

Some Problems of Registration of the Greek “Architects” in Istanbul between 1869-1945

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During the second half of the 19th century, Constantinople was characterized as the prominent multicultural, multisocial and multi-religious city, where the reflection of this phenomenon is also imprinted on the physical structure. The larger, after the Moslem community, was the Greek-Orthodox community, called by the Turks, even in our days, as the Rum Community, and which was occupying the shores of the Sea of Marmara, of the Golden Horn, of the Bosphorus and the Princes' Isles, but mainly the districts of Pera (Beyoglu) and Tatavla (Kurtulus). The referred time period (1869-1945) is set by the records of a French commercial yearbook but it coincides with the most turbulent years of the Balkan states formation. The passage from empires to democracies under kings or not, was determining for the life of all nationalities, regardless whether they were conquerors or conquered. The movements of great numbers of persons, called “refuges”, created huge problems regarding the coverage of their needs, especially their rapid housing. In this way, manners and customs, mentalities and prejudices of old “homelands” led to new, not only urban formations but societies. Constantinople, a capital of a cosmopolitan character, was transformed into a secondary urban center of a national character, in the same way in which Salonica, once the greatest city of the Balkans, covered its downgrading by being called formally as “co-capital”.

This paper concerns one of the fundamental production factors that designed and materialized the built environment of the Empire's Capital, independently whether their activity concerned the limited boundaries of a community or the whole population of the city. The craftsmen's training is characterized by the homogeneity of the art of building, either this is derived from the unwritten, mainly, terms and limitations of the guilds, or from the systematic discipline of the university studies. Actually, we do not know whether the names still existing over the title of “architect” on the marble plates of the old buildings in the center of today's Istanbul, are indicating some craftsmen *calfas* or they concern graduate architects or /and engineers. The aim of this paper is to prepare as archival document of a complete list of the persons that worked as designers, and possibly as constructors in Constantinople during the indicated time period, and to collect their curriculum vitae, in order to create a work-list and draw future conclusions for the architectural “identity” or “identities” that could characterize the cosmopolitanism phenomenon.

In doing so, the “forgotten architects” list of names drawn by Hasan Kuruyazici¹ is taken as a starting point. It contains data collected from the periodical issue of the commercial almanac, under the title “Annuaire Oriental”, which was published in Istanbul continuously from 1880 to 1945, for 65 years with small interruption intervals, except the first issue which was published in Paris at 1868. This database is compared with the other architects' names, located dispersed within the Greek information sources - such as the Technical Almanac of Greece, dated 1934, and the review issued by the Hellenic Literary Society of Constantinople - by tracking-down the methodology problems for the

exact recording and identification of these persons. Magazines, reviews and daily newspapers are the main sources of information for the works and the identification of their creators. On the other hand, using the press for promoting and indirect advertisement of scientists and artists has always been a means to obtain fame and prestige.

We know some of the Greek architects that worked in Constantinople during the 19th century, and several of their buildings have remained, survived until today, and their names are still appearing on the marble plate of the buildings, written in Greek, Ottoman and French (Latin) letters. Many of them came to Constantinople from the Greek territory or from the subsequent “New Countries”, namely from Thessaly, Epirus, Macedonia, Thrace and Aegean Islands, whereas some were natives or from Asia Minor. Unfortunately, the data we have for their origin or for the school they graduated from, concerns only few of them.

In 1931, the February issue of *Mimar* magazine recorded a list with 15 names of Greek architects registered as members of the Architectural Department of the Turkish Association for Fine Arts². Since then, these architects lived and worked in Istanbul for approximately the last fifty years. Three years later (1934), the “Technical Almanac of Greece”, issued by the Technical Chamber of Greece, recorded 31 names of members of the Chamber, who were graduates of the Architectural Department of the Fine Arts School of Istanbul (Güzel Sanatlar Akademisi) and had worked before the exchange of populations (1923) within the geographical area, including not only Constantinople but also Anatolia and Thrace. By the insertions of brief biographical data we realize that these architects, who came as refuges, used their professional experience from the Capital of the Ottoman state in the best way to attract clientele and promotion. Their stay at Constantinople has been the necessary *bon service* for their further survival.

We also find architects' names dispersed in documents and reports, referring to publications during the last years³ or to unpublished doctoral theses⁴. However, even though the monographs for the life and work of the Greek origin architects are even less⁵, the Turkish bibliography for foreign architects, mainly French and Italians, is beginning to show exemplary works⁶.

