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MAIN SECTION

What Kind of 'Cosmopolitics'? Studying the Eastern Mediterranean Port Cities between East and West

Didem Yerli — Leiden University, Netherlands — Contact: didemlyerli@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to problematize traditional views on Eastern Mediterranean port cities, and their so-called cosmopolitan nature during the long nineteenth century. To do so, this paper focuses on the production and effects of the East-West dichotomy, in three port cities of the region: Constantinople, Smyrna and Salonica. The main aim of this contribution is to elicit debate for further research about port city systems and emphasize the obstacles this dichotomy brings in the field. In doing so, this paper also contributes to the growing need for new perspectives on cosmopolitanism studies of the present and the future by examining the nature of co-existence in the past.

KEYWORDS

Eastern Mediterranean; Port Cities; Cosmopolitics; Urban Studies; Historical Sociology

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Introduction

In recent studies of the Mediterranean region, historians have claimed that nineteenth-century Mediterranean port cities have played a particularly important role in the emergence of today's global economic system by virtue of the microcosmos they constituted between East and West civilizations.[1] This is a compelling assumption that has been neither elaborated nor discussed in respect to the agents that structured the port city system. In fact, until the advance of modern means of communication, port cities were indispensable sites of cultural influence. Consequently, the Mediterranean has long been studied as a medium of communication between two civilizations. Its port cities were seen as the hubs that enabled the flow of goods and ideas through ethno-religiously segmented networks.[2] In such a framing, the port cities of the Eastern Mediterranean in particular, due to their diversity of religions, emerge as the embodiment of a hybrid region. Consequently, there has been much discussion about the cosmopolitan past of these port cities and the cosmopolitics of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in the region. This article takes the claim "the Mediterranean Sea is a passage between the East and West" a step further by arguing that this dichotomy was a product of the cosmos of these port cities and, therefore, should not be applied uncritically as a panacea in future cases within the context of cosmopolitics studies. In doing so, this paper aims to open a perspective from which to study port city networks and their culturalization in a cyclic and a tautologic manner, rather than as a passage between civilizations. The main aim of this contribution is to elicit debate for further research about port city systems while responding to the growing need for new perspectives in cosmopolitanism studies of the present and the future. To do so, this paper investigates the largest port cities of the Eastern Mediterranean region; Constantinople (Istanbul), Salonica (Thessaloniki) and Smyrna (Izmir) as case studies. After looking at the politics of dichotomy in these port cities, consequently, this paper highlights the conflicts that should be taken into consideration for bridging different port cities as unique social spaces.

The two sides of the Eastern Mediterranean port: a conceptual framing

A cosmopolitan person can be vaguely defined as a person who is at home all over the world. For Jacques Derrida, the very essence of ethics rests on a foundation of hospitality, of readiness to welcome the other into

1 For examples see: Carolyn Cartier, "Cosmopolitics and the Maritime World City," *Geographical Review* 89, no. 2 (April 1999): 278–89, https://doi.org/10.2307/216092; Daniel Goffman, Edhem Eldem, and Bruce Masters, *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

2 Henk Driessen, "Mediterranean Port Cities: Cosmopolitanism Reconsidered," *History and Anthropology* 16, no. 1 (2005): 129–41, https://doi.org/10.1080/0275720042000316669.

one's 'home'.[3] The various and processual definitions of cosmopolitanism emerge from the premise that there is an 'other' which is socio-culturally defined and that the concept of cosmopolitanism would be a remedy for the friction which exists between the other and the self. Indisputably, this idea aims to perceive all human beings as a part of a single community. In other respects, East-West dichotomy in sociology is based on the perception that humanity is made of two artificial sets of clearly demarcated cultural entities.[4] The idea is entirely reflected in examples provided by Samuel Huntington when he argues that: "Villages, regions, ethnic groups, all have distinct cultures of different levels of cultural heterogeneity. The culture of a village in southern Italy may be different from that of a village in northern Italy, but both will share a common Italian culture that distinguishes them from German villages".[5] According to Huntington the future of global politics will be dominated by the clash of these two civilizations, or more simply the clash between East and West.[6] In such a scenario, the Eastern Mediterranean region appears as a physical space where agents co-created this dichotomy while existing in one cosmos. However, this paper argues that co-existence per se is not insufficient to constitute a cosmopolite environment, but, it could have triggered the implications of 'cosmopolitics'.

Malte Fuhrmann in his book, *Port Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean*, writes "Cultural historians now tend to highlight the fact that cultures in contact do not manage to remain aloof from one another, but undergo fundamental change in the process, creating in-between zones and hybridity".[7] Geo-politically, the Eastern Mediterranean region has been the in-between zone within whose borders Eastern and Western civilizations had co-existed. This characterization notwithstanding, defining the exact borders of the Eastern Mediterranean region is impossible, and necessarily politically biased. For instance, historian Fernand Braudel draws the boundaries of the Mediterranean through botany, describing it as the place which lies within the limits of the olive trees until they give way to the palm groves.[8] To Braudel, the separation seems to emerge from a geographical difference that has influenced the socio-cultural and socio-economic development of civilizations. For sociologist Pierre Bourdieu this understanding ignores the fact that human beings are biological beings and social agents who are constituted as such through their interdependent

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3 Jacques Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, trans. Mark Dooley and Michael Hughes, Thinking in Action (London: Routledge, 2001).

