

Time Travel to 1902 at Parma House, Istanbul

A great day at Parma House,

Atelier Paul Parma 1er Tailleur de S.M.I le Sultan, Constantinople

With the patronage of the Italian Embassy in Ankara, Turkey

With the collaboration of the Italian Koleji in Istanbul



Grande Rue de Péra, Constantinople (coll.FortunatoMaresia)

Time Travel

Begun at the Kalmar Läns Museum in southeast Sweden, Time Travel now has members in twenty-two countries and has an international organization, called Bridging Ages, which supports this method of history engagement. Based on the concept of Historic Environment Education, Time Travel uses local historical resources as the foundation for an engaging hands-on experience in re-living the past. Schools, museums, and other heritage organizations assist teachers and students in researching a particular period in the past, developing characters to portray and scenarios to act out, and creating activities to do with visitors. (Dr. Jon Hunner)

<http://www.bridgingages.com>

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The project

Stories of the past are a common heritage for the present inhabitants of Istanbul. The Ottoman Empire was characterized by the presence and the co-habitation on its territories of numerous communities from different nationalities and different religions. As the result, a multi-cultural society grew up in the capital of the empire. In order to realize the time travel, our research activity focuses on the history of Paul Parma, the tailor of sultan *Abdulhamid II* (1876-1909).

The facts

The Ottoman Empire expanded vastly during the XV century and had a long period of prosperity. The Ottoman sultans always encouraged tradesmen from foreign countries to develop commercial exchanges within their empire and therefore they favoured the presence of large communities of merchants in Istanbul.

The name *Beyoğlu* is connected with the Venetian community In Istanbul. The residence of the Venetian ambassador was located in Pera, the Venetian quarter in Istanbul, called *Beyoğlu* in memory of Alvisе Gritti, the son of the ambassador Andrea Gritti, who lived there. Andrea Gritti then became the Doge of Venice in 1523. The Genoese community was settled also in the area of Galata/Pera and the Genoese merchants developed a large activity of trade in the capital and in the Ottoman territories.

The early XIX century represented the beginning of a threatening period for the empire: wars, revolts in some provinces for the conquest of Independence, a serious economic crisis...and consequently, the empire lost many of its territories. So in order to relieve the empire from its weakness, sultan *Mahmud II* (1808-1839) and sultan *Abdülmeçid* (1839-1861) re-organized the empire and modernized the economic and social life. In the period of the *Tanzimat* (Reforms) (1839-1876) numerous economic, commercial and legal privileges were given to foreigners (coming from Italy, France, Austria, Germany, England, Russia), in particular: the right to own real estate (18 June 1867) and to obtain easily naturalization (9 August 1863). During this period of national riots in most European countries, many people in search of peace and prosperity settled in the Ottoman Empire.

At the end of the XIX century, big Latin and Levantine communities lived in Istanbul. Each community had its own banks, schools, theatres, churches, hospitals. In Pera, there was also a market held by Turkish, Greek, Armenian and Jewish merchants. *Beyoğlu* was transformed in a little European capital and became famous for its lively *Grande Rue de Péra* where luxury stores sold European goods for the élite of Istanbul.

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Paolo Parma (coll.Mario Parma)

Scenario

Paul Parma was a *tailleur* (tailor of the court) of sultan *Abdulhamid II* (1876-1909). The Parma family, of Genoese origin, belonged to the Levantine community and lived in the area of Galata at *Beyoğlu*. Around 1890 this Italian family was numerous and its activities were varied. The most important consisted in the trade of products arriving from abroad, in particular in the field of food. Paul Parma was mainly a trader in materials of quality coming from various foreign countries, then he assumed the conduction of the *atelier* of Lena and Parma, both Italian, bringing in new technologies and opening its products to Ottoman and foreign aristocracy.

December 6, 1902: today, Paul Parma receives an Ottoman rosette from the sultan. It is a great honour for the Parma family. Before the departure of Paul Parma to *Yildiz* Palace, the employees are quickly completing the gifts for the sultan and his family: *fez* for his sons and precious embroideries for his daughters. All friends and neighbors are gathered at Parma House to congratulate Paul Parma and his family for the award of the Ottoman decoration which made him Grand Officer of the Order of *Osmanié*.

Roles

Three groups: men of Parma Family and women of Parma family, workers (female and men) and servants, some important guests of Parma family: personalities of Istanbul belonging to the Ottoman and foreign society: pashas, diplomats, bankers, doctors, tradesmen, photographers, journalists...

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Activities

Drawing, sewing, washing the fabric that will be used by the tailor, also coming in and out delivering items for the workers and the household.

Preparation for the reception at Parma House, discussions.

