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AICA COLLECTA

Berichte und Vorträge der
XVII. Permanent International Altaistic Conference
3. - 8. Juni 1974 in Bonn/Bad Honnef

Herausgegeben von
Walther Heissig, Bonn

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Tek-Esin Vakfi

EMEL ESİN

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OTTO HARRASSOWITZ · WIESBADEN

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Dr. Emel Esin
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Esin, Emel (Istanbul)

In the last two decades, a growing interest, not only in Turcology which is natural enough, but also in comparative Altaic studies, is manifest in Turkey. As a sign of this awareness, in 1973 on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Turkish Republic, together with the First International Congress of Turcology, the XVIth Permanent International Altaistic Conference was also invited to hold their meeting in Turkey.

In the field of the history of art, and of culture, in the last two decades, some of the contributions to comparative Altaic studies may be, more or less chronologically summarized as follows. Particular attention was drawn to Central Asian art of the last Uyghur, Qara-Khitay, Mongol and Timurid periods of Central Asia in a series of articles by the late Prof. Z.V.TOGAN, on the paintings of unknown origin in the miscellany albums of Istanbul. Such articles as "Topkapı Sarayında Dört Cönk" (Four miscellany albums from Topkapı, Islam Tedkikleri Enstitüsü Dergisi, vol.I, Istanbul 1954), "Londra ve Teheran kütübhanelerinde bazı İslâmî yazmalar" (Some Islamic manuscripts in London and Teheran libraries, Islam Tedkikleri Enstitüsü Dergisi, vol.II/3-4, Istanbul 1960) and The miniatures in Istanbul libraries (Istanbul 1963) raised immense interest amongst historians of Islamic and Turkish painting who until then had concentrated their attention more to links with Near-Eastern art. The major interest of Professor TOGAN's work was that this historian searched the sources for data on artists and was able to identify some of the unknown painters mentioned in the miscellany albums, as Uyghur. Following Prof.TOGAN's lead, I tried the method of stylistic comparison between the works of those painters identified as Uyghur by Prof.TOGAN and the paintings found in Turfan. This research was attempted in three consecutive articles: a communication to the XIth meeting of PIAC entitled "The Turkish bağşi and Muhammed Siyâh Qalam" (Acta Orientalia XXXII, Copenhagen 1970); another communication published in the Acts of the Sixth Congress of Iranian art (Teheran 1972) entitled "Four Turkish bağşi active in Iranian lands" and an article in the issue of Islam Tedkikleri Enstitüsü Dergisi

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(vol.V/1-4, Istanbul 1973) dedicated to Prof.TOGAN's memory, on an illustrated genealogical book of the late Çağatay period in Easter Türkistan ("Son Çağatay devrinde Doğu Türkistanda bir han silsilenâmesi"). However, although the Turkish contribution to the works in the miscellany albums is attested by numerous Uyghur inscriptions, a further impression that the miscellany albums contained not only Uyghur, but also other Altaic people's works, was supported by the opinion of Prof.BRENTJES. I now hope to attempt, on the occasion of my contribution to the collective work to be published on the Central Asian art of the book in the XIII - XIVth centuries (under the auspices of UNESCO), a comparison not only between non-Islamic and Islamic Uyghur works but also between the paintings in the miscellany albums which seem stylistically akin to them. Professor M. İPŞİROĞLU, in Malerei der Mongolen (München 1963) has already pointed to such possibilities, in the case of Mongol influences.

In the general field of Turkish art, it may be said that since in 1959 the First International Congress of Turkish art was convened to Ankara and in subsequent meetings which took place in Venice, Cambridge, Aix-en-Provence, the published acts showed a mounting interest in the Altaic links of the Turks. The deliberations of the XVIth PIAC in Ankara were therefore followed with deep interest by historians of Turkish art who had the occasion to attend.

A special mention is due to Prof.B.ÖGEL's work, starting with İslâm-iyetten önceki Türk kültür târihi (History of Turkish culture before Islam, Ankara 1962), continuing with Sino-Turcica (Taipei 1964) and Türk mitolojisi (Turkish mythology, Ankara 1972). These and other works of Prof.ÖGEL are major reference books for students of Turkish culture and art within an Altaic context, in Turkey.

