

New Europe College Yearbook

2023-2024

Volume 2



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ISSN 1584-0298

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Biographical note

Malte Fuhrmann is a historian of the Eastern Mediterranean, Turkey, and Southeast Europe. He has written extensively on the modern history of German-Turkish relations, colonialism, public memory, and urban culture. His current research concentrates on transport infrastructure and hegemony in Bulgaria and Turkey. His publications include *Port Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean: Urban Culture in the Late Ottoman Empire*, Cambridge: University Press 2020/2022, and *Konstantinopel – Istanbul. Stadt der Sultane und Rebellen*, Frankfurt (M.): S. Fischer 2019.

OX VS. STEAM

“INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE MAKING OF URBAN SPACE: CRITICAL APPROACHES” AND “CULTURE, INFRASTRUCTURE, MOBILITY”*

Malte Fuhrmann

Abstract

Istanbul and other Eastern Mediterranean port cities adapted some elements of nineteenth century state-of-the-art steam-propelled urban transport at a very early stage. However, these coexisted for nearly 150 years with more time-proven forms of muscle-propelled vehicles. Based on the concept of *chronopolitics*, this article enquires into the attitudes that residents and visitors to these cities developed towards this wide range of possibilities to move about the city. Did steam- and muscle-propelled mobility coexist peacefully or were they framed as a clash between different evolutionary stages?

Keywords: Urban transport; infrastructure; tramways; chronopolitics; Ottoman Empire; Istanbul; Izmir

1. Introduction

When I was teaching in Istanbul around the year 2018, on the way to my university, the shuttle bus would pass a 2.5 km state-of-the-art car tunnel. Inaugurated in 2010, it consists of two separate tubes, has high power ventilation, and uninterrupted radio and mobile phone reception. Pedestrians and cyclists are banned from using it. But at the tunnel exit, which was in a shantytown being demolished to make space for high-rise

* Research was in part supported by the DFG (grant number DFG 290815861) and completed during my fellowship at NEC. Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the conferences Infrastructure and the Making of Urban Space: Critical Approaches at Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin (22 Sept. 2017), and Culture, Infrastructure, Mobility, Sofia University (9 Oct. 2023). My thanks for all comments and criticism.

residences, I repeatedly saw a horse grazing on the well irrigated green strip between the different car lanes. Involuntarily, I was always seized by a sentiment of sympathy for the horse and whoever placed it there.

The horse grazing on a grass strip that was originally designed to please the eye of drivers before they entered a dark and dull concrete tube seems to me symptomatic of the kind of contrast that was much more frequent and relevant in this region 100-150 years ago, especially in Istanbul and other major cities of the wider Eastern Mediterranean region. That is, state-of-the-art infrastructure coexisted with other infrastructure forms with a longer history. Around 1900, steamers raced with commercial rowing boats crossing the straits or gulfs of the various port cities; camels, donkeys, and ox-carts competed with trains in bringing the cash crops of the interior to the ports, while electric trams and, soon after, cars plowed through crowds of pedestrians. City streets and houses could be illuminated by a wide number of energy sources, from candles to vegetable oil, gas, or electricity. In the very long run, some of these technologies died out or were marginalized, but between 1830 and 1930, the process seemed much more complicated in the Eastern Mediterranean. Steamship connections, railway lines, horse-drawn and later electrically powered tramways appeared, but were never developed to anywhere near their full potential, resulting in a long transition phase characterized by the coexistence of a wide variety of forms of mobility and combustion.

In what follows, I will attempt to gauge the relationship between them. What sense did contemporaries make of the coexistence of these modes of communication and illumination in their times? Was this coexistence taken as a given? Were they seen as complementary, serving different purposes within the urban framework? Can we therefore assume that for residents of cities on the Eastern Mediterranean, ox-carts and steam trains were not signifiers of different stages, with the latter quickly phasing out the former? Or was their relationship more one of conflict and if so, why? Did the one seem modern and the other outdated or was their relationship more complex?

As the question of popular reception is always a difficult one for historians, this article cannot give the ultimate answers; it must work with some conjectures and the qualitative interpretation of a limited number of sources, rather than a broad, representative sample. Also, there are a number of theoretical questions to clarify. In a first step, we shall ask about the wider relevance of the questions posed: what does a positive or a negative attitude to a particular form of propulsion signify? Here, the theoretical framework of *chronopolitics* can help. To then gauge the

spectrum of possible positions towards modes of transport and technology in general among contemporary intellectuals in the Ottoman Empire, we will have a look at the positions some of them took towards the railways in particular, or towards technological change in general. We will also ask whether such comments stood in contrast or in harmony with observations by people from outside the region. Having thus established the theoretical and discursive framework, we will then turn to the empiric evidence: what actually were the available transportation modes in late Ottoman port cities that people had access to? From among them, we shall concentrate on the *tünel* or underground metro system and on tramways, while also briefly discussing camels and port infrastructure. Finally, we will pose the question of how these attitudes changed over time, focusing on the late Hamidian period just prior to 1908, and what the effect of the Young Turk Revolution was, and then cast a look upon possible changes in attitudes in the interwar period (1923-1941 for the Eastern Mediterranean).

2. Can the Hare and the Porcupine be Friends? On the Coevalness of Different Transport Speeds

To begin, we must ask: What is it that makes us rank different forms of propulsion and energy according to some prescribed scale, categorizing them in the process? A popular view in many Western and Central European writings of the nineteenth century, which was later canonized in development theory, is that once an innovation appears that more efficiently serves the needs of society than the old one, the old technology will die out and the new one will conquer the market.¹ But what happens if this process of technology replacement is not straightforward, but unsuccessful or at least protracted? To answer this, we must discuss the “contemporaneity of the non-contemporaneous” (*Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen*), a notion popular in German sociology and historiography. Fernando Esposito and Tobias Becker have recently summed up the debate, synthesizing and operationalizing the terms within the field of *chronopolitics*. Asserting that all time constructs are inherently political, the two authors differentiate between the politics of time, the time of politics, and politicized time. The latter includes what Johannes Fabian has called the “denial of coevalness” and Dipesh Chakrabarty the “politics of historicism:” an entity, organizational form, cultural manifestation, economic activity, technical appliance, or, in our case, mode of transport or source of energy is delegitimized on the grounds that it transgresses

against an unquestionable chronopolitical order. Since the nineteenth century, this has mostly been an evolutionary model of progress:

“In a world where the new is valorized and the old devalued, the dichotomy between old and new, past and present, the untimely and the timely, becomes central to how politics is legitimized”²

Based on this simple juxtaposition, several erudite evolutionary teleologic orders have been drafted, from philosophy via anthropology and sociology to (last but not least) history, which already in its most basic methodology relies on arranging events and agents according to chronological sequences. Fernando Esposito mentions Jacques Turgot, Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, Christian Jürgensen Thomsen, Auguste Comte, Karl Marx, Henry Maine, Lewis Henry Morgan, Edward B. Tylor, John Lubbock, and Walt Whitman Rostow as just some of the influential names who (re)created stage models of human society, economics, and statehood for their respective disciplines.³