Men: discussions regarding the construction of the Hedjaz Railway (*Hicaz Demiryolu*) and the Congress of Young Turks just held in Paris; or the opening of the Istanbul's University; or some news from Italy.

Women: discussions and preparation for the next charity ball at the Italian embassy that will be given by the ambassador and his wife. Since Parma's uncle, Cesar Lundgreen took part in the edification of a modern department to cure mental patients at the hospital "La Paix"(1858) , women of Parma family are very active to develop the services in order to help the French Sisters in the reconstruction of their new hospital.

Key questions

1. The history of the Western quarter called *Beyoğlu*, in spite of all social and economic changes, continues to fascinate the young generations. The history of *Beyoğlu* along the centuries reflects the image of the big city which is inconstant evolution...
2. Education: opening of numerous schools and universities during this period; the role also played by the presence of many foreign schools in Istanbul...
3. Scientific progress, modern technologies... innovations which changed the daily life: trains, photographs, hospitals and medicines....

Work Plan

18 November 2014

- 10 AM: A presentation of the time travel method at the Italian Koleji by Cécile Franchetti, Alessandro Bertoni e Giordana Trovabene.

In a time travel everybody is active and participates in the activities and the talks. The *scenario* or script, the roles and the key questions will be proposed by the association Bridging Ages and will be given to the participants on the same day of the time travel. The choice of costumes will be done according to the roles foreseen by the scenario. In a time travel, there is always a dialogue in order to discuss the different aspects of what is going on and to provide a deeper understanding of the cultural heritage and society.

- 15 PM: A presentation of Paul Parma and his family by Mario Parma at Parma House (Armada Pera Hotel)

19 November 2014

9.30 AM: Palazzo di Venezia, Residence of the Italian ambassador in Istanbul

the time travel will be set in December 1902 at Parma House, *atelier* Paul Parma-Tailor of sultan *Abdulhamid II*.

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Organizing Committee

With the support of the Turkish Consulate in Venice

The family Parma: Catherina Lundgreen married to Vincenzo Parma & Margaret, Antonio, and Mario Parma

Cécile Franchetti - coordinator Bridging Ages - Venice

Prof. Fortunato Maresia -Lycée St Benoit, Istanbul

Dr. Barbara Scarante

Zeynep Sicimoglu

Mira Zoto - Armada Pera Hotel, Istanbul

Scientific Committee

Dr. Cécile Franchetti (Bridging Ages - Venice, curator and project coordinator Time Travel)

Dr. Alessandro Bertoni (former director of the University Library System, University Ca 'Foscari, Venice)

Prof. Fortunato Maresia (Lycée Saint Benoit, Istanbul)

Prof. Dr. Emre Oktem (Hulkuk Falkutesi, Galatasaray University, Istanbul)

Prof. Maria Pia Pedani (Department of Studies on Africa and the Mediterranean, University Ca 'Foscari, Venice)

Dr. Barbara Scarante

Dr. Hulya Tezcan (Topkapi Palace Museum, Istanbul)

Prof. Giordana Trovabene (Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage, University Ca 'Foscari, Venice)

Prof.ssa Maria Vasapollo, coordinatrice Italian Koleji, Istanbul

Dr. Marino Zorzi (former director of the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice)

Bridging Ages Venice

In the realization of a time travel are involved schools and students, museums and teachers and all who wish to participate. Since 2007, a great interest in the utilization of local heritage through living history and time travels has developed in Venice. The relevant cultural institutions of the city such as the Venetian State Archives, the Arsenal, the Marciana Library, the Venetian Civic Museums Foundation and the University Ca' Foscari worked in collaboration with some Italian schools from Venice, from Otranto (October 2012) and from Istanbul (October 2013), involved with the Bridging Ages projects.

Both Venice and Istanbul have been for a very long time exposed to other cultures thanks to their tradition of overseas trade and to the presence of people from many countries. Their mutual influences have enriched both cities. The time travel method has been applied with success to several educative initiatives relative to the history of Venetian diplomacy and its relationship with the Ottoman world in order to re-enact important diplomatic events in Venice and in Istanbul. All these activities have the aim to stimulate the discovery of each other's culture and to encourage dialogue in our society.

June 2007- Civic Museums of Venice, Doge's Palace: signing of the peace treaty between the Republic of Venice and the Ottoman Empire, June 1454.

September 2011- University of Venice, Ca'Foscari Venezia - Venetionight la note europea dei ricercatori: the peace treaty between the Republic of Venice and the Ottoman Empire, June 1454.

October 2013- Italian Embassy in Istanbul, Palazzo di Venezia: Time Travel to 1682 at the Venetian embassy.

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