An additional Greek source is the magazine issued by the Hellenic Literary Society of Constantinople (HLSC)⁷, which reports its members in every issue. Thus, during the approximately 60 years of its activity, it published 33 volumes and 21 volumes of appendixes in total, providing significant information for the level and the issues concerning not only the Greek community of Istanbul, from 1863 until 1912, but also the entire scientific and financial elite. The contents of the volumes are divided into 3 sections. The first section includes the members' lists, the deans and the members of the regular committees for the specific year, with their professions. The second section includes readings, that are

the scientific publications of the members, and the third section includes the minutes from the Society's meetings, recorded in chronological order.

The lists of the ?LSC members, who were also "architects", are presented in the doctoral thesis by G. Giannakopoulos⁸. Here, Giannakopoulos notes that the data, and specifically those related to the time of the election or departure from the Association, are not always accurate. The volume 19, "Acts of the years 1902-1905", edition 1907, which we had the opportunity to study, does not include the names of the architects that were accepted as members during the meetings of 1903 and 1904, and this could be due to the fact that they were never activated essentially and that their interest was spent in the glamour provided by the participation in this scientifically complete, as well as socially recognized, environment.

Also, foreign architects, mainly of Italian origin, as well as some well-known Turk architects of the time, are also presented as registered members of the HLSC during the year of 1903, such as: ?l. Vallauray, G. Mongeri, Ant. Tedeschi, Pierre Bello, Edouardo de Nari, Hikmet Mehmet Bey, I. Aznavour, I. Emine, Leon Gurekian, G. Nafilian, I. Nahoum, Y. Pekmezian, Th. Kouyand, G. Semprini, G. Tedeschi, A. Tahtadjian, L. Valeri, H. Libey, Vedat (Tek) Bey; and for the year 1904: Raymondo d'Arconco, Antoine Ratifuski, Friederich de Ritter, St. Fassanoti, A. Destuniano. Finally, (Mimar) Kemalletin Bey, who is considered as the father of the modern Turkish architecture.

Lately, the work of Hasan Kuruyazici, presents great interest, since it indexes systematically the names appearing under the professional group of "architects" in the French-speaking commercial review under the title: "Annuaire Oriental du Commerce, de l'Industrie, de l'Administration et de la Magistrature". Since there was not professional organization to represent the architects during the 19th century, there was no need for their official registration. Unfortunately, the records of the Fine Arts School were destroyed during a fire and thus the existing catalogues for the graduates from the Architectural Department are incomplete, because they do not include all the last names of the graduates until 1940 – save some exceptions – such as: Spyros Arslanoglou (1894), Georghios Zahariadis (1896), Gerasimos Stavrou (1897), Dimitrios Tsilenis (1903; identified in the list because we know his diploma number), Philippidis (1905), Anastas(iou) Birda (1910), Theochar(is) Phisto (?) (1910), Symeon Symeonidis (1934), Aristeidis Pasadaio (1936), Christos Iordanidis (1936) and Vasilis Vigkas (1937), that is, 11 architects out of a total of 66 christian orthodox names, that is, only the 17% approximately are identified. From these 11 architects we find only one included in the above review. However, like today's «Yellow Pages», this edition, which offered a continuous presence for approximately 75 years, constitutes an indisputable testimony source for the active professional architects of the time.

The first issue, somehow exploratory, was published in 1868 under the title «L'Indicateur Constantinopolitan, Guide Commercial». Its first regular circulation was materialized in Paris during 1880 under the title «Indicateur Ottoman, Annuaire – Almanach du Commerce et de l'Industrie». Two or three years later, it was renamed to «Indicateur Oriental, Annuaire die Commerce, de l' Industrie, de l' Administration et de la Magistrature», and the 9th issue that was published during 1889-90 received the final name stated above. Until 1930 it was published without interruptions, excluding the years of the First World War and the occupation by the allied forces, 1916-20 and the year 1926.

Yet, some irregularities are observed concerning the publication, such as: for three years, 1884-86, two issues were published; for the two-year period, 1889-90, one issue was published; for the three-year period 1892-94, two issues; and for the two-year period 1896-97, one issue. Thus, for the period of the first 18 years, from 1889-97, 14 issues were printed. During the period from 1880 – 1930, 40 issues were published in total. H. Kuruyazici indexed the 32 of them, whereas he succeeded to study 8 issues: the issue of 1882, of 1994-86 (2 issues), 1906, 1907, 1923, 1925 and 1925, because they were not collected in