What do Marx’s “progressive epochs” or Rostow’s *Stages of Economic Growth* have to do with a horse grazing in front of a car tunnel in Istanbul? A lot. As mentioned, such evolutionary models of progress have focused on technology as driving forces of change. The inventions of bronze tools, agriculture, or steam combustion are all believed to have catalysed new eras of economics, society, and politics. Historians, anthropologists, and archaeologists have long criticized this idea of technical innovations as automatisms of change. David Graeber and David Wengrow have drawn our attention to the transitional period of several millennia between the invention of agriculture and its dominance in food production, during which many societies relied only to a small extent on crop raising for their diet.⁴ The industrial revolution, many historians claim, was rather an “industrious revolution,” sparked by humans willingly or forcedly intensifying and extending the labour they invested into formal work, rather than the sudden appearance of steam power.⁵

Nonetheless, the assumed automatisms of technical progress continue to inform not only academic debate, but also public memory, especially in the fields of transport. Here, the assumed teleology begins with hominids leaving their cave on two legs and climaxes in space travel. Every innovation that allows for greater speed, greater volume of transported goods, and more comfortable travel is lauded as a step forward. This formula has also come under activist criticism, especially in the context of

climate change. The dynamic towards more energy-intensive propulsion and ever larger private cars, trucks, airplanes, freight and cruise ships has been portrayed as an evolutionary dead-end. But when oversized SUVs or pickup trucks are criticized as “dinosaurs” and the bicycle is heralded as a step forward for humankind’s ascent to a timely, less energy-intensive form of propulsion, this might break with the teleology of resource-intensive vehicles, but it reproduces nonetheless a chronopolitical order of transport evolution. What is more, the bicycle’s revival is relatively minor compared to its heyday in the early decades of the twentieth century, before being almost eradicated in countries following the model of Fordism and mass-automobilization.

How exactly do my emotions for the grazing horse fit into these evolutionary models of transport? What lies behind my empathy? I come to the conclusion that it derives from seeing in the horse a comrade in a fight I and many other Istanbulites should have fought, but did not: against the constant automobilization of the city that drowns it in exhaust, noise, and traffic jams, and against the senseless production of up-market housing useful only for investing excess money of the happy few, in the process displacing the lower and middle classes. Is the horse for me then a genuine alternative for the twenty-first century, as the bicycle is for climate-activists? Hardly.

Horse carts used by street fruit vendors were still a fairly common sight in Istanbul a few decades ago, but have in my subjective impression become less frequent in the constantly growing megalopolis. Horse carriages remained mostly as an object of commodified nostalgia on the car-free recreational area of the Princes Islands, transporting foreign and domestic tourists to the sights, until the metropolitan municipality banned them in 2020. In essence though, my nostalgia for the horse by the car tunnel exit and that of the tourists selfying on the carriages is perhaps not too different, as we both see in the horse a signifier of an older time and order which we do not really long for out of practicality, but for aesthetic reasons. Drawing once again on Fernando Esposito’s work, I find my stance to be reminiscent of Eric Hobsbawm’s, who sympathized with historical “primitive rebels,” but nonetheless judged them as outdated and considered a more modern form of resistance to be necessary.⁶

But what about modern periods and milieus where a wide range of transport possibilities, both energy-intensive and low-energy, steam-powered and muscle-powered, speedy and andante, inhabited the same space? Would contemporary observers also find no other framework

than to rank them on an evolutionary ladder? Or could they more easily accommodate these different speeds without resorting to the “denial of coevalness?” Heike Weber considers such protracted technical transition periods a “polichrony,” the contemporaneity of technologies of different age.⁷ A good field to investigate polichrony seems to be the Eastern Mediterranean roughly between 1830 and 1930. While camels, ox carts, but also horse-drawn trams and steam-propelled boats and trains might have disappeared by today and sailing and rowing boats, donkeys, and horses have become marginalized, this was a slow process, unfolding over several generations. A prolonged transition between the appearance of steam-propelled and later oil- and electricity-based modes of transport and the disappearance of older forms of mobility is characteristic of this time, which makes it hard to imagine that contemporaries saw in their epoch nothing more than a transitional phase for mobility.

3. The Steamship Revolution in Eastern Mediterranean Transport

To gauge attitudes among the men and women of letters of the time, let us begin with the coming of energy-intensive transport to the region. The *Swift* is acclaimed to be the first steam-propelled vessel to arrive in Constantinople. A passenger, Charles MacFarlane, describes its arrival in 1827 –

“The combination of a violent contrary wind and a rapid current in a narrow strait was admirably calculated to give the Turks an advantageous idea of steam. Immense crowds gathered on the shores of the promontory on which Constantinople stands to gaze in astonishment as we passed, for this was the first steam-boat seen in these parts. The evidence of their senses told them that the wind was blowing hard from the Black Sea – that the current was running with its eternal violence, yet they saw the ship rapidly advancing. Several parties threw up their arms and hailed us, whilst others on horseback cantering along the beach kept up with us to learn in what this miracle should end. At some batteries along the coast as we were afterwards informed, we were well-nigh receiving less agreeable signs of wonder, – the cannoniers, in their ignorance, had conceived the vessel must be some extraordinary brutot, and had proposed firing into us.”⁸

This depiction of steam-propelled transport technology arriving in the Eastern Mediterranean’s capital thus follows a rather predictable narrative of

West European condescension and Orientalism. State-of-the-art technology seems intrinsic to the West's claim to superiority. By contrast, the Easterners react with superstition and ignorance, but also with admiration. This set the tone for the Orientalist narrative on transport technology in the East for decades to come, even though within a few years, steamers would become a ubiquitous sight in the Eastern Mediterranean ports, operating on a regular, often weekly basis to Marseilles or Trieste.⁹ According to this narrative, Western transport innovations were interpreted as binary opposites to an Orient frozen in time, devoid of inherent progress, or even movement, as several more quotes in the course of this article will show.

Eastern European or Mediterranean men of letters reacted in two different ways to this Orientalist trope: a handful rejected the supposedly superior technology outright, while others accepted and propagated it, embracing the supremacist discourse in the process. We will first concentrate on the former, and then turn to the latter.

4. What Have the Railways Ever Done for Us? Why Liberation Must Come at a Snail's Pace

Even in the West and North of Europe, regions where supposedly the population embraced and benefited from the industrialization process, not all shared MacFarlane's simple equation of steam propulsion and social progress. Public intellectuals willing to lend their voice to opponents of new technologies include George Gordon Lord Byron, who had expressed sympathy for the Luddites, a movement that destroyed modern production lines in order to conserve more labour-intensive manufacturing.¹⁰ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe likewise sympathized with laborers attempting to save jobs in the epoch of machine-driven rationalization and pauperism.¹¹ But can we find similar cases among intellectuals to the East of the continent?

