RCL 9/30/1901 "La Tanneries a Constantinople"

Slaughter of animals at Istanbul annually: 30,000 cattle and buffalo; 4,000 horses mules, mares; 1.5 million sheep and lambs; 20,000 goats; insignificant pigs.

Istanbul does not produce tanning materials. In 1900, imported some 71,000 kgs of bark. The tanning extracts are not made here. the "Velocitan" tannery imports the liquid, all prepared and ready to be used. Other tanners import the sold form, but in small quantities. Total value of tanning extract imports is c. 100,000 francs. In 1900 this was 480,000 kgs. gross weight.

The hides slaughtered here are poor, of inferior quality. Import 20,000 cowhides a year. Also import fabricated products, such as sole hides, colored goatskin, veaux cires (waxed hides?), polished hides etc. so the tune of 7 million fr per year, more than half from France.

Istanbul exports lots of sheep skins without and withuot the wool, lamb and goatskin and goathair.

There are six relatively important tanneries and 21 smaller that work in sheepskin. Total these employ 400 workers with an average salary of three francs per day for nine hours of work. pp. 530-1.

None of them tan with minerals.

The tannery workers--and all the other workers of the capital--have no form of mutual assistance and the tyrannical syndicate has not penetrated this far. There are no training programs for tanneries.

Thanks to the development of the Outillage mecanique and its improvements that have also brought a better utilization of tannin, the net price of local tanning products has has dropped five percent since
1889. The machines employed by the tanners all come from Europe, mainly from France and a few from Germany and England. The sale price has not varied for eleven years. We repeat that the local tanneries produce articles at very reduced prices that give as beautiful as possible an appearance. The consumer is poor, is not worry about tomorrow and so looks first of all for the low price.

Nevertheless, to struggle against foreign competition, some great progress has been made since 1889. Thanks to improved equipment, the leather is better, finer and softer. A lot of progress. Total production of the tanneries of Istanbul is c. four million francs per year.

Tanning is not in a very favorable situation in Istanbul. Local butchers partially provide enough raw materials. Both hides and tannin come from abroad and have lots of additional expenses. The workers are lazy, lacking in attachment to their patron, have no esprit de corps, have no desire for the prosperity of their mill. The installation and repair of equipment takes twice as much money as those of Europe. The government and the local authorities have no sense of industrial development and place all kinds of difficulties in the way.
RCL 31 Jullet 1909, "Tannerie indigène". Tanneries of Istanbul: the state tannery at Beykoz whose products are used by the army and connected to the Min of War.

five important tanneries: G. and N. Pintza Freres; G. Nicolaides Tripo; Denzli Haci Hassan and Ismail Hakki; Djambezli Freres.

Two tanneries of lesser importance, belonging to Photios Doulos; and to Nicolaides Freres.

And also a large number of small Turkish tanners working by hand the sheepskins de couleur.

All the great tanneries are at Gazli Çeşme near Yedikule.

The five big ones mentioned above are mechanical tanneries, well-equipped, modern equipment, mostly French machines.

Local tanneries use chiefly local hides. They also need to buy important quantities of hides abroad and at times buy cowhides for soles at Havre. But these hides pay 11% customs, high for raw materials, plus veterinary and other charges and our local tanners, who are in fierce competition among themselves, find it difficult to import foreign hides.

Thus hide imports limited to those of Egypt, cowhides from Havre and Hamburg and some heavy buffalo hides from China and the Indies. In 1323/1907-8, Istanbul imported:

597,000 kgs of cow and buffalo hides  3.8 mil piasteres; 838,000 fr
1000 kgs of goatskins, 13,000 pia, 2900 frs;
28,000 kgs of sheepskins, 176,000 pia; 39,000 frs. 124-5.

The principal products of local tanneries are sole leathers en bandes; and waxed leather—some 1.5 million kgs/yr. Pickled sheepskins, some 500,000 annually are produced, sent to North America
where they are made into imitation kidskin. 125

Next are sheepskins, matte, lustrous and in colors, some 300,000 skins. For three years G and N Pintza brothers, the doyen of local tanners have made a sheepskin au chrome noir and in color. Very successful. Is 30,000 skins yr and rising quickly.

Also goatskin mat. Some 50,000 skins yr.

Gives prices of the local products in fr per kgs.

Most sole leather made from cow skin butchered at Istanbul; the rest is from Egypt, Hamburg, Havre, and for buffaloes from China and India.

For the waxed cowhide(vachette cire) the skins come from Aknara, Kayseri, Bagdad, Mosul etc. All the sheep and goatskin from local sources that also export a lot.

The tannin is extract form. Tanning by extract was introduced twenty five(sic) years ago at Istanbul by G and N Pintza brothers who made, in 1894(sic), the first practical experiments in tanning with extracts provided by the Brothers Möller of Hamburg.

Presently, the import of these tanning extracts is important; annually some 4-5000 casks, some 1.2 million kgs. Most of the extracts in a liquid state come from France, of the Havre.

The exetracts employed are 70% extract of mimosa; 20% chestnut and 10% quebracho. For a year there's been a factory of these extracts at Izmir (127) and its products are liked by Istanbul tanners and of the Archipaelago.

The other tannins used by local tanneries are the bark of pine and of fir from Greece and the Dardanelles; the valonia of Izmir and the pulverized sumac of Sicily for small hides. Also the dog dung for
suppleness to lustrous and colored sheep skin. Given all the dogs in Istanbul, this is important. A lot of this is exported abroad after the limited local needs of the tanneries are satisfied.

Vegetable colors of the tanneries have been totally replaced with aniline colors that mostly come from Germany.

The various acids used come from Marseilles and Germany—sulphuric, nitric, hydro chloric as well as ammoniia, potassium carbonate and quicklime to remove the hair.

For waxed cowhide, vachette cirree and black leather for saddles they use a fish oil from Trabzon that the Laz get from shooting dolphins. This oil had a good market in Europe but was impure and replaced by better prepared Japanese fish oil.

Workers in the tanneries: most of the tannery workers are Greeks from the coast and from the Islands of the Aegean; the rough work, gros ouvrage is done by Kurdish workers. The workday is nine hours.

The workers earn from 1-5 francs depaneding on their job. In general the tanner is able because the craft is passed from father to son but he is lazy and addicted to drinking. When the Constitution was proclaimed in July 1908, the tannery workers, imitating their colleagues, struck and demanded wage increases. The owners resisted but, fearing their hides would rot, yielded, increased the salaries by 25% and reduced the workday slightly.

Market is internal; used to sell in Bulgaria but since the truly extraordinary convention signed between the OE and its former vassal, this market is gone. 130.

Tanners of Yedikule have made good progress but the consumption of their products is very restrained and export impossible. There is
local overproduction between the number of tanneries has increased. Competition is fierce and profits more and more reduced. They complain that they pay import duties on the raw materials. Ask for free import and for right to supply the military with items as boots, saddles and harness.

The government Beykoz tannery doesn't meet all the needs of the army and produces at a very high price. In every country, the state manufactures at high cost and poorly. This article appears in its entirety in Le Mouvement Economique, 1er Octobre 1909. Translation into English, that leaves out only the worker description is in: U.S. Monthly Consular Reports, April 1910, 89-90.