4 Ibid.

5 Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?," in *Readings in Globalization: Key Concepts and Major Debates*, ed. George Ritzer and Zeynep Atalay (New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 24.

6 Ibid., 23.

7 Malte Fuhrmann, *Port Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean: Urban Culture in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 23, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108769716.

8 Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1949).

relation to a social space.[9] This does not mean that there is no clear distinction between physical space and social space, but that social space is an abstract space constructed by the ensembles (economic, bureaucratic, social, etc.) emerging from the unequal distribution of various modes of capital.[10]

Jürgen Osterhammel writes that not everything originates with the steam engine and the French Revolution, but instead each defining element of the era was affected directly by the transformative power it brought with it. Osterhammel paints a picture of a world increasingly connected by the telegraph, the steamship, and the railways.[11] As a matter of fact, nineteenth-century Mediterranean port cities had long been argued, by the above-mentioned scholars, to have played a particularly important role in the emergence of today's global economic system together with its liberal cosmopolitanism. However, Henk Driessen argues rightly that further anthropological and historical research is needed to reframe what we really mean by the "liberal cosmopolitanism" or the "cultural pluralism" of the past, and accordingly, that further discussion is needed to understand how these phenomena can contribute to today's definition of multiculturalism.[12] Alike, this paper tries to address the question of how did the individuals of the past engage with the so-called "liberal cosmopolitanism" of the port cities? Is multiculturalism or cosmopolitanism only limited to the condition of inhabiting East and West together in one cosmos? Looking closely at the transcultural exchanges in Ottoman port cities may provide insights about this growing cosmopolitan nostalgia for the port cities of the Eastern Mediterranean.

Ottoman port city 'Cosmopolitanism'

Nineteenth century modernism manifests itself best in the urban scene through the physical transformations it brought into the socio-cultural fabric of the city life. Nineteenth century Constantinople was one of the largest imperial port cities[13] but was not the only port city administrated by the Ottomans. The Eastern Mediterranean was home to several port towns and cities hosting different compositions of ethno-religious communities. These cities were governed by the Ottoman administration, from Constantinople, for the direct benefit of the Ottoman State, including,

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9 Pierre Bourdieu, "The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups," *Theory and Society* 14, no. 6 (November 1985): 723–44, https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00174048.

10 Etienne Gehin and Pierre Bourdieu, "La distinction, critique sociale du jugement," *Revue Française de Sociologie* 21, no. 3 (1980): 439–44, https://doi.org/10.2307/3320934.

11 Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth* Century (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 904–6, https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400849949.

12 Driessen, "Mediterranean Port Cities," 138–39.

13 Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1986), https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520337510.

FIG. 1 Old port of Constantinople and the surrounding faubourgs during the nineteenth century, by German cartographer C. Stolpe, dating 1880, ©Harvard Library[15].

and especially, its military. The Ottomans, however, were not modern capitalists aiming at an unlimited and free market in their port cities. They were concerned with the maintenance of the port city as a system while expanding their legacy in the area they controlled.[14] Under this imbalanced and pragmatical administration, the main port cities such as Salonica and Smyrna were scenes of flow of people, goods and ideas. The flow of people was not entirely based on mobility within the imperial borders. It also brought many travelers and European experts to these port cities **[Figs. 1-2-3]**.

14 Nükhet Varlik, "Plague, Conflict, and Negotiation: The Jewish Broadcloth Weavers of Salonica and the Ottoman Central Administration in the Late Sixteenth Century," *Jewish History* 28, no. 3–4 (2014): 281–84, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10835-014-9219-9.

15 C. Stolpe, "Plan von Constantinopel mit den Vorstädten, dem Hafen, und einem Theile des Bosporus", Lorentz & Keil, 1882. From: Harvard Digital Map Collection, Harvard University. Accessed on 03-06-2021: https://curiosity.lib.harvard.edu/scanned-maps/catalog/44-990096520370203941

FIG. 2 Closer look from *Figure 1*, of the Galata Port and its 'modern' neighbourhood Pera, Beioglu (1) across Topkapı (Jeni Serai meaning new palace) (2). Port region of Galata can be seen below Pera (3), ©Harvard Library.

FIG. 3 Postcard showing the busy port district Karakeui and Galata Bridge that spans the Golden Horn in Constantinople. The bridge is the third construction that was built by the French company Forges et Chantiers de la Mediteranée in 1875 and used until 1912[16] , ©Library of Congress.

There is no other capital city in Europe that composes the common city of diverse groups and still retains their characters as distinct as in Constantinople. Education, which everywhere else unites children and

16 "Kara-Keui (Galata) and view of Pera, Constantinople," Detroit Publishing Company, (1905), from the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington. Accessed on 03-06-2021: http://loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsc.06062/

youth in common centers, by expanding ideas, and by gradually establishing bonds of union and fraternity, has tended so far to distance all rapprochements in this capital, because each national family maintains at its expense its school of home, where education is given in the mother tongue and where efforts are made to maintain religious traditions and political prejudices.[17]

The first director of Le Lycée de Galatasaray (the Galata Palace Imperial School) known as Monsieur de Salve wrote the lines above during his employment between 1868 to 1871. At the time, the vast majority of the great powers of the nineteenth century endorsed an expansion of their ideas abroad through the tool of educational institutions. Many of these states invested their own funds into this venture, while others depended on private endeavors. Undoubtedly, the residents of Eastern Mediterranean port cities like Constantinople bore witness to the expansion of this "educational imperialism and enlightenment" first-hand.[18] Studying the hybrid social sphere of these port cities, therefore, requires a deep understanding of the emergence of organized and modern education.