Due to the nigh-absence of heavy industry in the East, discussions often centred on the railways. One famous early case was that of Lev Tolstoi and his dislike of trains, apparently provoked, among other reasons, by his motion sickness when using them. He wrote in 1857 that "the railroad is to travel as a whore is to love."¹² But Tolstoi's aversion seems to have been based mainly on sensory and aesthetic grounds. While the railway figures allegorically, and as a stage, in *Anna Karenina*, he does not spell out its implications for social change.¹³

Among those born on Ottoman soil, possibly the most eloquent opponent of so-called modern forms of transport was the primary school teacher, poet, and revolutionary Hristo Botev. Writing in the mid-1870s, he opposed the establishment of railways on political grounds. A railway in a capitalist society would always lead to more exploitation of the lower classes, he observed. Therefore, he suggested to postpone its establishment until after a future socialist revolution:

“Look at all the civilized countries of Europe, listen to those cries and sufferings that are heard behind the official screens of human progress [...] A living example of this is England, in which, with all its machines and railways, the majority of the people are slaves and servants of the privileged classes [...] First of all, we ask: are the railways useful for us? To this question we answer emphatically that they are not. As a discovery that shortens time and space and serves to rapidly exchange products and human services, and as an improvement that replaces the physical strength of man and animals, the railways would be useful to every nation [...] But because the railroads are made only by governments (whose treatment of peoples is akin to that of bandits towards civilians), and by certain private thieves and bandits, and because they serve only their interests, they are harmful to every nation [...]”¹⁴

Botev warned that the ongoing Europeanization process of the Ottoman Empire would have devastating social effects. Traditional manufacturers could not hope to compete if their region was easily accessible for imports and exports. As a result, the region would be reduced to an exporter of raw materials to Western and Northern Europe and be forced to re-import the final products, thus reducing its economic role to that of the banana republics of Latin America. Many later socialist thinkers, and especially those more in tune with the Marxist position that technological progress is inevitable and ultimately positive for social liberation, would find such ideas in stark contrast to their techno-optimism, culminating in posters depicting Vladimir I. Lenin and other leaders of the Soviet communists in conjunction with a dynamically portrayed locomotive that symbolizes the progress of socialism.¹⁵ Botev however was not alone among leftist national revolutionaries and critical thinkers to reject modern infrastructure outright due to its social repercussions. He stands out as an antecedent of Mohandas K. Gandhi, who famously declared: “Railways accentuate the evil nature of man: Bad men fulfil their evil designs with greater rapidity [...] Good travels at a snail’s pace – it can, therefore, have little to do with the railways.”¹⁶

5. Ottoman Techno-Optimism on the Way to Civilization and Prosperity

However, Botev's (and Gandhi's) techno-skepticism was not echoed by more mainstream members of Ottoman society. This can best be described by comparing Russian and Ottoman writers and their reactions when visiting the ultimate display of technical progress of the time, the world exhibitions. Visiting the World Exhibition of 1862 in London famously inspired Fyodor Dostoevsky to denounce the belief in progress:¹⁷

"You feel that something final has been accomplished here, accomplished and concluded. It is some kind of biblical image, something out of Babylon, a kind of prophecy from the Apocalypse, being fulfilled before your very eyes. You feel that a great deal of eternal spiritual resistance and denial is needed so as not to submit, not to succumb to the impression, not to worship fact and idolize Baal, in other words not to accept as your ideal that which already exists."¹⁸

By contrast, Ottoman travelogues demonstrate no sign of similar musings. Ahmed Midhat, when visiting the world exhibition of 1899, does not turn to fundamental critique such as Dostoyevsky's, but sees the expo as "a Social Darwinist yardstick for measuring Europe's progress and the Ottomans' standing compared to it."¹⁹ This comes as little surprise, as Ahmed Midhat had begun his writing career as a propagandist for the Ottoman Empire's leading "infrastructure governor,"²⁰ Midhat Pasha, claiming to "provide advice to the people on their way to civilization and prosperity"²¹ and admonishing them that "the deterioration of roads is a disaster for the individuals and their property."²² In 1899, the Egyptians at the same exhibition as Ahmed Midhat were likewise only disturbed by the depiction of their homeland vis-à-vis the rest of the world.²³ Earlier Ottoman visitors to world fairs had not been critical either.²⁴ The techno-optimist attitude embracing the West is best summarized by Ahmet Cevat:

"The word Westernization has in our language taken on the permanent meaning to transfer the West's social and economic life as much as possible to the East, i.e., to make the East engage in science, technology, and industry just like the West, to revitalize it by means of universities, factories, parks (large municipal gardens), operas, big observatories, in short to save society from indifference and immobility by orienting it towards knowledge and the arts."²⁵

Alexander Kiossev explains the fact that many Southeast European spokespersons of national development were uncritical of the process of technical change in general as a “self-colonizing” attitude, resulting in the constant need to admonish one’s compatriots to strive to meet the international standards of the time.²⁶ This is because the modernizing paradigm, as it had been formulated by Europeans vis-à-vis the peoples of the Mediterranean basin, had not ruled out that people from the East or beyond Europe could someday be accepted as equals. However, this acceptance was from the beginning based on performance and was competitive. Not all peoples were expected to make the grade.²⁷ Accordingly, those who strove for recognition had to undertake decisive measures to overcome their “immobility.”

6. Assessing the Gap: Fin-de-Siècle Multispeed Istanbul

Let us now turn more closely to the object of study, the wide range of modes of transport in Eastern Mediterranean port cities 1830-1930. The most extensive overview of Istanbul local transport was undertaken by Ernest Giraud in 1896. As head of the one-man-show of the French Chamber of Commerce at Constantinople, Giraud published a monthly business bulletin nominally informing French investors about the Ottoman market, but often would lose himself in detailed amateur sociologic observations. His extensive overview of local transport for the greater part reads rather as a matter-of-fact assessment and does not demonstrate the arrogant attitude of MacFarlane; nonetheless, the Istanbul resident cannot resist giving a “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” for several types of vehicles. He meticulously lists the two suburban railway lines, the *Tünel* (to which we will turn in more detail shortly), the different steamer companies offering services to the suburbs (the *Şirket-i Hayriye* steamers he found recommendable, the *Mahsusiyé* ones and others less so) and the rather considerable network of horse-drawn tramway lines, which he considered slow, expensive, uncomfortable, and dirty. For more intimacy, or if one left the grid of tramway rails, there were horse carriages for rent (or of course in private ownership).

However, Giraud does not stop with these modes of transport which would have been familiar to a France-based readership, but gives a detailed description of others. He considers these either as complementary or as an insufficient competition to the steam- and horsepower-propelled vehicles.