one library. The different issues were discovered in 11 different libraries within Turkey and in 4 outside Turkey, as some of them are also included in private collections. The Oriental Commercial Almanac *Sark Ticaret Yilligi* during 1932-37 and the Commercial Almanac *Ticaret Yilligi* during 1938-45, were published as a continuation of the *Annuaire Oriental*, stating as subtitle the original title of the Almanac. Obviously no final conclusion can be drawn for the percentage analysis of the architects' nationality, but we are not sure also for their total final number. The first text, covering the period 1868-1929, estimates a total of 589 architects, without examining the double-registration problem, and after taking also under consideration the volumes until 1945, the fourth text presents another 125 names, rising the total number to 714 registrations, Kuruyazici, who probably created a database for the processing of all this material, does not record, within the framework of this article, the change of address noted close to the name of each architect. From this data, future conclusions could be drawn concerning the mobility and the collection presented by the members of a profession in relation to their work location.

The contents of the *Annuaire Oriental* present stabilization with the passage of the years, and include distinguishable sections such as *Administration, Full Names, Professions, Addresses* (recording in alphabetical order the street names, then the building – inn, and its number). These last 3 units cover exclusively the area of the capital. There are also sections for the *Professions in urban centers outside Constantinople, in Neighboring Countries and Announcements*.

In the section *Professions* (professions des commercants et industriels de la ville de Constantinople), each professional section includes the names of the professionals and their address. In the section *Full Names*, the names of all the persons according to their professions and their addresses are presented in alphabetical order. The section *Addresses* is divided into two units: (a) "adresse des hans", for the inns or buildings at Galata and Istanbul (within the walls), and (b) "adresse des rues de Pera, Pancalti et Ferikeuy", "Galata" and "Stambul et du Grand Bazar". This section lists alphabetically: (a) the names of the inns – buildings (with their addresses), where according to the number of each work area (laboratory or office), the name and the profession of the resident; and (b) the names of the streets, where according to the number of each building (and when it is a multi—store building, the name of the street is written next to each number, i.e. Appartements Aperghi) the name and the profession of the residents.

The author, Hasan Kuruyazici, used as a base in the list of the *professions* the entry for the *architects*, and compared it to the catalogues with the *full names* and *addresses*. Even though this comparison should be unnecessary theoretically, it was ascertained that it was necessary since differences were observed: the three different registrations were supplementing each other. For example, the name "Pappas (K)" in the section for the *Professions*, appears as "Pappas (Konst.)" in the section for the *Full Names* and as "Papas (Konstantinos)" in the section for the *Addresses*. In some years, the list for the *Professions* was not as complete as the other two sections, and it has the rationale ruling the "Yellow Pages". The names registered here are probably paying for their registration. Presenting certain names that are printed either in bold letters, or within a frame where, many times, additional information is recorded for the occupational field of the advertised can prove this. From the prologue texts it results that the company that assumed the publication of the almanacs, assigned to census-takers the on-site verification of the data recorded in the *Addresses* section. Therefore, it was necessary for someone who wanted to be registered in this section to declare a priori his interest or to pay for his registration. Finally, the list for the section of the *Full Names* should result from the reverse copying of the catalogues for the section of the *Addresses*.

For certain years, the comparison of the different sections in each volume is impossible due to the absence of completeness in these volumes; or because, in certain years, certain sections have not been

included in the publication. For example, in the years 1880 and 1888, the section *Addresses* is missing; in the years 1927, 1928 and 1929 the section *Full Names* is missing. Also, Kuruyazici mentions certain difficulties encountered during the scanning of data that were written in the French language and their correct interpretation in the modern Turkish language. The problem becomes more prominent when Armenian, Greek and Hebrew names are transcribed, and many times the same name is encountered under different spelling in the section for the *Professions* and in the section for the *Full Names*, in the same volume. For example, the last name Ioannidis is encountered under 4 different spellings: Joannidis, Ioannides, Ioannidi, Ioannidis. Another problem is the “Frenchization” of the names, that is, even though we know that in the Greek language Coulouthros is George, in the review it is written as Coulouthros George; and Kuruyazici, probably trying to avoid the interpretation of the Greek name, refers to it in its French version. We proceeded to its reformulation to Georgios.

An identification problem is also encountered for the registration of the type: Marco Calfa, Nicolaki Calfa or Yorghi Kalfa, that probably release us from the search for a diploma architect, but they do increase the uncertainty of duplicity. However, the names with the title “efendi”, such as, Othon Efendi, Thedori Efendi, Vasili Efendi, lead us to the third sequel of the article, where the architects serving in different state services are listed. It is easier to search for their identity in the saved curriculum vitae, but ambiguity will always exist. For example, the name “Pavli Efendi” could not be found in this unit.