The same narrative of Constantinople's cosmopolitanism beset by friction is reflected in the book of Edmondo De Amicis (1846-1908), Italian writer and traveler, when he argues:

> To recover from this condition of amazement, one has only to dive into one of the thousand alleys that wind about the flanks of the hills of Stamboul (Istanbul). Here there reigns profound peace, and here can be contemplated in tranquility every aspect of that mysterious and jealous East, which on the other side of the Golden Horn is only seen in fugitive glimpses, amidst the noisy confusion of European life. Here everything is oriental.[19]

De Amicis visited Constantinople in 1874 and dedicated a book to his travel, at a time when ever more European travelers were making their way to this easily accessible Orient, and they were 'fascinated' to see the traces of East (Orient) and West (Europe) in one social sphere in a capital port city. The texts written by travelers who had been to Eastern Mediterranean port cities are products of a complex process that started out with certain ideological baggage and positioning. Consequently, the voyages reflected

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17 Translated by the author of the paper, from the original: "Dans aucune autre capitale de l'Europe, les divers groupes composant la cité commune ne conservent des caractères aussi tranchés et aussi dissemblables qu'à Constantinople. L'éducation, qui partout ailleurs réunit les enfants et les jeunes gens dans des centres communs et, en élargissant les idées, établit peu à peu des liens d'union et de fraternité, a tendu plutôt jusqu'ici à éloigner tout rapprochement, parce que chaque famille nationale entretient à ses frais ses maisons d'éducation, où l'enseignement est donné dans la langue maternelle et où on s'efforce de maintenir les traditions religieuses et les préventions politiques.". Ernest de Salve-Villedieu, "Le lyçée impérial de Galata-Séraï," *Revue des deux mondes*, no. 5 (1874): 1.

18 Fuhrmann, *Port Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean*, 219.

19 Edmondo De Amicis, *Constantinople*, trans. Caroline Tilton, Stamboul ed. (New York; London: Putnam's, 1896), 32.

and recorded in these accounts contribute to the formation of certain stereotypes.[20]

Daniel Goffman states that starting from the seventeenth century, Smyrna became a colonial port city rather than a small village. The neglect of the Ottoman authorities in port cities offered actors from Italy, the Netherlands, England and France the opportunity to create a 'free market'[21] in the otherwise strictly statist Ottoman lands.[22]

During the second half of the nineteenth century, Ottoman production of raw materials and manufactured goods had increased significantly. The port cities enabled the flow of these goods to faraway lands. At the beginning of the twentieth century Smyrna on its own secured 43% of all exports and 20% of all imports within the whole of the Empire.[23] Salonica, on the other hand, was the main manufacturer and the exporter of textiles in the Eastern Mediterranean.[24] The city experienced a decisive uprising especially in the 1880s due to factory-building activity. According to the accounts given by Donald Quataert, entrepreneurs founded a whole range of new businesses from distilleries and soap works to factories for construction materials and new tobacco businesses. Salonica's port had reliable ties with other Mediterranean port cities such as Smyrna, Trieste, Vienna, Genoa, and Marseille, as well as commercial lines to Paris and London.[25] The accelerated circulation of various goods transformed life in these cities. From the 1870s to the 1890s, the volume of trade increased by 25.8% in Salonica. In Constantinople, growth was as big as 32% and in Smyrna 19.4%.[26] Figure 4 and Figure 5 **[Figs. 4-5]** demonstrates a trade card published by the biscuit company Pernot headquartered in Dijon, France. The card illustrates Constantinople as one of the biggest ports of the world where factories of Pernot were shipping their products, using the maritime routes. Consequently, urban inequalities became more visible as the class dimension was added to the already ethno-religiously segmented society. The Eastern Mediterranean port cities were not just the

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20 For further examples see the website of Aikaterini Laskaridis Foundation which presents a large collection of traveller accounts in the Eastern Mediterranean from fifteen to twentieth century: http://eng.travelogues.gr/

21 Goffman calls this system of free market "pocket of *laissez-faireism*".

22 Goffman, Eldem, and Masters, *The Ottoman City between East and West*, 82–90.

23 Mübahat S. Kütükoğlu, *İzmir tarihinden kesitler* (İzmir: İzmir Yayıncılık, 2000); Mübahat S. Kütükoğlu, *Balta Limanı'na giden yol: Osmanlı-İngiliz iktisâdî münâsebetleri* (Ankara: Türk Kültürünü Araştırma Enstitüsü, 1974); Abdullah Martal, *Belgelerle Osmanlı döneminde İzmir* (Izmir: Yazıt Yayıncılık, 2007).