The proper *kayıks* (rowing boats), for example, he found complementary to steamers, but saw no point in the *kayıks bazaars*. While middle-class passengers used the scheduled steamer ferries, those who needed to travel economically would face lengthy waits for one of them to fill up, then spend 30 to 60 minutes being bounced and splashed by the waves in order to save a few *metaliks* in comparison with the comfortable steamer passage. As far as land transport was concerned, he conceded the necessity of some less elegant, but sturdier vehicles for the outer districts, where the condition of the roads did not allow for an elegant horse carriage. These included the more robust *taliks* or *voitures de muhacirs*, literally refugee carriages, as these were associated with Muslims who had fled the separatist Christian states in Southeast Europe, especially following the Turco-Russian War of 1877-1878. They were still common at the time of Giraud's writing, two decades later, and stood in contrast to the more refined carriages used on the quays; they were characteristic especially of the less well-off faubourgs with their more difficult roads. The country roads, such as the one down to the popular picnic excursion area of Kağıthane on the upper Golden Horn, still needed to be served by oxen carts. Downtown, the widening, straightening, and more reliable paving of roads which had progressed since the 1840s had led to carriages having become a widespread and fast mode of transport. Prior to the road widening program, upper-class men had had to proceed through town on horseback or donkey. For women of high social status, the sedan chair (locally called *portantine*), carried by two or more men, had been the solution to navigate the dirty, wet, and uneven pavements of the streets. Giraud claimed that the sedan chair had almost completely disappeared. However, women still occasionally made use of them in order to protect a particularly elegant dress, such as those for balls, from street dirt. Bicycles had made their appearance despite the bad state of the pavement.²⁸ Giraud's panorama, while not free of a latent teleologic narrative, ultimately investigates the various modes of transport for local practicality; he asks whether they are the right vehicles in the right place, rather than within the matrix of a supposedly superior Europe. This ultimately was the attitude many locals shared. They asked the same question as Botev: "Are the railways (or trams or ox-carts) useful for us?" However, they excluded the global context and long-term consequences the revolutionary stressed, and focused on the more down-to-earth aspects.

7. Slumming It: Foreign Upper-Class Residents Explore Urban Transport

Giraud's assessment seems plausibly representative; we can imagine the middle-class steamer passengers pulling up their noses passing a *kayık* when commuting between Asia's Kadıköy and the European Karaköy and the same bourgeois grudgingly getting onto an ox cart for their weekend outing to the suburbs, as there was nothing better. But at least two of his assessments are challenged by Alka Nestorova, the Zagreb-born wife of a Bulgarian diplomat. In the letters to her parents from the years 1907-1909, she narrates her experiences with local transport while accompanying her husband on his post as diplomat to the Bulgarian legation in Istanbul. Even 12 years after Giraud had predicted the imminent extinction of the sedan chair, Nestorova makes the experience of riding such an exotic vehicle. As the very steep and cobblestoned streets of Pera were iced over on New Year's Eve, she and her husband, Minčo Nestorov, decided it was too risky to proceed to the New Year's reception at the Russian Embassy by carriage. To still be able to go, they hired two sedan chairs and their carriers. It becomes obvious from her description though that this business was past its prime. The rich decorations of the chair were in tatters, the roof replaced by paper and her carriers made the impression of behaving rather uncouthly.²⁹ However, sedan chairs still catered to a niche of transport needs due to the terrain and bad pavement.

Nestorova also presents the steamers in less favorable light. While they might have been state of the art in the 1840s when they were introduced, they were apparently no longer so in 1908. On one occasion, she speaks of "the funny old-fashioned paddle steamer" and on another of a "small run-down boat on wheels. Boats like these are the only transportation available to the nearby harbors."³⁰ After her excursion to Üsküdar on such a boat, she feels adventurous enough to slum it even more and ride back on a *kayık*. The *kayık* serves here as a source of nostalgia and adventure. As Nestorova describes her trip,

"I was drawn to them because they reminded me of all those wonderful gondola trips on the Canale Grande! [...] And so there we were in the kayak of very questionable cleanliness and even less comfort.

But, as soon as we departed, a strong wind picked up and the sky filled with clouds. The waves were getting higher and swinging our kayak just to spite me. Our behatted heads were one moment at sea level, the next above it. Minčo held onto his brand-new authentic Viennese "žirardc" hat

more and more intrepidly, while I clutched my “Florentine hat,” hitched with a long hair needle, with both my hands.

I do not know how it happened, but it was very sudden: Like a flying dragon, my Florentine hat with its needle and a tuft of my hair soared into the air. Then – out of a sense of marital solidarity, I suppose – Minčo’s Viennese “žirardec” took off as well and then fell together with my hat into the Sea of Marmara. Hence my dream to visit another continent ended in a tragicomic finale.

We arrived home ragged and wet. I was prepared to look at it from the humorous side, and my husband from every other side.”³¹

Istanbul’s traffic infrastructure and available modes of transport thus seemed to a mid-term resident of higher social status and of Habsburg origin sometimes threatening, sometimes a source of annoyance, and sometimes one of amusement. No matter which perspective prevailed, the whole range of possibilities seems outdated. She uses the sedan chair out of necessity, but looks down on the whole range of maritime transport. Her “denial of coevalness” is mixed with nostalgia, but of a condescending kind.

8. The *Tünel* as Signifier of Hiatus

But the occasional bad weather in Istanbul winters and the nostalgia of *kayık* passengers are not enough to explain why different speeds coexisted. The “long hiatus” of modes of transport infrastructure in Eastern Mediterranean cities is best illustrated by another example. The Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality today considerably advertises one peculiar mode of transport infrastructure: the so-called *Tünel*. An originally steam-powered underground funicular railway, it was created in 1875 by the engineer Eugène Henri Gavand and a company based on English capital. It alleviates the passage between two (especially in the nineteenth century) important parts of the city by linking the Galata waterfront and banking district to uptown Pera and its glamour zone around the embassies. The funicular helped to overcome the steep incline and 60 meters difference in altitude between the two, thus relieving residents of the necessity to trudge uphill on a sweaty ten to fifteen minute walk.³² The municipality proudly advertises this underground line as the second underground metro in Europe and the world after London.³³ My superficial look into the history of metropolitan rail lines seems to confirm this boast,

as similar underground funiculars in steep downtown areas only appeared a few years later in Lyon, and much later in Naples. However, if one takes the municipality boast at its word, Istanbul's metro network is also the slowest to develop in the world. Gavand drew up ambitious plans to cover the city with a metro system worthy of what was at the time the seventh largest city in Europe, projecting a mostly underground line from the old city across the Golden Horn through the new center of the town up to the palace area of Beşiktaş. Already in the 1860s, a suburban line had been projected onwards to the northern village of Büyükdere.³⁴ However, no other metropolitan rail opened for 114 years, between the 573 meter *tünel* line from 1875 until 1989. Only after the turn of the millennium did Istanbul's metro network reach a length one would expect of a modern megalopolis generating the largest GDP between at least Rome and Dubai (2024: 242 km of metro lines).³⁵ The lines across the Golden Horn and to the northern Bosphorus suburbs projected under sultans Abdülaziz (1861-1876) and Abdülhamid II (1876-1909) were realized in 2014 and 2010/11 respectively.

