **Ayten Türkcan**: Purdue University
- **Vedat Verter**: McGill University

A more complete list may be obtained from the web pages of the industrial engineering department of Bilkent.
References


Boland, V. “Don’t mention the word elite”, *Financial Times*, July 18, 2007.


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About the Author:
Ali Doğramacı has been serving as rector of Bilkent University since 1993. During 1991-1993 he served as vice-rector at the same university. Prior to Bilkent he taught at Columbia, Cornell and Rutgers Universities from 1975 to 1991.