24 Kate Fleet, "The Via Egnatia under Ottoman Rule (1380–1699): The Menzilhanes of the Sol Kol in the Late 17th/Early 18th Century. Halcyon Days in Crete II," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 62, no. 2 (1999): 362–63, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0041977X00017043.

25 Donald Quataert, ed., *Manufacturing in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, 1500-1950*, SUNY Series in the Social and Economic History of the Middle East (New York: State University of New York Press, 1994).

26 Giannēs Karatzoglou, *The Imperial Ottoman Bank in Salonica: The First 25 Years, 1864-1890* (Istanbul: Ottoman Bank Archives & Research Centre, 2003), 6.

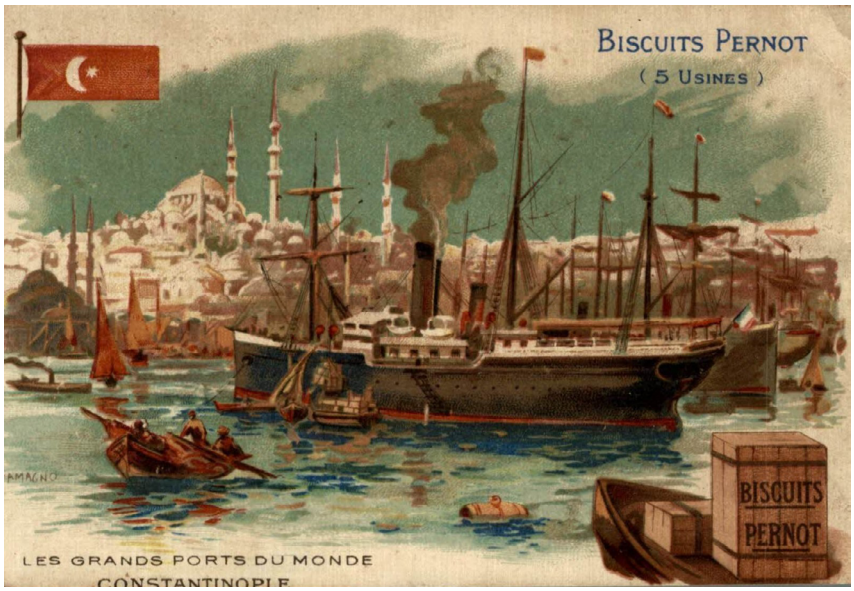

FIG. 4 Front of the trade card advertising Pernot biscuits in the port of Constantinople. Author's collection.

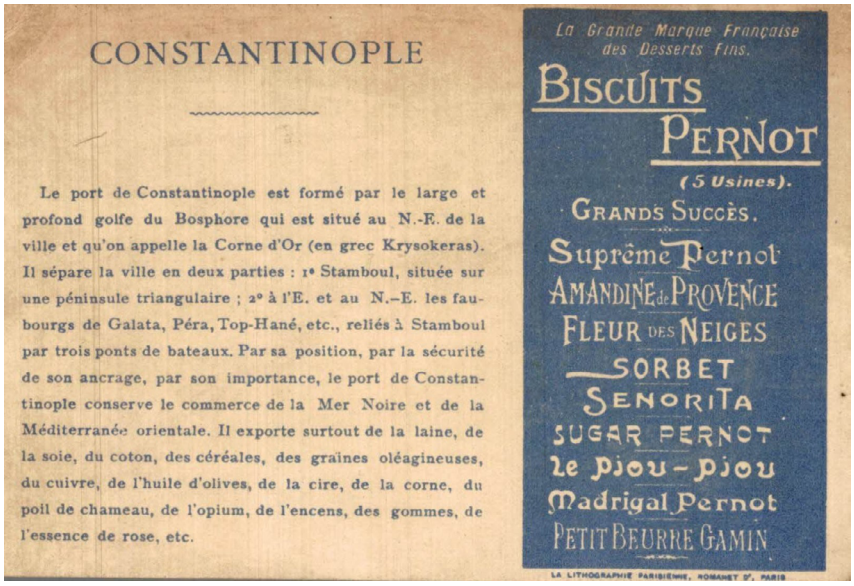

FIG. 5 Back of the trade card introducing the port of Constantinople and the products being exported. Some of the raw products listed are: Wool, silk, cotton, cereals, oilseeds, copper, olive oil, wax, camel hair, opium, gum, rose essence. Author's collection.

hub of the commercial bourgeoisie but also home to sizable and growing middle and working classes.[27]

The three port cities had their distinct composition of ethno-religious groups depending on the flow of people before and during the long nineteenth century. While the capital Constantinople remained much like a microcosm of the Empire, Smyrna and Salonica had their own particular composition of ethno-religious groups.[28] Beginning of the 1840s, within a couple of decades, Smyrna became the largest city after Constantinople

27 Athanasios Gekas, "Class and Cosmopolitanism: The Historiographical Fortunes of Merchants in Eastern Mediterranean Ports," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 24, no. 2 (2009): 95–114, https://doi.org/10.1080/09518960903487966.

28 Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century*.

