

- 16.00 Uhr Mitgliederversammlung des Verbandes Deutscher Kunsthistoriker  
e. V.
- 19.00 Uhr Öffentlicher Vortrag  
NN.
- 21.00 Uhr Empfang der Stadt Stuttgart in der Kunsthalle

*Samstag, den 29. September*

Exkursionen (ganztäglich)

A) Obermarchtal — Zwiefalten — Steinhausen — Schussenried — Weingarten —  
Bad Wurzach — Ottobeuren — Wiblingen

B) Esslingen — Reutlingen — Bebenhausen — Herrenberg — Sindelfingen — Tie-  
fenbronn — Maulbronn

C) Faurndau — Göppingen — Lorch — Schwäb. Gmünd — Murrhardt — Schwäb.  
Hall — Comburg

Exkursionen (halbtäglich)

D) Ludwigsburg — Marbach

E) Stuttgarter Architektur im 20. Jahrhundert

F) Tübingen

## Ausstellungen

### THE ANATOLIAN CIVILIZATIONS

Festival of exhibitions in Istanbul,

May 22—October 30, 1983

Between April and October 1983, the city of Istanbul was covered with posters and flags proclaiming a series of exhibitions dedicated to *Anatolian Civilizations* and under the auspices of the Council of Europe. Two formal exhibitions, based primarily on Istanbul collections but including as well loans from provincial museums and a few major European collections, were essentially historical surveys of the many civilizations which, over several millenia, appeared in Anatolia. Then ten exhibitions were called didactic; they consisted exclusively of objects from Istanbul museums and dealt with more specific themes like writing, jewelery, coins, carpets, tents, and so forth; quite naturally, greater emphasis was given in didactic exhibitions to Ottoman artifacts and some of these may become part of the continuing presentation of Turkish treasures. The quality of the displays was throughout remarkably high and the transformation of Ste. Irene for Ancient, Classical, and Byzantine arts was truly stunning. Such criticisms as can be formulated (overcrowding in the Script and Calligraphy exhibition or insufficient information in the one dealing with tents) are easily explained and forgiven by the magnitude of the effort which was undertaken and perhaps by wrong judgments

about the respective popularity of individual shows. The main loan exhibitions were provided with adequate catalogues in Turkish and English and short check-lists were put together for some of the didactic shows, although not for two of the most successful ones, the script and tent ones. All in all, what emerges is that Istanbul is one of the major "art cities" of this world and the area which goes from the edge of the Golden Horn or the Sirkeci railroad station to the mosque of the Sultan Ahmet (the so-called Blue Mosque) is one of the most spectacular artistic centers in the world, with architectural masterpieces next to museums full of treasures, including the beautifully refurbished palace of Ibrahim Pasha transformed into a museum of Islamic art. For all of this all students of art must be grateful and one can only imagine the practical, bureaucratic, and institutional hurdles which had to be resolved in order to reach these results. To identify any one individual as primarily responsible for success would not be fair to many others and I prefer, therefore, to express my gratitude to a whole system.

It would take volumes to review all these exhibitions and I shall concentrate my remarks on the two so-called formal exhibitions destined to show the sequences of cultures which had found a place or a haven on the territory of contemporary Turkey and primarily in the Anatolian peninsula. And, once again, I do not wish to quibble about the presence or absence of a specific object (for instance some sculptures from the Archaeological Museum are more spectacular than the ones which were moved) or of a given sub-culture, the most obvious one being Armenian. Even if contemporary political or ideological rather than practical reasons led to some omissions, no exhibition of this ambitious magnitude could have avoided omissions of some sort or other and it serves little purpose to seek the motivation for such omissions nor to criticize the organizers for them. I will dwell instead on three impressions given by these exhibitions which lead to a number of issues of some importance, or so it seems to me, to the art historian as well as to questions about the value of exhibitions of this sort.