Prof.N.DIYARBEKİRLİ has published a book entitled Hun sanatı (Hunnic art, Istanbul 1971) in which he supports the opinions attributing not only sites like Noin-ula, but more Western ones such as Pazırık to the forerunners of the Turks. Prof.DIYARBEKİRLİ also went to Kazakistan to try to ascertain a possible Turkish identification of the art works in the tomb of Esik, dated in the Vth -IVth century B.C. in which was found an inscription which some see as an archaic form of the Turkish runes. Prof.DIYARBEKİRLİ expounded his stylistic conclusions on Esik at the XVIth PIAC.

The Türk kültürünü araştırma enstitüsü (The institute of research of Turkish

culture) are about to publish a collective work entitled Türk dünyası el-kitabı (Handbook of the Turkish world) and a historical atlas in which the Inner-Asian links of the Turks appear in many aspects.

In what concerns my personal efforts, as I "confess" each year at the PIAC meetings, I will only mention here, apart what has been already named, only the most recent publications and those which as yet are unborn. I have contributed to the collective work entitled Türk dünyası e-kitabı published by the Türk kültürünü araştırma enstitüsü a chapter on the religious culture of the Turks, that is on the religion of heaven and earth and the cult of ancestors, Buddhism, Manicheism, Christianity and Judaism and the first phase of the acceptance of Islam. To the historical atlas, equally published by the Türk kültürünü araştırma enstitüsü, I contributed with four maps showing archaeological sites connected with Turks and other Altaic peoples of Inner-Asia between the first millenary B.C. and the XIIIth century A.C. To a work, translated into several languages, entitled Liber Librorum, published on the occasion of the "Year of the book" commemorated by UNESCO in 1972, I contributed the chapter called "Central Asia". It referred to the art of the book in Central Asia, in Iranian, Tokharian, Tibetan, Nepalese, Turkish, Si-Hia, Mongolian, Manchu manuscripts. In these articles which involved comparative studies, my main sources of reference were naturally the works of the members of PIAC some of whom I consulted repeatedly. I hereby reiterate my gratitude to them.

I also venture to beg the contribution of the PIAC members for a collective work which I try to continue to edit, on subjects connected with pre-Islamic Turkish and related Altaic people's art. It will be remembered that a Committee for the preparation of a Handbook of Turkish culture had been founded, on Prof. TOGAN's motion, at the XXVIth Congress of Orientalists. After Prof. TOGAN's decease in 1970, Prof. H. İNALCIK was elected chairman of the Committee at the XXVIIIth Congress of Orientalists. I continued my work as secretary of the Committee and editor of the section of pre-Islamic art. Volume II/1a of the Handbook of Turkish culture, composed of thirteen articles, in English, French and Turkish, written by an international board of contributors was published in 1972 by the Turkish Ministry of National Education (Türk kültürü el-kitabı, İslâmî-yetten önceki Türk sanat târihi, Millî Eğitim Basımevi, İstanbul 1972). I had written a supplement in English to volume II/1a of the Handbook of Turkish culture already in 1967, under the title Antecedents and development of Turkish

Buddhist and Manichean art in Eastern Turkistan and Kansu. Now a further collective volume in the same series is planned, thanks to the contributions and promises of contributions of several PIAC members. It is for this volume that I beg to request the articles of the PIAC members, on pre-Islamic Turkish material culture and art, or on related Altaic subjects.

Finally allow me to mention that some articles of mine on Inner-Asian Turkish art and culture are presently in print, in Turkish or foreign periodicals and acts of congresses, as well as in the Turkish Encyclopaedia, the Turkish edition of the Encyclopaedia of Islam and foreign encyclopaedic works. My communication to the symposium on Fârâbî held at the Turkish National Library in October 1973 which had attempted a research on the culture and art of the Sirdarya area in the VIIIth-Xth centuries will appear in the next issue of the İslam Tedkikleri Enstitüsü Dergisi. The Institute of the history of art at the University of Ankara also intends to publish, possibly together with an English translation, the text and illustrations of a series of lectures which I delivered at that Institute on the subject of the history of the culture and art of Turks from the beginning of the XIIIth century.

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