FIG. 6 Lively photos of two different districts from Smyrna, at the end of the nineteenth century, ©SALT Research[33]
On the left: View from the Frank Street
On the right: View from the Bazar Square

with growing number of immigrants from all over the Empire as well as from outside the imperial borders.[29] According to the official registers drawn up in 1890, Muslims constituted 44% of Smyrna's residents, followed closely by Orthodox-Greeks with 26%, foreigners (immigrants mostly from Europe) with 19% and a roughly equal proportions of Jews and Armenians.[30] This plural social make-up was reflected in the city's physical organization. Residential neighborhoods bore testament to this diversity. Greek, Muslim, Armenian, Jewish and 'Frankish' (*frenk*, i.e. European) neighborhoods were interlocked with one another.[31] The commercial boom resulted in high demand for wage labor. The industrial workforce in the city was fulfilled in high majority by 'Rum' (Greek Orthodox) people and by low percentage of Armenians, Jews, and later on by Muslim. The agricultural industries mostly employed seasonal workers during the harvest. For instance, fig sorting and packing required three months of work per year and was done mostly by female seasonal workers.[32] [Figs. 6-7]

29 Sibel Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir: The Rise of a Cosmopolitan Port, 1840/1880* (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 24–25, http://site.ebrary.com/id/10534325.

30 Vital Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie, géographie administrative : statistique, descriptive et raisonnée de chaque province de l'Asie Mineure* (Paris: Leroux, 1890), 440, https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k415003j.

31 Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir*, 11.

32 Ellinor Morack, "Turkifying Poverty, or: The Phantom Pain of Izmir's Lost Christian Working Class, 1924–26," *Middle Eastern Studies* 55, no. 4 (2019): 499–518, https://doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2018.1559157.

33 "Rue Franque, Symrne, " SALT Research, Photograph and Postcard Archive. Accessed on 03-06-2021: https://archives.saltresearch.org/handle/123456789/102632; "Place du Bazar, Symrne," SALT Research, Photograph and Postcard Archive. Accessed on 03-06-2021: https://archives.saltresearch.org/handle/123456789/121333

FIG. 7 Female fig sorters in Smyrna market, ©SALT Research.[34]

A census carried out by the authorities in Salonica shows that in the year 1831 the total male population of the city breaks down into 44.6% Jewish, 33.7% Muslims[35] and 21.7% Christian Orthodox, with 22.7% of the whole population being foreign. This classification was purely based on religion and in fact did not reflect the reality of the cosmos in the city. According to a document discovered by Meropi Anastassiadou, in the municipal census of 1890 there were seventeen ethno-religious groups defined.[36] Identities were therefore dynamic but being reframed in the hands of political authorities based on their agendas. However, the urban fabric of the port cities was not segregated only based on these identities. The growing working-class, increased suppression and violence of the palace, the city's developing character as an industrial and commercial hub made these port cities a thriving urban sphere for political unions. In Salonica, a socialist workers' federation was formed by a group of Jewish workers, in 1909, which attracted members from other port cities and ethno-religious identities. The networks of Salonica also gave fuel to the spread of French nationalism.[37] The Ottoman opposition movement known as *Jeune Turcs*,

34 "Travail de figues, Smyrne" SALT Research, Photograph and Postcard Archive. Accessed on 03-06-2021:
https://archives.saltresearch.org/handle/123456789/196944

35 The number of Muslims also includes high number of crypto-Jews (converts).

36 Méropi Anastassiadou, *Salonique, 1830-1912: une ville ottomane à l'âge des Réformes* (Leiden, NY: Brill, 1997), 58.

37 Mark Mazower, *Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews 1430-1950* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2006).

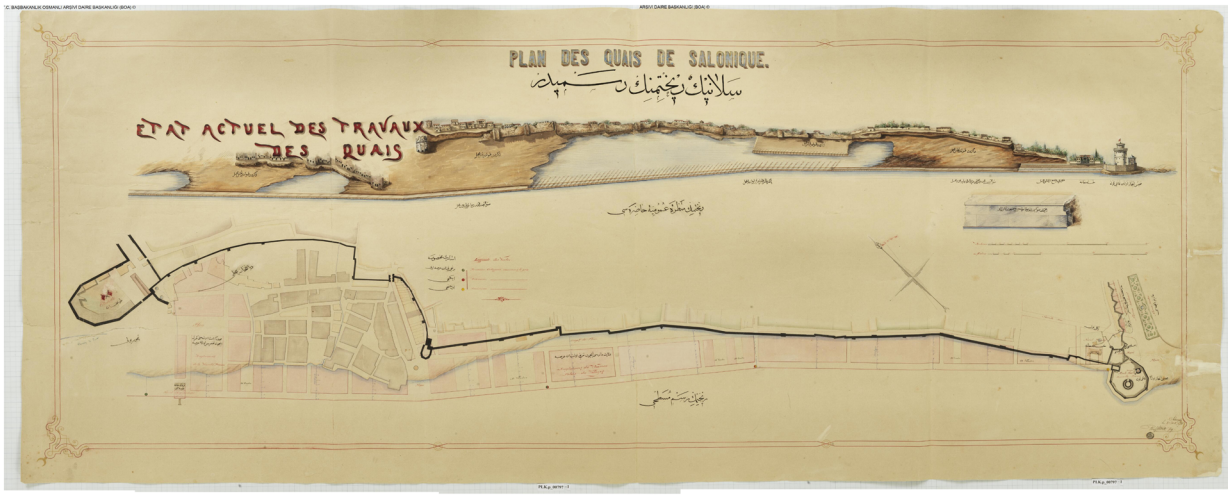

FIG. 8 The dock plan and illustration of Salonica, dating 1872. The plan ends on the right with Tour Blanche and does not include the areas in the East of the city that were developed and populated at the end of the nineteenth century, ©Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı [Ottoman Archives].