First, the vast majority of the objects shown belong to what may be roughly called the archaeological realm. Many of them were actually retrieved during controlled, accidental, or clandestine excavations, but this is not the main point. It is rather that they express functions before becoming, if they ever do, works of art. This impression is inescapable in nearly all the exhibits dealing with pre-Hellenistic times, where sequences of pottery or of artifacts illustrate the material culture of Anatolia and such variations or evolutions as do occur are difficult to perceive, because the emphasis in each instance is on the closed entity of a specific time and place. But, in many ways and with notable exceptions to which I shall return, the same impression is given by the Ottoman section of the exhibition. There too, the visitor is drawn to imagine himself at the Ottoman court, wearing the clothes which are shown, using the bowls and ewers, reading the Koran, just as he can imagine what living was like in a Catal Huyuk house four thousand years earlier. Even the spectacular series of Late Antique portraits or the beautiful liturgical silver objects from early Byzantine times appear primarily as actors, as

functions, in a variety of private or ceremonial settings. It is curious, for instance, that, from prehistoric times to the Seljuqs (the point would also be true for the Ottoman, but was not made in the exhibition), the monuments for the dead are so frequently the ones which provide us with the artifacts which are put in museums and then considered to be art (the point is striking with the first series of monumental sculptures in Anatolia, all of which come from graves). The study and understanding of the ways of death is an essential aspect of archaeological and anthropological investigations, but they are different exercises from those of the historian of forms. A more amusing example of this issue occurs in the curious fact that nearly one fifth of the objects shown deal with eating, drinking, and carrying light. To consider these plates, cups, beakers, or lamps as works of art before knowing what was eaten or drunk from them is to transfer them artificially to a level to which they did not belong, unless proved otherwise, as can be done with a few ceremonial objects of Ottoman times. Yet, except for pre-classical centuries, the modalities of exhibiting compel the excerpting of the object from its context.

Why is this impression given of a mismatch between the excellent exhibition techniques and so many of the objects in them? One is that the post-Renaissance western (and possibly Chinese) idea of an "art" exhibit and of an "art" museum has so overwhelmed every one country that, in the absence of exact parallels to Western art, every artifact is transformed into a work of art and thereby its real significance is betrayed. I shall return presently to another aspect of this problem which has plagued so many exhibitions of medieval art, but a second reason for the mismatch lies in the greater security archaeological approaches have given to most scholars in the non-western world, because they deal with far more precise and nationally meaningful realities than the vanities of aesthetic judgment.

A second broad impression derived from the exhibits is closely tied to the first one, but has slightly different implications. It is the absence of masterpieces, that is to say of unique works striking either for their aesthetic merits or for their historical importance. There are, of course, superb portraits from Side or Aphrodisias, the Kumluca treasure (with its somber smuggling story) is stunning, and the monumental *tughra* of Sulayman the Magnificent is strikingly powerful. But, on the whole, such examples are few and what predominates is a series of settings. It is easy to deal with these settings in Hellenistic and Roman times, as our general art historical culture has taught us how to evaluate the portrayal of a person, the folds of drapery, or the waving of forelocks; we sense easily the wealth of Anatolian provinces during the first centuries of our era, while terracotta or bronze figurines show the presence everywhere of a high "Hellenistic" vocabulary of forms just as many local centers maintained, for important purposes like a votive one in a striking example from Lycia (B 354), their own old ways of representation. In short, the Anatolian examples can serve to give an excellent lesson on Late Antique representations, possibly a uniquely rich one, although I suspect that Gaul, Iberia, Egypt, or Syria would provide a similar one.