Thus, Istanbul had at an early stage an example of pioneering transport infrastructure long before many other comparable large cities in Europe. Unlike in London though, this example only spread to become an important mode of transport, providing a rough coverage of main commuter routes, a century and a half later. We learn from this example that the city was not a lethargic medieval agglomeration where business as usual ruled over the centuries. It was possible to access capital, know-how, and organization and combine them to produce tangible results. However, for reasons beyond the scope of this article, this constellation was only rarely reached during the late Ottoman and early republican period.³⁶ The ready availability of capital, entrepreneurial spirit, engineering skills, political will, municipal planning, construction materials, laborers, and their coordination was only achieved at particular moments, and often did not resurface for long spells.

If ignorant Istanbulites had actually considered shooting down the first steamship and others continued stubbornly to ride rowing boats instead of steamers, should we not assume that there was some anti-progress sentiment, vaguely reminiscent of my empathy towards the horse at the car tunnel exit? One urban legend is the fatwa against the *Tünel*. According to this story which is recounted endlessly, the highest theological authority in the empire, the Şeyhülislam, had decreed that "whoever travels in the tunnel and whoever operates the wagons will commit a sin and will be

guilty of illicit gain” or that “human beings are not to enter the underworld before death.” Therefore, for a prolonged period, the *Tünel* was only used for animal transport. Only under intense administrative pressure did the theologian issue a new expertise revoking the old one.³⁷

This framing fits conveniently into the scheme of transport teleology as described in the introduction. Progress and a better life come with great engineering feats. The reason for the hiatus, why such feats do not immediately conquer the underdeveloped world, is the Orientals’ superstitions and backwardness. However, to date, no documentation of such a theological verdict has surfaced in the archives. Vahdettin Engin, who has researched the history of this iconic mode of Istanbul public transport, refutes the fatwa’s existence outright. In the nineteenth century division of labour of the Ottoman bureaucracy, the Şeyhülislam was not heard on issues considered to be within the responsibility of the ministry of public works. Engin believes that the urban legend derives from the fact that the original *Tünel* vehicle had an outdoor platform actually used for the transport of animals. As the Taksim Square roughly 2 kilometres beyond the upper station at the time was still an open field used as pasture and all roads leading there were excessively steep, taking sheep to their pasture by metro was not uncommon.³⁸ We find therefore that the fatwa is a construct of later generations, who projected their binaries of engineering-driven progress versus religious ignorance onto a period that did not actually experience such a conflict. Nonetheless, the actual situation behind the urban legend, the sheep taking the downtown metro to their pasture, hint at another historical instance of “contemporaneity of the non-contemporaneous” in our eyes.

Even though this particular opposition against a new technology can be debunked as a myth, it is important to recall that scepticism towards new technologies is not something necessarily irrational. Grand-scale infrastructure implementation, especially if underground, is something beyond our personal observation and we must by necessity formulate a more or less well-informed guess as to its trustworthiness until today. One example: opened in 2013, a commuter railway intended to connect the Asian and European suburban railway networks passes underneath the sea in Istanbul. In fact, even this project was on the drawing board in the 19th century, but was only realized in the 21st. Especially around the time of its inauguration, many Istanbulites had reservations about using the line, as they found the prospect of being in a tunnel at the bottom of the sea threatening. In support of their point of view, they referred to a

number of public statements by engineers, trade unionists, and opposition politicians who claimed that errors occurred in the tunnel's construction, that there is continuously water seeping in through cracks, that the material is not durable enough, etc.³⁹ With mostly unproblematic operations in the decade since, scepticism has dwindled, but not disappeared.

9. The Electric Tram and the Masses

Istanbul's infrastructural mix as described by Giraud is to different degrees representative of many Eastern Mediterranean ports. Steamers and rowing boats, trams and horses, suburban railway and ox-carts coexisted in many places. Only the *Tünel* remained unique in the Ottoman port cities. In the more southerly Izmir, we find only two major differences to Istanbul: camels, not mules or horses, were the main beasts of burden, and instead of an underground *Tünel*, an outdoor elevator was built in 1907 to overcome a particularly steep incline between different neighbourhoods.

But rather than focusing primarily on rather isolated modes of high-tech transport, we can better gauge public opinion by looking at a more widespread vehicle of the time. While metros did not spread beyond the original half-kilometre in East Mediterranean cities during the initial century of rail transport, tramways did. Introduced originally in the 1860s and drawn by horses, they saw electrification in the decades just before or just after the turn of the century. They were the ubiquitous mode of transport in the major port cities.

To begin with, we can once again locate a condescending remark by a Westerner. Visiting Istanbul not long after the introduction of equestrian tram services, Edmondo de Amicis writes,

"In another street, entirely Turkish and silent, you are suddenly startled by the sound of a horn and the stamping of horses' feet; turning to see what it means, you find it difficult to believe your eyes when a large car rolls gayly into sight over tracks which up to that moment you had not noticed, filled with Turks and Europeans, with its officials in uniform and its printed tariff of fares, for all the world like a tramway in Vienna or Paris. The effect of such an apparition, seen in one of these streets, is not to be described; it is like a burlesque or some huge joke, and you laugh aloud as you watch it disappear, as though you have never seen anything of the kind before. With the omnibus the life and the movement of Europe seem to vanish, and you find yourself back in Asia."⁴⁰

De Amicis' "LOL" clearly fits the "denial of coevalness." The tram is dismissed on no other grounds than that it appears out of place in a quiet residential street of the old city. This is reminiscent of a common trope among European visitors who had a bifurcated view of Istanbul. While everything that was considered Oriental – mosques, palaces, or baths – was associated with Istanbul *intra muros*, the embassies, department stores, and churches were associated with the faubourg of Galata-Pera across the Golden Horn. In fact, the city never knew such a clear-cut opposition. While Galata-Pera as a whole offered much modern glamour (but also squalor, usually passed over in silence), the train station and telegraph office lay in the old city, and banks, department stores, and the bustling port lay on both sides of the Golden Horn.⁴¹

How did locals see their tramways and their spreading to various parts of the city? The novelist Hüseyin Rahmi observed that there was a factual divide between the two halves of the city, but framed it rather as an injustice by the tramway company. While the better trams were reserved for Galata-Pera, Istanbul *intra muros* was served by worn, dirty coaches drawn by horses near starvation who could not perform satisfactorily.⁴² By contrast, in Pera, carnival performers used a mock-up of a local tram to perform a parody of local high society and its aspirants, with women fanning themselves and male passengers smoking expensive cigars.⁴³ This shows that already by the late nineteenth century, locals saw the Pera tramway passengers as representative of local society (just as Lev Tolstoi had used the train to symbolically represent society in *Anna Karenina*).

