

## Library Selections

### A Study on the Evolution of the Oriental Directories, 1868-1945: A Rich Source of Information extending from Trade to Social Topography

The Oriental Directories are designed to acquaint both local and foreign entrepreneurs with the commercial activities flourishing in the main trade centers established within the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic. They are undeniably important sources of information for those focusing specifically on the socio-economic and commercial life throughout Ottoman territories during the second half of the 19th century, and in Turkey until the 1940's.

The Ottoman Bank Archives and Research Centre Library, which focuses mainly on the economic history of the Ottoman Empire after the Reforms of the Tanzimat and on the Turkish Republic, aims to constitute a collection based on these trade directories.

#### From Istanbul Guide to Oriental Trade Directories...

The first yearbook, namely the *Indicateur Constantinopolitain*, was published in both Ottoman Turkish and French, in 1868, by Raphaël César Cervati and N. C. Sargologo. Designed as a simple guide for Istanbul, this edition was translated into Turkish and republished in Armenian scripts under the title *Tarif-i Der el-Saadet*, by S. Hisarliyan and A. Maviyan, in 1870. Considering Istanbul the capital city of the Levant, this guide contains detailed information about the Ottoman dynasty, state officials, the places of worship of different religions, embassies and consulates, Ottoman telegraphical and postal services, railways, and the bankers, merchants and artisans practicing in Istanbul.



These yearbooks, published more regularly after 1880, were entitled *Indicateur Ottoman Illustré* until 1883, *Indicateur Oriental* between 1887 and 1888, *Annuaire Oriental* from 1891 to 1930 and *Oriental Trade Directory* between 1931 and 1945. Intended to figure among Istanbul guides, the yearbooks encompassed commercial life in Ottoman lands under the denomination of *Indicateur Ottoman Illustré* and, reaching beyond these frontiers under the title of *Annuaire Oriental du Commerce*, included as well the trade networks of the Levant. Thus, the yearbook dated 1887 extended from Russia to Greece, Rumania and Bulgaria. As soon as the Ottoman provinces obtained their independence after the dismantling of the empire, territories such as Arabia, Palestine and Syria figured separately as did the Balkans.



More interesting is the fact that the publishers of the yearbooks, named successively Cervati Frères & Denis Fatzea, Cervati Frères et Cie and the Annuaire Oriental & Printing Company Limited also acted in different fields of commerce. Another remarkable point is the strange coincidence that these companies, though registered in England, preferred to publish the directories in French. This preference is a typical indicator of French domination in the Near East and particularly in Ottoman lands. The 1789 Revolution had propagated principles such as equality, fraternity and freedom beyond French boundaries; the fact that reforms carried out under the reign of Selim III were based on French institutions stresses the influence of France over the empire. On the other hand, French became an intermediary language used to broadcast the Ottoman effort of

westernization to the European world. When looking at the press, created in French in that period by the Ottoman Government, the intelligentsia that supported the westernization process, and the minorities who undertook independence movements after the Tanzimat, French emerges as the favorite language chosen by these entities of conflicting interests to express themselves in the international arena. In that sense, French progressively acquired political connotations as a means to acquaint the empire with western concepts and institutions and proclaim to the Western world that the different groups living within the Ottoman Empire were internalizing this process.

Playing an intermediary role in the political field, French acquired a similar connotation in commercial life. The advertisements that appeared in the first pages of the books inform us that the sale of oriental directories extended beyond Ottoman boundaries and they were generally accessible via representative bookstores throughout European countries such as Germany, Great Britain, Italy and France. Thus, French, as the prevailing language of that era, enabled the directories to meet the requirements of a readership that included Ottoman minorities, foreign merchants and European industrialists.

In their early stages, the yearbooks generally started with a preface in French, Greek, Ottoman Turkish and sometimes Armenian scripts, and consisted of five chapters. The first chapter was devoted to the Sultan and members of the Ottoman dynasty, consulates, embassies, ministries, state officials, postal and telegraphical services, the places of worship of different religions, customs tariffs, railways and railroad schedules. The second chapter, namely "Addresses of Constantinople" compiled information, in alphabetical order of names, about the addresses and professional categories of bankers, merchants and artisans exercising their activities in the main trade centers of Istanbul. The third acquainted its readers with important personalities in Istanbul listed in alphabetical order of their professional categories without omitting their office addresses. The fourth chapter recorded the *hans* or business centers built in Galata and Eminönü and their residents, as well as the street numbers, and names and professions of the population on the left and right sides of Beyoğlu streets. Finally, the fifth one categorized the commercial population living in different Ottoman provinces according to their professions and addresses. The last pages of the yearbooks displayed the large advertisements of local and foreign industrialists. Most of the yearbooks also included plans related to Galata and Pera.