also partly started as an Ottoman-Muslim secret union in Salonica and evolved into the nationalist ruling elite of Turkey after the establishment of Turkish Republic in 1923.[38] Yet the question remains: What factors united individuals from these various subdivisions within port cities? **[Fig. 8]**

To a certain extent, what united these groups of people was the French language and French-language press which functioned almost like a 'common forum' in *and* between the port cities.[40] The Francophone newspapers on private initiative started in the 1820s in Smyrna , the first of which having been published under the name *Smyrneea*,[41] followed by a boom in Francophone publishing in Salonica at the end of the century, where the oldest journal bore the title *Journal de Salonique*.[42] In these cities, literacy in French was already high among those who had received modern education. The readership was thus not limited to the foreign residents of the cities but reached also Greek, Armenian, Judeo-Spanish and Ottoman-Turkish speaking people. Fuhrmann writes "The French-language press was a mark of distinction, of 'cultural capital' that played a part in the construction of contemporary gender and class identities."[43] This privileged group's access to new French ideas was enabled by the increase in printing activities, the expansion of French-language education and new maritime lines that eased the flow of 'new' Western ideas. Consequently, the

38 Erik-Jan Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey* (London; New York: I.B.Tauris, 2010), https://doi.org/10.5040/9780755610761.

39 "Plan des quais de Salonique", from: Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi [Ottoman Archives], Plan, Proje ve Krokiler, Document No:797, 19-10-1288 [1872].

40 Fuhrmann, *Port Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean*, 234.

41 Ibid., 235.

42 *Journal de Salonique: publication bi-hebdomadaire, politique, commerciale et littéraire*, Director: Saadi Levy, (1895-1910). Issues are open access on BnF Gallica,

43 Ibid., 241

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Directeur - Propriétaire : *Saadi Levy*

ABONNEMENTS — INSERTIONS

27 Gemazi-ul-evel 1313 (hégire) Administration : Caracache Han N° 13 2 Novembre 1895 v. s.

REVUE POLITIQUE

CHRONIQUE LOCALE

Le port de Salonique

Le projet de la construction d'un port à Salonique, sur lequel nous avions promis de revenir, comporte les travaux ci-après :

Un quai de rive de 130 mètres de largeur entre la douane actuelle et l'ancien débarcadère, qui servira à l'accostement des bateaux et navires constituant un terre-plein sur lequel on pourrait par la suite projeter des constructions.

Deux grands môles, l'un de 100 mètres, l'autre de 50 mètres de large seront établis perpendiculairement à chacune des extrémités du quai de rive, et s'avanceront dans la mer sur une longueur de 200 mètres chacun. Le port sera enfin formé par un brise-lames qui …

TRAVAUX PUBLICS DU Vilayet de Salonique

Object 1: Article on the first page of the journal about the construction of the new port, 14 November 1895

Cie des MESSAGERIES MARITIM[ES]

Paquebots Poste Français

Départ du 8 Décembre 189[5]

de Salonique pour Marseille

touchant à Syra et Calamata et relevant directement sans transbordement pour

Le Hâvre et Londres

Bagda[d] capitain[e] Galetti

Pour tous renseignements s'adre[sser] à l'Agence.

Object 2: Information about the depart date of the post ship from Salonica to Marseille, 7 December 1895

HOTEL IMPÉRIAL

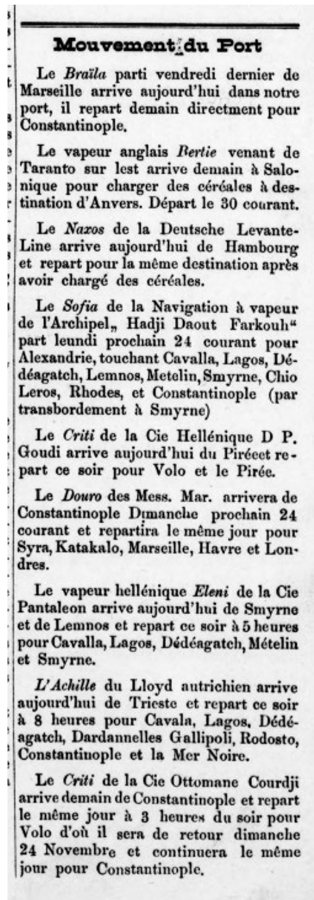
sur le quai

Situation exceptionnelle. Vue magnifique sur le golfe et les monts Olympe.

Chambres et appartements meublés, à la journée et au mois. Arrangements pour séjour prolongé. Pension complète depuis 8 francs par jour.

Cuisine soignée. Mets turcs et européens. Restaurant à l'entresol. Service à la carte et à prix fixe.