However, the introduction of tram services was not only accompanied by Western condescension, and carnivalesque travesties. For locals, more essential issues were at stake. Growing up in early twentieth century Salonica, Anna Vourou recalls in a later interview that her mother, a woman who had been born before the advent of trams, was afraid for her daughter having to commute by tram to school. The horse-drawn tram was electrified sometime around 1909. Her mother considered the electric tram too fast and dangerous.⁴⁴ Thanks to On Barak's study on Alexandria, we know that her sentiment was echoed by many residents of Eastern Mediterranean cities. In fact, trams invaded the streets and presented a serious threat to the life and health of people especially in crowded downtown districts. On an average day in the first decade of the twentieth century, an Alexandrine newspaper would list three serious traffic accidents with loss of life or limbs and any number between one and three would involve a tram. According to Barak, the accidents manifest two

opposing attitudes towards the new mode of transportation introduced in 1897 (apparently, he refers to electric, horseless trams here). On the one hand, the tram companies had ordered their drivers not to stop under any circumstances and to counter any obstacles simply by blowing the horn. Failure to do so would result in a fine. This idea of “time is money” and the expectation of a reliable schedule for passengers collided in the literal sense of the word with the expectation of the majority of the population that traffic in the street would be a practice of negotiation. Those who were inert or moving at a slow speed believed that those wishing to move fast should ensure not to endanger them. According to Barak this widespread assumption can be traced both in popular assumptions and at the official level. When a tram mercilessly charged into a carriage whose horses had slid and fallen and the next tram charged into the crowd that had gathered, pedestrians punished the tram drivers with a beating. Courts ruling on cases of accidents between trams and pedestrians or passengers unanimously considered it the duty of the tram drivers to avert accidents.⁴⁵

10. The Camel Strikes Back: Defending the Aydın Caravan Route

So much for the acceptance of the so-called modern modes of transport, such as trains, trams, and underground funiculars. What of the ox-carts and other vehicles with a longer history? Occasionally, they were not only an object of nostalgia, a cheap competition for the nineteenth century modes of transportation, a necessary means to deal with streets that were inadequate for the modern forms of transportation, or a last resort for those fearing acceleration. An early twentieth century guidebook for travellers in Izmir, the busiest port in the Eastern Mediterranean, suggests a visit to the so-called Caravan Bridge, where, despite the two downtown railway termini, endless numbers of camels brought the agricultural and handicraft products of Anatolia into town for export to the world market. Although numerous travelogues describe this as a scene out of *1001 Nights*, these camels were far from innocent folklore to please the eyes of the tourists.⁴⁶ They were the most serious capitalist challenge to steam-powered modes of transport. The camel, not a native of the northern ports of Istanbul and Salonica, but nigh-omnipresent in Izmir’s trade, managed to compete successfully in the freight transport sector for over half a century.

The Smyrna-Aydın Railway was the first line to begin construction in Anatolia in the 1850s. It was conceived as a feeder for the already considerable export of West Anatolian agricultural products through the İzmir port to the world market. As mid-nineteenth century technology and the capital invested was limited, the line avoided costly tunnels and bridges and made the most of the natural terrain. This consideration, as well as the location of major inland markets and lowland agricultural production sites, made it follow the same route as time-established caravan routes transporting the agricultural produce until then. The London-based company had obviously not given this competition much thought, believing in the natural supremacy of progress as sketched above. However, the camels proved not to be a pushover. The first section of the line was opened in December 1860 from Smyrna to Torbalı.⁴⁷ After a minor extension in 1861, the line reached Ayasuluk, near the ancient site of Ephesus, in September 1862. In a pompous ceremony involving the governor general (*vali*) and countless other officials, the company representatives had to admit that while passenger traffic was satisfactory, they were losing the struggle for freight against the camels. The company's local chairman Hyde Clark spoke of "a severe and costly competition with the Camel drivers". The general manager Mr. Fergusson appealed in his speech to the caravan organizers to cooperate with the line, but also urged the authorities to put pressure on them.

"An old Camel driver the other day came to him and kissed his hand and thanked him for the benefits the Railway had conferred on him and his class saying, 'I came the other day with six Camel loads of Figs to Kos Bounar for which I received 35 Piastre a Quintal from Aidin to Smyrna, and I found you took them from Kos Bounar for 5 Piastres. Well today is my 6th journey to Kos Bounar and I return with 200 Camel loads, you therefore see I have done all I can to induce my friends to come to the Railway.' [...] what he had related to them regarding the Camel driver, evidently showed that in a short while they would be able to win over the Devajees to the Railway, as it was obviously to them greatly to their advantage to work in conjunction with the Railway, he therefore (though taking all interests into consideration) was perfectly justified in asking H. E. and the whole of the Turkish authorities present to endeavour to render the Company all the assistance in their power to procure such a traffic to the Railway as will render it remunerative to the Government and the shareholders. He was confident much good would accrue if official orders were given to the Mudirs and Chiefs of all the Villages to persuade the Camel owners to work to the Railway."⁴⁸

Despite the elegant anecdote, the company was obviously losing the fight and, faced by nervous investors wanting to see a return on their shares, it now clamoured for government intervention into the transport market. Shortly after, the directors had to accept that intermodal humpback and rail transport proved unattractive: “the evils of a break in the transport are assigned as the sufficient and certain cause of the continued employment of the camels, added to the comparative shortness of the distance after the camels traversed the worst part of the journey over the mountain pass.”⁴⁹

Believers in modernization theory will consider such troubles a mere temporary setback on the path of progress, and from the vantage point of today they might be right. However, in the more than 65-year lifespan of the Ottoman Empire after the inauguration at Ayasoluk, the situation did not change much. As late as the eve of World War I, camels managed to still compete with the railways. As the London-based stock company of the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers had concentrated the export of Anatolian carpets in its hands and had pushed the previously dominant Uşaklıgil family out of business, the Uşaklıgils retaliated by challenging the monopoly of the Smyrna-Aydın Railway. A huge concentration of caravan traffic by camel along that route allowed the family to undercut the rail freight prices and take a large share of the traffic into its own hands.⁵⁰ The most astonishing aspect of this situation is that the camels’ success is not due to superstition, as insinuated in the legend about the fatwa on the *Tünel*, nor to a Luddite-style resistance by a marginalized workforce, to the lack of a more sophisticated infrastructure, or to aesthetic nostalgic reasons. Caravans managed to hold their share of the market in a fiercely competitive situation and against huge capital interests, because speed was not essential for the freight business, and the camels were apparently able to compete with the rather limited capacity of the railway. It is the foreign-based company that finally appeals to the state to intervene and obstruct the fair competition.