Until the early Republican period, the Ottoman Empire and Istanbul occupied a dominant place in the yearbooks in comparison to other states and cities. Although the reader might be tempted to consider the part entitled "Addresses of Constantinople" a kind of a census covering the commercial population of the city, the prefaces reveal that an important faction of tradesmen, familiar with the language of the directories, refused to figure in these yearbooks and thus constituted an obstacle to the compilation of relevant data. Complaints on this issue expressed in the prefaces should be noted to obtain a clear picture of the missing points in this census. Despite these shortcomings, the preface of the 1889-90 yearbook, presented at the Paris Exhibition, mentioned a project aimed at compiling the addresses of all the inhabitants of Istanbul. Since not all the offices and residences situated in Istanbul bore a street number, this project was canceled. Nevertheless, the 1889-90 yearbook managed to assemble the addresses of some of the residents living in Pera, Pangalti, Galata and Eminönü. On the other hand, considering the means of communication in the 19th century and the political instability of the era, it cannot be denied that the yearbooks represented a valuable endeavor. In the course of a parliamentary session held on November 5, 1912, for example, when the British deputy Mr. King had requested to be informed about the demographical structure of the occupied regions belonging to the Ottoman Empire, Sir Edward Grey, foreign minister of that period, had replied that all the relevant information could be found in the Oriental Directories.

As the starting point of the directories in the 19th century, the central place Istanbul occupied in the yearbooks is related to the economic and commercial restructuring that occurred in the heart of the city. Throughout history, the geographical status of Istanbul made it a privileged transition and meeting point between East and West in the Mediterranean basin. This position accelerated the interaction existing among local economic powers and the world economy. But from the viewpoint of integration to European economy, the characteristic that distinguished Istanbul from other harbor cities such as Izmir, was the existence of a well-structured monetary market. While Izmir imported consumption goods from Europe to its hinterland, it also paid the equivalent of that purchase by exporting raw materials provided from the same hinterland. In cities such as Izmir, the importance of agricultural production and of pre-industrial production models rendered the integration to the world economy difficult. However, Istanbul could not depend sufficiently upon its hinterland for a number of reasons, the main one being that as a capital city, it consumed more than it produced. At the same time, the city housed a rich elite of consumers, who emerged in the periphery of the Ottoman court and adopted European patterns of consumption under the impact of the westernization process. Istanbul met the requirements of that elite faction by importing luxury goods from Europe and paying the amount of these transactions in cash. The rapid circulation of liquidity in its markets rendered the city more attractive and reliable in the eyes of European merchants.

The integration of Istanbul into the world economy was carried out because of some transformations that occurred in the 19th century. In that period, European merchants, always in contact with Istanbul, succeeded in breaking the monopoly of the guilds and in establishing a direct link to local markets. However, since previously they had sold their consumption goods to wholesalers acting through the guilds, they were excluded from local markets. In the 19th century, western investments established a new equilibrium of political and diplomatic powers in Istanbul and broke the autonomy of local tradesmen. The efforts towards westernization that emerged within the state elite speeded up the influence of the West on local powers. Meanwhile, the capitalist world economy, reaching beyond national boundaries after the Industrial Revolution, restructured all the 19th century. Due to their centralizing administration and their policy of expansion, the core states of Europe succeeded in including pre-industrial regions into the periphery of the world economy. Thus, they transformed them into markets that European goods could easily penetrate. In that sense, the advertisements of the European industrialists that figured in the last pages of the yearbooks were intended to acquaint Eastern tradesmen with Western producers.

From 1896 on, in order to collect information more easily and to give an official identity to their works, the yearbooks were published under the auspices of the British, French, Greek and Italian Chambers of Commerce. In all the prefaces of the directories published up to the Republican period, the administration of the yearbooks addressed their thanks to the Sultan and to members of the Court for their support.