Object 3: Advertisement of the Imperial Hotel with the view of the dock, 17 January 1898



Mouvement du Port

Le *Braïla* parti vendredi dernier de Marseille arrive aujourd'hui dans notre port, il repart demain directement pour Constantinople.

Le vapeur anglais *Bertie* venant de Taranto sur lest arrive demain à Salonique pour charger des céréales à destination d'Anvers. Départ le 30 courant.

Le *Naxos* de la Deutsche Levante-Line arrive aujourd'hui de Hambourg et repart pour la même destination après avoir chargé des céréales.

Le *Sofia* de la Navigation à vapeur de l'Archipel„ Hadji Daout Farkouh" part leundi prochain 24 courant pour Alexandrie, touchant Cavalla, Lagos, Dédéagatch, Lemnos, Metelin, Smyrne, Chio Leros, Rhodes, et Constantinople (par transbordement à Smyrne)

Le *Criti* de la Cie Hellénique D P. Goudi arrive aujourd'hui du Piréect repart ce soir pour Volo et le Pirée.

Le *Douro* des Mess. Mar. arrivera de Constantinople Dimanche prochain 24 courant et repartira le même jour pour Syra, Katakalo, Marseille, Havre et Londres.

Le vapeur hellénique *Eleni* de la Cie Pantaleon arrive aujourd'hui de Smyrne et de Lemnos et repart ce soir à 5 heures pour Cavalla, Lagos, Dédéagatch, Mételin et Smyrne.

L'Achille du Lloyd autrichien arrive aujourd'hui de Trieste et repart ce soir à 8 heures pour Cavala, Lagos, Dédéagatch, Dardannelles Gallipoli, Rodosto, Constantinople et la Mer Noire.

Le *Criti* de la Cie Ottomane Courdji arrive demain de Constantinople et repart le même jour à 3 heures du soir pour Volo d'où il sera de retour dimanche 24 Novembre et continuera le même jour pour Constantinople.

Object 4: A regular section on the newspaper regarding the movement of the port, 21 November 1895

FIG. 9 Excerpts about the port of Salonica from Journal de Salonique, ©BnF, Paris.

common narratives shared within and among the Eastern Mediterranean port cities were conformed to and reproduced the lines of the dichotomies between East and West, traditional and modern, old and new. **[Fig. 9]**

Scholars have long studied the conditions within Ottoman port cities as urban spheres in which two different fields of ideas lived together in separate spheres.[44] Analyses strictly based on this dualistic view have failed to notice the trans-cultural and trans-communal relations between the agents in these port cities.[45] Moreover, this dualistic view perceives old and new or East and West as different spheres separated strictly from each other with clear boundaries. As anthropologist Lynne Nakano puts it "The East-West dichotomy is based on the assumption that cultures and civilizations are self-contained, internally consistent entities."[46] As a matter of fact, the cosmos in the Eastern Mediterranean port cities

44 For an overview of the works on Ottoman modernization see: Hilmi Ziya Ülken, *Türkiye'de çağdaş düşünce tarihi* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2015).

45 Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

46 Lynne Y. Nakano, "Writing for Common Ground: Rethinking Audience and Purpose in Japan Anthropology," in *Dismantling the East-West Dichotomy: Essays in Honour of Jan Van Bremen*, ed. Joy Hendry and Heung Wah Wong (New York: Routledge, 2006), 191, https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203968697.

falsifies the idea that the East and West lived in separate spheres without any exchange, or that their co-existence in the port cities can be flagged as liberal cosmopolitanism.

History of port cities: a practice of rethinking on cosmopolitics?

To gain an initial sense of how the Eastern Mediterranean embodied the passage between two sides of the historically constituted dichotomy of civilizations, this paper looked at the three major port cities of the region. Carola Hein defines port city regions as 'fuzzy territories' engaged in the flow of goods, people and ideas that surpass institutional boundaries, lacking the strong and supportive governance systems that generally characterize states.[47] The cases we have focused on correspond to these tautologic definitions of port city regions during their long nineteenth century. What made these port cities an object of interest for social historians and anthropologists is the social, economic, and political transformation they faced at the turn of the twentieth century. Studies focused on analyzing nation-state formation, homogenization and violent state culture in the Eastern Mediterranean should benefit from a wider study of port cities as a connected system of their own. Although throughout the last twenty years there has been a growing interest in the port cities of the Eastern Mediterranean and so-called Ottoman cosmopolitanism, there is still a need for global and unifying perspectives in the field. Indeed, the purpose of this paper has been to look at the dichotomy produced and practiced in these port cities as it relates to the concept of Ottoman cosmopolitanism.

As noted by a number of authors,[48] Ottoman cosmopolitanism has often been adopted rather uncritically or by connecting several definitions of the concept within a region. Ulrike Freitag, on the other hand, has argued that the phenomenon of Ottoman port cities could be framed as 'conviviality' as living together rather than being subsumed under the flag of cosmopolitanism.[49] This perspective allows us to focus primarily on living together, conflict and daily life within a urban sphere, and therefore permits us not only to understand the interactions between 'us' and 'the other' but also the agents that made it possible to exist, or fail to exist, together.[50] Furthermore, conceptualizing Ottoman port cities under the flag of

47 Carola Hein, "The Port Cityscape: Spatial and Institutional Approaches to Port City Relationships," *PORTUSplus* 8 (2019), https://portusplus.org/index.php/pp/article/view/190.