A similar story of interest-based resistance against infrastructural innovation can be told about the so-called camels with only two legs, two hooves, and one hump, as the porters and manual labourers in the port were condescendingly described by Giraud.⁵¹ The port facilities were decisively modernized in İzmir in the 1870s and in Salonica and Istanbul in the 1890s. They now made direct unloading from ship to the quays possible, but in the process threatened the existence of boatmen operating the lighter boats. Likewise, the railways on the quays in Salonica and İzmir, designed to transport goods between ships and train stations, were

a serious competition for the porters. As these workers' interests coincided with those of many businessmen who opposed the stiff new tariffs imposed by the new port authorities, and as porters and lighter boatmen were organized in tightly controlled guilds, they were in a position to take collective action against the imposed reorganization of port activities. In Constantinople it delayed the full introduction of modern port technology for several years. When the port facilities in Galata started operations in 1894, lightermen prevented a steamer from docking directly on the quays. In 1895, when a further section of the quays was inaugurated, they set the floating docks that were to replace their lighters adrift. The French company operating the port had to submit to the guilds' Luddite resistance, and for several months, Constantinople saw the spectacle of lighters unloading ships in front of an unused port infrastructure built to more quickly and efficiently complete the process. While the port company succeeded in gradually suppressing the guilds' monopoly, the conflict violently resurfaced in the short summer of Ottoman labour radicalism following the Young Turk Revolution of 1908.⁵²

11. Perceived Modernization Backlog on the Eve of the Revolution

How did late nineteenth or early twentieth century urban residents look to the future? Was there a sense that the peculiar state of their region, the coexistence of muscle-, steam-, and later electric-powered modes of transportation would come to an end? How was this constellation related to other parts of the world? Two sources indicate that some anxiety existed over the course infrastructure development would take in the final days of Abdülhamid and thereafter. In 1907, J. Angel, a correspondent of *Journal de Salonique* (or more likely his pseudonym), took a slow tour of the Balkan railway network. The first city he arrived in just beyond the Ottoman border was Niš. While this is a mid-size town few travelers usually deem worthy of much mention, Angel is suitably impressed. He learns that a power plant and grid is in place and that as of January 1st, 1908 (a month after the time of writing), Niš will be illuminated by electric light. Angel expresses the hope that Salonica would follow suit, but admits to his readers that this was unlikely. To make matters worse, his host, the head of the Niš municipality and supposedly a very rich and esteemed local citizen, graciously takes him around town in his private automobile,

and asks Angel how many cars existed in Salonica. Too ashamed to admit the truth, Angel lies and claims there were “a great number.”⁵³ The fact that the star of Southeast Europe, Salonica, is outdone both in the fields of electrification and automobilization by a Balkan provincial town in Serbia that in former times would have looked up to the region’s leading port city is communicated to the readership with rhetorical emphasis. British-ruled Alexandria had by 1905 already 56 cars disturbing the tranquillity of the streets, Salonica’s rival Smyrna saw its first car in that same year and also made the experience of electricity in 1905.⁵⁴ One can read Angel’s statement as a veiled criticism of Abdülhamid’s policies, but more significantly, it reflects the anxiety in Eastern Mediterranean society that the Ottoman realm was falling behind its peers, i.e. the independent former provinces, when it came to being prepared for the challenges of the twentieth century.

Echoing Angel’s feeling of outdatedness, Alma Nestorova sums up her thoughts on Constantinople’s infrastructure and urban development, only a few weeks after Angel’s article, in a letter to her mother.

“It seems like everything fell asleep in this town – there is little construction and what has been built is so tasteless that it spoils the uniqueness of the Orient. [...] The most troubling flaw of the city is its lack of electric illumination, an electric tram and, in all, a lack of any modern comfort.

It is terrible when one must deal with these paraffin lamps. [...] You can experience such adventures with paraffin lamps in all homes, whether the modest ones or the house of the grand vizier. Unless they have replaced the lamps with candles. God only knows how many thousands of candles burn in Yildiz Palace.

It is also hard not having a telephone because the distances are great. After the death of Abdul-Hamid, Carigrad will lose its current design. The dogs will vanish and skyscrapers will show off their hollow Americanized domes. Thank God that this will not happen here very soon. Although no one knows for sure, we all feel that these poor dogs will meet their end. There are more dogs in Carigrad than fezzes. Just imagine how hard it is for me to even contemplate it, especially the visible modernization of the town.

But, it cannot be avoided – that’s it. It’s inevitable [...]”⁵⁵

In this case, Nestorova expresses a sentiment that was not only the arrogant look of a foreign observer, but one widely felt in pre-World War I Eastern Mediterranean society. An expression from German neoliberal media speak, “Modernisierungsstau” (modernization backlog) is the best way

to describe how contemporaries believed they were losing ground in the global competition for progress. It is perhaps to relieve this anxiety and to gain legitimacy in the process that after the establishment of popular government in 1908, we find a flurry of measures to catch up with the backlog. The Baghdad Railway project, which had been dormant for years, was revived and construction continued. Electricity served Salonica as of 1908 and the imperial capital as of 1914. In Istanbul at the same time, a new steel bridge was built from the old city to the Galata peninsula, making continuous tram lines and their electrification possible. The street dogs were seized and deported to an uninhabited isle to starve. Following the Balkan Wars, the feeling of insufficient modernization gathered new momentum, but now shifted to military matters, questions of disciplining the individual, and suppressing potential national/ethnic enemies.⁵⁶

12. Aggressive Modernity: The Interwar Period

After the series of wars that devastated the region until 1923, public intellectuals were taking a more aggressive stance on infrastructural matters. While according to On Barak the prewar Alexandrine public had unequivocally condemned the tram for the accidents it was involved in, a caricature from 1923 Istanbul clearly chooses the other side to blame. It shows an electric tram driven by a uniformed vatman with fez and moustache. He gesticulates, as his tram has come to a halt due to a horse stalling on the tracks, apparently out of fright of the tramway's bright electric light. The horse is hitched to a "voiture de muhacirs," one of the aforementioned refugee carts. The carriage is about to break apart due to the imbalance caused by the horse. The driver is dressed in wide baggy pants, his shirt half open and a kerchief wrapped around his fez – all signs of his rural origins. To make matters worse, a car and a more orderly horse carriage are also stalled by the horse's panic. The caricature unequivocally "denies coevalness," marking the "voiture de muhacirs" as unfit for the center of a modern city, unable to survive an almost Darwinian struggle for space on the downtown streets.⁵⁷ Likewise for Alexandria, On Barak finds that for the first time an accident was blamed on the victim's inattentiveness in 1931, after a car had run over a pedestrian.⁵⁸

Photographic depictions are another instance where we can notice the change. Pre-war postcards of the so-called modern areas of Istanbul had still honestly documented the "contemporaneity of the

non-contemporaneous,” such as the countless homeless dogs even in the most elegant parts of the town. Photographs from 1923 onward however, often attempt to depict the city’s modernity by showing the many tram cars in succession without any element that could spoil this image of progress. Iconic photos were taken at tramline junctions, preferably, it seems, at the upper end of *Tünel* on Grande Rue de Péra or at Harbiye, an upper-class residential neighborhood beyond Taksim Square and also location of the Military Academy. Both seemed at least at first glance reminiscent of the hustle and bustle expected of notable cities in the interwar period.