Undoubtedly, World War I influenced the evolution of the yearbooks in a negative way. In the preface of the yearbook dated 1921 for example, Alfred Rizzo pointed out that the war had upset the publishing house. As a new owner of the company where he had worked as administrator for many years, he mentioned the difficulties in undertaking publication after a six-year interval. In his opinion, it was difficult to elaborate the census of a new population, to compile information about cities under political instability and to work with a new staff and typographic materials.

During the Republican period, French maintained its ascendancy over the yearbooks. However, given the general tendency of the press in that period, this is not surprising. In Republican Turkey, the press, created in French until World War II, targeted foreigners living within Turkish territories or abroad. Several Turkish newspapers published supplementary issues in French that focused on the industrial and agricultural production of Turkey. In particular, they conveyed the message that economic and social development in Turkey was generated in accordance to Western norms and aimed to render the process of westernization more comprehensible to European eyes.

In the 1930's, many changes became noticeable in the editing of the yearbooks, which by then included Albania, Bulgaria, Egypt, Greece, Iraq, Palestine, Rumania, Syria, Turkey under the title of "Orient," and the United States and Sweden (in 1944-45). The most important of these changes was the fact that a more or less part equal was now reserved to each country. Thus, Istanbul lost its priority of Ottoman times and occupied the same place as other cities in the yearbooks. This evolution was related to the national economic policy undertaken in the Republican period, whose objective was to enable commercial life to reach beyond the boundaries of Istanbul and to spread economic development to every city in the country. The chapter "Addresses of Constantinople," still listed the *hans* situated in Galata and Eminönü along with their residents. However, details regarding the street number, and the names and professions of the residents living in Beyoğlu no longer appeared as they had in earlier editions. These omissions in the "Addresses of Constantinople" made it difficult to locate people. If the reader was not familiar with the professional category of an individual, it was no easy task to find relevant information about him in the yearbooks.

In the new pagination, there were about ten countries listed along with the main cities in each and for each city, the merchants were categorized in alphabetical order of professions. Inspired by the International Trade Directory, the new yearbooks also compiled statistics regarding the import-export activities and economic life of the countries included. The part entitled "Abroad," for instance, informed the user about the industrialists exporting products from countries such as Germany, Austria, Belgium, France, Great Britain, Italy, Poland, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia to the Levant. Unlike the yearbooks of imperial times, these included indexes with the equivalents in German, Italian and Turkish for the professional categories listed in French. The general information given for Turkey was in Turkish and French and for other countries, in French and German.

In the yearbook dated 1930, a paragraph emphasizing the importance of international trade reflects the precepts of liberal economic policies: "Il existe entre les peuples une solidarité d'intérêts telle que la richesse de chacun est fonction de la prospérité de tous et l'on ne saurait espérer une amélioration sensible de la vie économique internationale, tant que l'harmonieux équilibre des échanges commerciaux ne sera pas à nouveau instauré dans le monde." An important announcement followed these few lines. In order to accomplish its due function as an intermediary between supply and demand and to increase the efficiency of advertising, the administration had founded a new service of propaganda and information. This service was not only restricted to establishing communication between producers and merchants. It would offer, as well, a wide range of services extending from the compilation of information regarding mutual commercial activities to the collection of debts.

### Yearbooks Change Hands...

Though we do not possess detailed documents about the publishers of the directories, some advertisements that appear throughout lead to interesting findings. In the yearbook dated 1868, only Paul Cervati from the Cervati Family is mentioned. Having worked as a tenor with the famous artists of his time in the main theatres of Europe and taught music at the imperial court of Vienna, Paul Cervati is listed as giving private voice and music lessons.

The yearbooks dated 1880-1883 were published by Cervati Frères & D. Fatzea, a company of British origin founded in 1878. According to these yearbooks, the company was the representative office of many foreign brands within the Ottoman Empire and exercised its activities in the *Ada Han* near the Galata Customs in 1880 and in the *Köçeoğlu Han* facing the Galata Customs in 1883. It offered a wide range of goods extending from chemical products to imported champagne. Cervati Frères et Cie, founded in 1879, succeeded Cervati Frères & D. Fatzea, whose trace is lost after 1883.