48 Will Hanley, "Grieving Cosmopolitanism in Middle East Studies," History Compass 6, no. 5 (2008): 1346–67, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1478-0542.2008.00545.x; Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen, eds., *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context and Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

49 Ulrike Freitag, "'Cosmopolitanism' and 'Conviviality'? Some Conceptual Considerations Concerning the Late Ottoman Empire," *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 17, no. 4 (2014): 375–91, https://doi.org/10.1177/1367549413510417.

50 Brad Erickson, "Utopian Virtues: Muslim Neighbors, Ritual Sociality, and the Politics of 'Convivència,'" *American Ethnologist* 38, no. 1 (2011): 124, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1425.2010.01296.x.

cosmopolitanism fails to recognize contemporary class struggles in Eastern Mediterranean port cities, along the lines of Eastern and Western norms, namely the emergence of a working and middle class.[51] The dichotomy produced in Eastern Mediterranean port cities therefore was blended into this "non-elitist concept of conviviality"[52] rather than being an indispensable part of Ottoman cosmopolitanism.

In the introduction of *Waterfronts in Post-Industrial Cities*, Richard Marshall states that waterfronts have their unique complexity offering "remarkable opportunities to define and describe a contemporary view of life".[53] Likewise, Alice Mah explores three post-industrial port cities (Liverpool, New Orleans and Marseille), and demonstrates us how neo-liberal policies marginalized port city systems and people living within. She uses the expression of 'the blue' and 'the black' to elaborate on the mixed representations of these port cities as progressive versus exotic urban structures with high level of crime and poverty.[54] This contemporary example demonstrates us that 'dichotomy' was not unique to Eastern Mediterranean port cities, but, is a common feature of port city systems.[55]

Modifying the history shaped by the East-West dichotomy is not the purpose of this paper. On the contrary, we took the popular claim of Ottoman port city cosmopolitanism and its romantism or nostalgia to demonstrate the misinterpretation of the port city system and elaborate on the dichotomic understanding of the port cities of the Eastern Mediterranean. Such discussions and perspectives will enable us to rebuild and design future port cities in respect to the notion of living together as individuals rather than groups or poles while creating a tautologic perspective for port city histories. In fact, future planning should not be based on removing the traces of the less glorious facets of the past. Designing the future should offer accommodation and negotiation with the past as a whole. Otherwise, we fall into the trap of designing and re-inventing the past for the benefit of the political agendas of certain powerful groups.

Conclusion

This paper argues that, for a better understanding of inclusive movement of cosmopolitanism, it is important to differentiate between various modes of contact throughout history and the possible conflicts resulting from them. As the growing interest of scholars in the field demonstrates,

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51 Freitag, "'Cosmopolitanism' and 'Conviviality'?"

52 Ibid.

53 Richard Marshall, ed., *Waterfronts in Post-Industrial Cities* (Conference: "Waterfronts in Post Industrial Cities, London; New York: Spon Press, 2001), 9.

54 Alice Mah, *Port Cities and Global Legacies: Urban Identity, Waterfront Work, and Radicalism* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137283146.

55 For wider application of the understanding of dichotomy see the material prepared by PortCityFutures on the dualities of port city regions. Dualities, PortCityFutures. Accessed on: https://www.portcityfutures.nl/dualities

the situation of nineteenth century port cities has the potential to shed light on today's economic and political order. Nonetheless, flagging Eastern Mediterranean port cities as the first form of cosmopolitanism does not enlighten us about the values attached to the encounters between the agents existing therein. Cosmopolitan leanings should not be reduced to the number of languages spoken, the religions practiced, or to the accommodation of both sides of the Eastern and Western dichotomy in a single social sphere. Likewise, the idea of cosmopolitanism should not be understood just as conviviality or co-existence.

In comparing the three major port cities of the Eastern Mediterranean, this paper argued that the contemporary form of East-West dichotomy is a political division rather than a geographical one, and that the dichotomy was forged especially during the nineteenth century through encounters in the port cities of the region. With the spread of French language, ideas and life style, the agents in these cities were culturally segmented along lines of modern versus traditional or Eastern versus Western. Such bifurcations also accounted for the class inequalities which does not fall necessarily into ethno-religious segmentation.

Additionally, as this paper attempted to demonstrate with these albeit limited examples, among acts motivated by this dualistic way of thinking does not separate into two neat spheres that manifest necessarily in two contradictory camps. This conflicting situation is often neglected when debating social segregation and urban inequalities. As a result, actions conducted in the name of cosmopolitics are dictated by the demands placed on them by the historical surroundings, namely the dualistic way of thinking inherited from the originators of this dichotomy.

In conclusion, while Eastern Mediterranean cosmopolitanism should not be romanticized as an ideal that failed with the emergence of the nation-state paradigm, port city systems and the values associated with them should be studied to overcome the cultural dichotomy in contemporary cosmopolitan studies, and to re-think all port cities in a more tautologic, cyclic and globally connected manner.

Didem Yerli is Ph.D. researcher at Leiden University.

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