The names from other nationalities are not given in the list. There are some names that look Greek, but since we know from other sources their origin we do not include them in the present list. Such names are: Caracach, Isaac and Aram (the brothers Isaac and Aram Caracach are of Armenian origin). However, we include registrations with a Greek last name and a French first name, or vice-versa, who are probably Greek Catholics. Next to each name there is the date for the first and last registration in the volumes of the almanac of *Annuaire Oriental*, and even though this printing does not represent the years of the actual occupation of the “architect”, it is a possible indication for his most active period. In this part there are also certain omissions from the census-takers, i.e. Photiadis Pericles, when written as Fotiades P. is present between the years 1898-1907, whereas as Photiadis Pericles between the years 1896-1929. However, we do know that he started his career on 1892, and that on 1924 he moved permanently to Athens. Obviously, the second version is closer to the truth, and his name is registered after the year 1924 due to momentum, even though we do not know in which of the different sections of the *Annuaire Oriental* volumes.

In the new list which is prepared on the basis of the table of Kuruyazici and yet supplemented with other information sources, namely *Technical Almanach of Greece* and the catalogs of HLSC review give us the “architects” and constructors (calfas) in Constantinople – Istanbul between the years 1869 – 1945; and supplementing it with 28 names that were not registered by him. Also, the names encountered in the first source are noted with a little star and the year they obtained their diploma is stated within brackets; whereas two stars are placed in the names that are registered either as regular members in the first section of the magazine, or as accepted members in the section for the meetings’ minutes. Unfortunately, in the present phase it is not possible to examine all the volumes of the magazine, and therefore we confine ourselves to the 36 Greek and 25 foreign names of architects published in the 19th volume for the years 1902 – 1905 of the HLSC review. The most interesting point is determined to be the 44 *common* names and the three catalogues that constitute the 16% of all the 276 “architects” – calfas of the *Annuaire Oriental*. For these, at least, we are sure that they were architects with a *diploma*.

Finally, the basic question asked for one more time is whether all the names under the title *architects* - *architectes* in the original form - possessed the corresponding diploma. This profession was not consolidated and it was strictly specified at those times. It was more of

a title for the everyday work at the construction site, and, in general, at buildings serving as residence and work areas, than associated with public works and specialized structures. Furthermore, it did not specify the required academic training or the existence of an empiric training, based on the relation between the craftsman “calfa” and the apprentice “tsiraki”. The calfas were the last samples of a closed medieval work organization, of the guilds or the jobberies, and many times they carried also the title of the “ustalar”¹². In certain names, next to the title of architect there is also the “civil engineer”, and more rarely the “plumber”, or the “architect-engineer”, without specifying whether he had studied in an engineering school or in a Fine Arts school.

Conclusively, and even though there are many omissions or vagueness, we think that we know, now, the majority of the names of forgotten «Rum» architects, as he refers to them according to the usual naming of the city’s Greek minority¹³. The issue of the national identity of Greek architects of that period, 1869-1922, requires discussion and research from other sources and from their preserved works (architectural practices, written works).

NOTES

¹Hasan Kuruyazici, “The forgotten architects of [stanbul”, [stanbul’un unutulmuş mimarları], [stanbul 28 (January 1999): 68-73, 29 (April 1999): 41-45, 30 (July 1999): 52-54 and 34 (July 2000): 73-76.

²For the names of the architects, see: S. Tsilenis, “Retrospection to the architectural training in Turkey”, *Αναδρομή στην αρχιτεκτονική εκπαίδευση στην Τουρκία, Σύγχρονα Θέματα* (Modern Issues) 63 (April – June 1997): 131-138.

³(a) Akylas Millas, “Constantinople Seals. Parishes of the Holy Archbishopric”, *Σφραγίδες Κωνσταντινουπόλεως. Ενορίες Αγιότητας Αρχιεπισκοπής*, (Athens: Historical & Folklore Research Association “H Mnemosyni”, 1996).

(b) Haris Exertzoglou, “National Identity in the Constantinople of the 19th century. The Hellenic Literary Society of Constantinople, 1861-1912”, *Εθνική ταυτότητα στην Κωνσταντινούπολη του 19^{ου} αιώνα. Ο Ελληνικός Φιλολογικός Σύλλογος Κωνσταντινουπόλεως 1861-1912*, (Athens: Nefeli, 1996).

