

PREFACE

The present book evolved from a set of four lectures that I presented at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Centre d'Études sur l'U.R.S.S., l'Europe orientale et le Domaine turc during May 1989. The invitation to offer the lectures afforded me the opportunity to think about definitions of technology transfer and its success or failure.

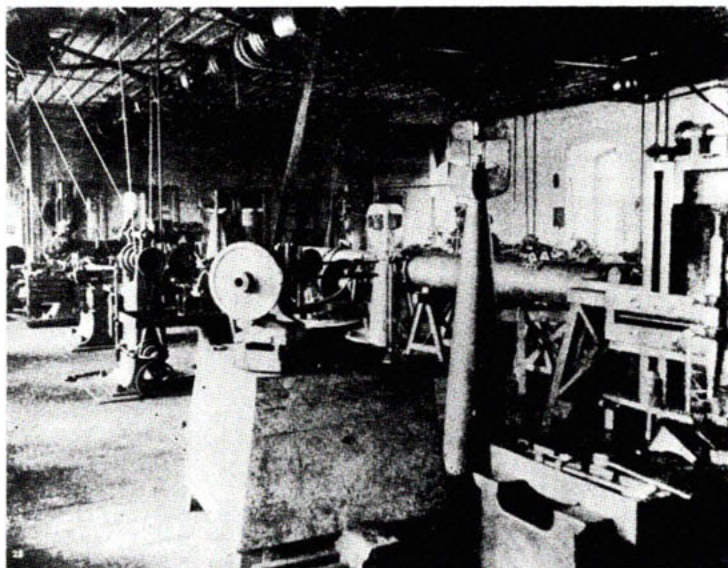
The literature on this general subject is truly vast. Much of it is present-oriented and concerned with issues of contemporary development. A major issue, for example, is whether high-tech factories should be imported lock, stock and barrel, assembled and turned on or whether more incremental steps should be employed, adopting just those technologies that seem to fit with local conditions. There is a large body of material on the historical process of technology transfer, a topic that has attracted the attention of East and Southeast Asian and Latin American as well as European specialists. Middle East devotees, for their part, can learn very much from reaching out beyond their chosen area of inquiry. But, in the end, as the reader will see, the explanations for comparative successes and failures remain elusive. Much of the rich literature really only describes how, not why, the transfers did or did not occur.

The focus of this work is on the transfer of manufacturing technology because, at the time of the lectures, I was preparing a book on textile manufacturing in the late Ottoman period. Many fascinating topics outside the manufacturing sector have remained unexplored. Two examples will suffice here to suggest additional lines of research. First, consider the diaspora communities that Philip Curtin and others discuss for their commercial prowess. Certainly the Greek and Armenian communities served as important transmitters of technology from the United States and Europe to the Ottoman regions, a process that we only glimpse at in the present book. Family histories surely would yield much useful information. Second, take the example of railroads and their appearance on the Ottoman scene. We know little about how the engineers and highly-skilled workers who came from European countries passed on their skills, as we know they did, to Ottoman subjects. Who were these Middle East innovators and how

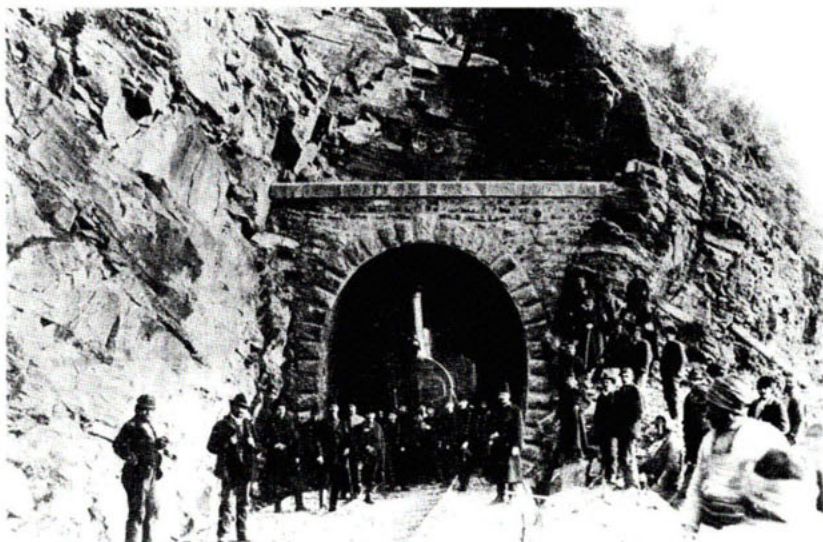
were they recruited and trained? More generally, why did some technologies remain the domain of the foreign technician while others did not ?

My sincere gratitude to Gilles Veinstein and other members of the École for their many kindnesses. I especially am gratefully to Paul Dumont for his countless courtesies and friendship, well beyond the requirements of collegiality. I am delighted to have this book included in the series being produced by his new institution, the Institut d'Études Turques at Strasbourg.

R.Q.



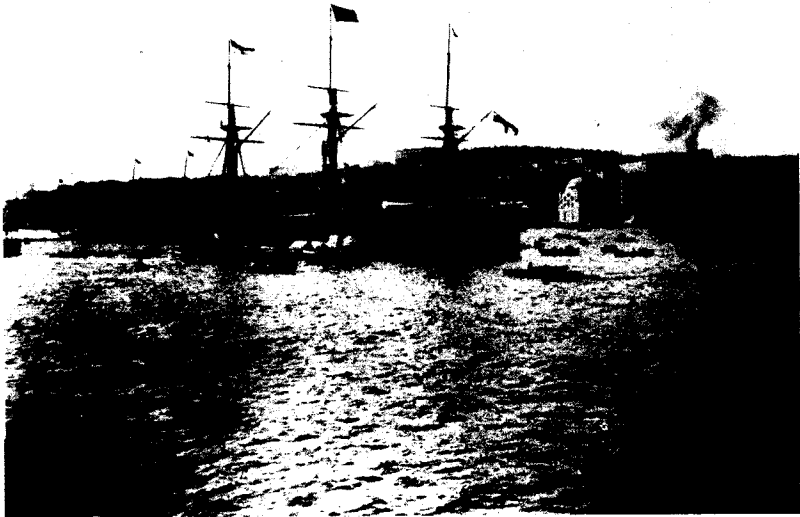
Interior view of the torpedo department in the Arsenal (*Tersane*)
Abdullah Frères



Military Academy students working on tunnel of the Haydarpasha-Ankara Railway
Fahreddin Turkan, 1891



Third class coach on the Berlin-Baghdad Railway
Stereo-Travel Company, 1908



Imperial German Cuirassé before the Dolmabahçe Palace
Abdullah Freres