Cervati Frères & D. Fatzea was founded through the partnership of two different families. Information about the shareholders of Cervati Frères is incomplete. But the yearbook dated 1880 leads to four persons bearing the surname of Cervati: Charles Cervati, working for the Italian Consulate, Paul Cervati, with whom we are familiar from the 1868 yearbook, Philippe Cervati, director and owner of an English school, the English School for Young Ladies, and finally the publisher Raphaël César Cervati. By tracing these individuals in yearbooks of different dates, it becomes apparent that their professional activities extended from music and publishing to law and trade. Similarities in their residence addresses at some dates strengthen the probability of kinship between them. In the year 1909, only Raphaël César Cervati was registered in the yearbook as managing editor of the *Annuaire Oriental and Printing Company*. Cervati Frères et Cie, reappears in the yearbooks dated 1912, 1913 and 1914. Since they are registered then as the editor and owner of a guide entitled the *Guide Horaire Général du Voyageur en Orient*, the company must have ceased its former activities.

As for the other partner of the company, Denis Fatzea, he was registered as commission agent and editor. We lose track of him after 1883 and he reappears, recorded as a rentier, only in the yearbook dated 1889-90.



From the yearbooks, we can conclude that the Cervati family and Denis Fatzea chose as their residence Tepebasi, Pera, Feriköy and Pangalti, all quarters reflecting transformations of the 19th century, and preferred as their office address Galata, the heart of trade and finance at the time.

From the 14th century on, Galata became a major hub in the Mediterranean basin. Founded as a Genoese colony, it conserved its autonomous status until 1682 but maintained its importance with the arrival of European merchants and the establishment of their stores and warehouses in the district. The new order of the 19th century emerged from this commercial and economic background and Galata attained its most prestigious stage then. Insurance, law, architecture, mining and railway companies as well as banks changed both the architectural and social fabric of the district and its economic and commercial structure. Developing on the opposite shore and literally meaning "other side," Pera remained a deserted district until the second half of the 16th century. After the the Capitulations brought about diplomatic relations between the Sublime Porte and European states, the European embassies established in Pera on the territories granted by the Ottoman Government played an important role in the improvement of the district. As time passed, foreign merchants residing in the proximity of these embassies started to construct schools and churches to meet their social requirements. Starting from the second half of the 19th century, Pera became the symbol of a European

lifestyle through its hotels, theaters, pastry shops and stores while Galata continued as a business center. In the meantime, the Ottoman Palace moved from the historical peninsula to Dolmabahçe, a space nearer to Pera.

As soon as Galata and Pera had attained their degree of saturation, the city enlarged its boundaries up to Tepebasi and Pangalti and Moda and Kadikoy on the Asian side. "Petits-Champs," "Pera Necropolis" or Tepebasi, as it had more recently become known, was situated on the Western side of Beyoglu, adjacent to a steep cemetery slope. 19th century travelers report that Tepebasi, due to its fantastic view of the Golden Horn and its clean air, distinguished itself from other cemetery locations and became a promenade for the Levantine people. After the 1856 Reform Edict, which conferred property right to foreigners, European merchants and the Levantine community settled in Pangalti, a newly emerging district.



The Oriental Directories were published by the Annuaire Oriental & Printing Company, whose headquarters was in London, from 1900 to 1921. The Rizzo family, who would take over the publishing between 1921 and 1930, figured in the administrative committee of the Annuaire Oriental Ltd. between 1900 and 1921. John Rizzo, in 1909, and Alfred Rizzo, from 1914 to 1914, were members of the administrative committee. It may have been through the mediation of Dr. Alfred Rizzo, who was registered in the 1913 yearbook as lawyer and director of the Gazette financière, a financial review in French, that advertisements in the directories and announcements related to the administrative committee of the

publishing company appeared in the different issues of this review. At the same time, the Rizzo Family was both the owner of the Rizzo Press, which published books on law and Istanbul, and the representative of some foreign brands. From 1931 on, Ahmet Cevdet Erdem was the editing director of the yearbooks while the M. G. Nesriyat Yurdu took over the publishing. This publishing house also printed books on trade and law as did the Rizzo Family.



beginning of the 20th century and sheds light on the social structure of these periods. In that sense, we have tried to compile a brief and non-exhaustive bibliography of the works that used the yearbooks as their main sources. We hope that, with new research, many of the other names listed in the pages of the yearbooks will unveil their stories and contribute to the formation of collective memory.

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