HISTORICAL STUDY
OF
PAPER INDUSTRY
IN
TURKEY

Forward
by
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Prof. Mehmet Ali Kâğıtç›
The history of paper reflects in an outstanding manner the history of civilization. In fact, paper is nearly the only faithful and obliging guardian of our civilization.

However, the universal history of paper is far from being complete, as there still exist many unknown points as to the introduction and evolution of its manufacturing in several countries and nations.

The useful study of Mr. Mehmet Ali Kafiçi lifts the veil off the past of paper industry in Turkey and also gives an insight on its present state and its prospective future.

The author had already presented us with an outline on the matter with his essay on "Köşkçılık Tarihçesi" — The history of paper — which was published in 1936 and intended to entail knowledge to the employees and managers of the young industry which he then created.

As an experienced pedagogue, he thus rightly emphasized the aphorism "without a past nothing which exists today would be." Let us entrust a few lines in order to introduce the author, our former pupil and friend.

Mr. Mehmet Ali comes from an ancient family of Istanbul. Both his father and his uncle were high officers in the Turkish Navy.

After having completed his classical studies, he graduated from the University of Istanbul with a degree in Chemistry and several certificates in General Mathematics, Mineralogy, Medical and Biological Chemistry.

(1) Technical Director of the French School of paper-making at the University of Grenoble.
On the merit of these titles he was appointed Professor of Chemistry at the Turkish Navy School of Heybeliada, and as Assistant Instructor for Chemical and Biological Chemistry at the Institute of Chemistry of the Istanbul University.

Fascinated and carried away by the program of political, cultural and economical renovation of the Kemalist regime, Mr. Mehmet Ali soon attracted the attention of Mustafa Kemal because of his laboratory investigations, his high competence in all industrial fields and especially because of his dynamism in favour of the creation of a large and modern paper industry.

No doubt his ardent and realistic faith turned into utter dedication: he was given the surname «Köşprü» —papermaker— by his friends; and this epithet he added to his patronymic when the Low on surnames was promulgated.

He then left his functions as Professor and Assistant and set himself the task of a «Europe survey» in order to learn about paper while working at it.

Thus he travelled in turn:

— To Germany where he worked as worker-trainee in several important paper mills. He then attended the lectures of Professor H. Ost at the Technical University of Hannover.

— To France, where before being admitted to the special Department (2) of the French School of Paper-making, he worked, again as worker-trainee, in order to obtain also a thorough knowledge of the French language, first in the Paper Factories of France in Lancy, and then in the Navarre Paper Mill of Voiron. In 1927 he graduated as head of his promotion and received the degree of Engineer in Paper-making.

Such an achievement, especially for a foreigner, rightly emphasizes his intellectual skill, his application to assimilate all the different teachings, his remarkable personality.

Taking advantage of his stay abroad, he establishes contacts with the industrial spheres, visits paper-mills, factories for the processing of paper pulp, workshops for the manufacturing of tools and motorized machines for paper-making and participates also to technical conventions.

As soon as he was back in Turkey, he reverted with still more energy and authority to his struggle for the introduction of a paper industry within the Five Year Plan 1933—1938. His efforts were successful and nobody would dare to contest that the Turkish Paper Industry has been entirely his doing.

In charge of the studies concerning the creation of a large paper mill in Izmit, he determined its size, as well as the structures which were to be implemented by graduate steps. So as to meet the more urgent

(2) Department reserved to the candidates for the degree in Engineering.
needs, he limited the equipment of «Paper-Mill I» to one workshop for the production of mechanical paper pulp which was to supply two modern paper machines, one for the production of newspaper, stationery and print paper, the other for the production of wrapping-paper and cardboard.

But let us not encroach further into the subject of Mr. Mehmet Ali Kâğıtçı's text; may he recall this glorious step himself, and tell us also how the present Paper complex of İzmit has been achieved.

Who has not had some drawbacks in the course of his career? Mr. Mehmet Ali Kâğıtçı was dismissed from the direction of his İzmit Factory by cabals and political intrigues following the legislative elections which took place after Atatürk's death.

We here take the opportunity to deplore once more the complacent ingratitude which is nearly always the lot of sincere realizers of great schemes.

The official homage rendered on September 9th and 10th 1970 by the Turkish Government to Mr. Kâğıtçı as «Promoter and Realizer» of the Modern Paper Industry has very happily erased our regrets (3).

As he was still allowed by the Government to act as a scientific and technical advisor to the Paper Industries, Mr. Kâğıtçı was able to participate and supervise, the expansion of the plants, in compliance to his own original plan, so as to turn İzmit into a modern complex. This complex is equipped with 10 paper machines yielding 150,000 tons of paper and cardboard per year and enjoys wide autonomy for the procurement of its fibrous raw materials; it owns workshops for crude and bleached bisulfite pulp, cellulose of bleached straw, straw pulp with lime and for the processing of old paper, while its equipment for the production of mechanical pulp is being developed.

Furthermore, Mr. Kâğıtçı carried his activity over to the Industry of ceramics by creating and directing the Research Laboratory of Kütahya (1941). His wide knowledge pointed him out to be elected in 1942 Director of the Municipal Laboratory of Istanbul. His studies led him also into the field of the Industry for Grease. Finally he was elected Director of the Institute for Hygiene of Istanbul and Professor of the Paper Science of the Technical University of Istanbul.

Thus for everybody he remains the «Kâğıtçı», the Paper-maker as he used to be during the heroic times of his struggle.

It is not our purpose to analyse Mr. Kâğıtçı's publication. The latter is the result of long-lasting and professional inquiries on the spot, of careful study of documents and archives, often difficult to unearth. The author has illustrated his text with photographs, charts, precise readings of filigree etc. Last but not least, in the final and very interesting chapter, he takes us back into a very ancient past, as he relates how old Nicomedia was, discovered while the earthworks for the İzmit Factory took place. Part of the wonderful archaeological findings are now in a