Thus the tramway, originally considered an intruder into time-honored usages of the street space, as of the interwar period begins to be seen as the unequivocal harbinger of modernity. Possible conflicts the tramway might find itself in are now seen to be caused by the backwardness of the others.

13. Conclusion

The long hiatus in the transition from muscle to steam, oil, and electric propulsion of local transport in the Eastern Mediterranean resulted in a number of different attitudes. Foreign observers often stuck to the Orientalizing, bifurcated vision of Ottoman urban space, although in reality, the cities manifested both highly modern and established modes of transport. The elites of late Ottoman port city society lauded the coming of modern transport, hoping this would mean a little step towards acceptance by Western observers. Few opposed the coming of new forms of transport on principial grounds, hoping that the revolution would bring conditions turning accelerated transport into a means of liberation, rather than exploitation. The average locals however looked at the new means of transport with a much more down-to-earth sense of rational choice: they expressed acceptance where the new transport proved beneficial, and resisted where it endangered the urbanites’ security and health, livelihood, or their uses of public space. In such cases, the time-proven forms of transport were more resilient than the outsiders and elites had imagined. Only in the twentieth century, the feeling of modernization backlog radicalized the elitist sentiment and its symbolic and practical violence against the older forms of moving around the city.

Endnotes

- 1 List 2008; M. Weber 1999; Marx and Engels 2010.
- 2 Esposito and Becker 2023, 19.
- 3 Esposito 2023, 33-34.
- 4 Graeber and Wengrow 2021.
- 5 Béaur 2017.
- 6 Esposito 2023, 31-32.
- 7 H. Weber 2019.
- 8 MacFarlane 1829, 490, 491; see also Müller-Wiener 1994, 70, 71.
- 9 For more on the impact of steamships on port city society see Fuhrmann 2020, especially 49-62.
- 10 Byron 1816.
- 11 Goethe 1821.
- 12 Jahn 1981.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Botev 1875.
- 15 Kiossev 2023.
- 16 Gandhi 1910.
- 17 Mishra 2015.
- 18 Fyodor Dostoevsky, quoted from Hudspith 2004, 51; see also Mishra 2015 and 2017.
- 19 Findley 1998, 30-31, 38.
- 20 Riedler 2024.
- 21 Herzog 2012, 644.
- 22 *Tuna/Dunav* 11/23 Jan. 1867, quoted from Petrov 2006, 134.
- 23 Mitchell 1991, Chapter 1.
- 24 Wagner 2016.
- 25 Ahmet Cevat (Eren), quoted from Tüccarzada 1997, 58.
- 26 Kiossev 1995.
- 27 Fuhrmann 2020, especially 37-48.
- 28 *Revue commerciale du Levant* 108 (March 1896), 143-151.
- 29 Nestoroff 2015, 44-46.
- 30 Nestoroff 2015, 51, 59.
- 31 Nestoroff 2015, 60.
- 32 Çelik 1986, 96-98.
- 33 *Istanbul Tarih*, <http://www.istanbultarih.com/dunyanin-ikinci-metrosu-210.html>
- 34 Çelik 1986, 98, 99; Carl Humann to his parents, 26 Jan. 1864, in Schulte 1971, 23, 24.
- 35 Skyscrapercity Forum: Istanbul Metro Developments, Post 2005, https://www.skyscrapercity.com/threads/istanbul-metro-developments-news.650193/page-101?post_id=187907019#post-187907019

- 36 Fuhrmann manuscript.
 37 See for example <http://www.istanbullite.com/istanbulwanderer/tunelthesubway.html>
 38 Engin 2000.
 39 See for example Istanbul Chamber of Engineers (İnşaat Mühendisleri Odası), “Marmaray’da tehlike mi var? Şube Başkanımız Cemal Gökçe’nin 25 Temmuz 2014 tarihli Şok Gazetesi’nde yayımlanan haberi,” 25 July 2014, <https://istanbul.imo.org.tr/TR,55582/marmarayda-tehlike-mi-var.html>; Odatv, “Marmaray’da hayati tehlike,” 16 August 2013, <https://www.odatv.com/guncel/marmarayda-hayati-tehlike-42432>.
 40 Edmondo de Amicis, quoted in Çelik 1986, 94.
 41 Fuhrmann 2020, 89, 90.
 42 Çelik 1986, 94.
 43 Ibid.
 44 Anna Vourou, “Interview, Thessaloniki 1985”, in Rillig 1985, 62.
 45 Barak 2009, 196-200.
 46 Baedeker 1905, 287. Already in 1850, the number of camels carrying freight into the city is claimed to have reached 5000; Cobb 2018, 161, 162.
 47 <http://www.trainsofturkey.com/w/pmwiki.php/History/ORC>
 48 *Smyrna Mail*, 23 Sept. 1862. Ayasoluk = later renamed Selçuk; Kos Bounar (Kuzpınar) = railway head before the inauguration at Ayasoluk; Aydın to Kuzpınar 63.7 km, Kuzpınar to Smyrna: 66.8 km; devajee (devacı) = camel driver; H.E. = the person addressed is the governor general, Mehmed Reşid Paşa; mudir (müdür) = official.
 49 Cobb 2018, 102.
 50 Mansel 2010, 192.
 51 *Revue commerciale du Levant* 109 (April 1896), 116.
 52 The conflict is described in detail in Quataert 1983, 95–120, and can also be traced in the issues of *Revue commerciale du Levant* 1895-1908. While the resistance of the porters and boatmen in Smyrna and Salonica certainly played a role, it has not received detailed analysis; see Quataert 2002, 194–197; Frangakis-Syrett 2001, 31, 32; Federal Archives – Military Archives, Freiburg i.Br. (BA-MA) 40/565, 274 (black numbers): Philipp Goeben to Mediterranean Division, Military Political Report, Smyrna Christmas 1913 (written Piraeus 9 Jan 1914).
 53 J. Angel, “Sur les railways”, in *Journal de Salonique*, 2 Dec 1907.
 54 Barak 2009, 199; Gürsoy 1993, 113; The claim in Mansel, 2010, 173, that electricity already existed in the city since 1888 can be considered a mistake.
 55 Nestoroff 2015, 56, 57. “that’s it” = Lat. *punctum pausa* (in the original; footnote by the letter editor). Yıldız Palace = Abdülhamid’s residence; Carigrad = Istanbul. Besides Abdülhamid’s fear of the use of electricity for violent political action and his concern for its potential to create urban fires,

another possible factor in the late establishment of appropriate infrastructure was the lobbying of gas suppliers intent to protect their business.

56

Ginio 2016.

57

MacArthur-Seal and Tongo 2023.

58

Barak 2009, 196-200.

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