⁴Georgios Giannakopoulos: “The Hellenic Literary Society of Constantinople (1861-1912): The Greek Culture and Science as a national policy in the Ottoman Empire”, *Ο Ελληνικός Φιλολογικός Σύλλογος (ΕΦΣ) Κωνσταντινουπόλεως (1861-1912): Η Ελληνική Παιδεία και Επιστήμη ως εθνική πολιτική στην Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία*, (Athens: Law and Finances and Political Studies School, National University of Athens, unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, 1998).

⁵Nikolaos Holevas, “The architect Konstantinos P. Kyriakidis (1884-1942)”, *Ο αρχιτέκτων Κωνσταντίνος Π. Κυριακίδης (1884-1942)*, *Κατοικία* 41 (May 1990): 121-125, S. Tsilenis, “The Great School of the [ation in Constantinople and its architect Konstantinos Demades”, *Η Μεγάλη του Γένους Σχολή στην Κωνσταντινούπολη και ο αρχιτέκτονας της Κωνσταντίνος Δημάδης*, *the world of Buildings* 16 (July 1998): 100-112; and S. Tsilenis, “Works and days of Pericles Dimitriou Fotiadi, a calfa of Constantinople”, *Τα έργα και οι ημέρες ενός κωνσταντινουπολίτη κάλφα του Περικλή Δημητρίου Φωτιάδη*, in the minutes of a scientific meeting: *The everyday life in Constantinople at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century*, *Η καθημερινή ζωή στην Κωνσταντινούπολη στο τέλος του 19^{ου} και στις αρχές του 20^{ου} αιώνα*, (Athens: Association of the Megascholites in Athens, 1999): 189-244.

⁶There is not enough space here for the presentation of an extensive bibliography, but I think we should mention the unpublished works of the doctoral thesis of Cengiz Can, “The buildings of the Western and Levantine architects in the Constantinople of the 19th century and the problems concerning their protection”, [stanbul’da 19 yy. Batı ve Levanten mimarların yapıları ve koruma sorunları] ([stanbul: Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi, 1993); and that of Mustafa Servet Akpolat, “The French origin Levantine architect Alexandre Vallauray”, *Fransız kökenli levanten mimar Alexandre Vallauray* (Ankara: Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Fakültesi, 1991).

⁷HLSC has been the basic association for the promotion of the letters, arts and sciences, and greek education as a whole and was a model in all Near East. It was founded in 1861, at the initiative

of distinct Greeks of Constantinople, but it soon included scientists and artists of all nationalities living there. Its prestige was due to its strictly scientific studies conferences, the holding of courses for the public, the proclamation of contests and lastly to the publication of a magazine that was soon acknowledged by distinct Hellenistic studies experts. For more information see Constantine Svolopoulos, "Constantinople 1856-1908, the thriving of hellenism", Κωνσταντινούπολη 1856-1908, η ακμή του ελληνισμού (Athens: Ekdotike Athinon, 1994).

⁸Same as in (4).

⁹In order to avoid misunderstandings, in the list of the transcription appendix (see S.Tsilenis, "The rum "architects" calfas of Polis, 1869-1945", Οι ρωμιοί "αρχιτέκτονες" καλφάδες της Πόλης, 1869-1945, Σύγχρονα Θέματα (Modern Issues) 74-75(December 2000):166-179) in the Greek language, we present in a separate column the registration of the names in Latin letters, as we encountered it in the Istanbul magazine; and when the name has two separate registrations, both will be presented. For example, the "Photiadis Pericles" corresponds to the "Fotiades, P," but the other version "Photiadis, Pericles" is also presented within brackets.

¹⁰Same as in (9)

¹¹S.Tsilenis, "The Greek architects of Constantinople in the first half of 20th century", Οι Έλληνες αρχιτέκτονες της Κωνσταντινούπολης το πρώτο μισό του 20^{ου} αιώνα in the minutes of popularized speeches: "The professions of Rums in Constantinople" Τα επαγγέλματα των Ρωμιών στην Πόλη, (Athens: Association of the Megascholites in Athens, 2001): 189-244.

¹²(a)K. Papathanasi – Mousiopolou, "Guilds & Professions in Thrace from 1685 – 1920", Συντεχνίες και Επαγγέλματα στη Θράκη 1685-1920, (Athens: Pitsilos, 1985).

(b)A. Petronotis: "Haciustalar: The master builder Hatzi-Antonis and his two brothers-builders", Χατζηουσταλάρ (Haciustalar): ο πρωτομάστορας Χατζή-Αντώνης και οι δύο μαστόροι αδελφοί του, Μικρασιατικά Χρονικά (Asia Minor Chronicles) 20 (1998):197-260.

¹³We ought to thank Mr. Hasan Kuruyazici, who through his persistent and laborious work acquainted us with many names of Greek architects.