Where matters became more complicated is that one does not penetrate with the same ease into the Ottoman part of the exhibition, even though there is a *prima facie* assumption, a correct one I suppose, that the choice made was of the best works of Ottoman art. To use there the traditional methodology of the art historian with its system of attributions, of formal analyses, and (after all it is an art contemporaneous with the Renaissance and the Baroque) of hierarchies of genres, subjects, and quality turns out to be useless or falsely pedantic. How does one deal with textiles, ceramics, and calligraphy when one's terminology is based on Raphael and Bernini? One answer is that one does not and therefore one concludes that, except in architecture, the Ottoman world did not develop whatever it is that the west calls art. Another answer could be that the culture itself possessed the means to deal with these objects and that their meaning will come out of social, intellectual, or other features of Ottoman civilization, not out of being compared to Western art. A specific task, indeed a challenge, is given to scholarship, for which scholars are hardly prepared.

This point leads me to my third and last impression. It is not easy after seeing the exhibitions or studying their catalogues, to identify a vertical Anatolian culture, that is some characteristics which would, even if arbitrarily as in so many nationalisms, seem to be legitimate in defining Anatolia through the ages. In part, the presentation of the art and culture of a land in a manner which mirrors the national centrism of so much of western culture serves to demonstrate the intellectual poverty, if not moral impropriety, of giving national and even regional labels to artistic traditions, except in clear instances of purposeful national artistic movement (as exist in the contemporary world) or of traditions, like the Chinese or Inca, with limited external contacts. What emerges from a land as rich in history as Anatolia is not a national or an ethnic artistic unity, but the demonstration of much more interesting and much more important ways of grouping the arts. There are provincial arts which reflected other centers. There are imported arts and the organizers of the exhibitions did not sufficiently show that the immense collections of Persian, Arab, and Western things in Istanbul *are* part of Anatolian civilizations, just as many of the treasures in San Marco belong to the Byzantine moment of Turkey's history. There are imperial arts, as the Ottoman or the Byzantine. There are arts for trade and arts for local consumption. There are alternations in the importance of regions, as with the contrast between the times when the plateau was predominant (Hittites, Seljuqs), or the Aegean coast (Hellenistic, Late Antique), or else the straights (Byzantium, Ottoman). What are the internal rhythms of Anatolian history and art? What are the ecological and human reasons for their rhythms? What are the external forces which affected Anatolia? These are some of the questions which come to mind as one sees this exhilarating collection of objects so lovingly installed.

Such questions occur after most exhibitions and lead me to two concluding remarks. One is that an ideal exhibition should always be *preceded* as well as followed by learned and thoughtful colloquia, for it sometimes becomes depressing

to know that enormous funds and energies were spent to raise questions which cannot be answered because the catalogues are written and there is no money for follow-ups. The second remark is that one must beware of national exhibits unless they succeed in bringing up issues extending much beyond themselves. It is to the credit of the teams which organized the Istanbul shows that they avoided (with only a few exceptions in the Byzantine section of the catalogue) false issues of national vanity. Istanbul and Anatolia are museums of the world and this vision comes out clearly enough. I only regret that some of the broader issues only fleetingly mentioned in this review were not made part and parcel of the exhibition itself. A festival to the eye could have been a festival to the mind.

Oleg Grabar

## DIE TÜRKEN VOR WIEN — Europa und die Entscheidung an der Donau 1683

Ausstellung im Künstlerhaus und im Historischen Museum der Stadt Wien  
5. Mai—30. Oktober 1983

Knapp vier Jahre nach seiner Ausstellung über die erste Türkenbelagerung 1529 veranstaltet das Historische Museum der Stadt Wien in Erinnerung an die zweite Belagerung vor 300 Jahren als 82. Sonderausstellung eine große Jubiläumsschau „Die Türken vor Wien — Europa und die Entscheidung an der Donau 1683“. Dabei kann es sich auf seine „besondere Beziehung zu diesem Thema“ berufen: Verdankt doch das Museum seine Entstehung gerade jener Gedächtnisausstellung, mit der 1883 „zur Erhöhung der zweiten Säcularfeier der Befreiung Wiens von der Türkenmacht“ das neuerbaute Rathaus an der Ringstraße eröffnet wurde. Viele der damals ausgestellten 1300 Objekte bildeten den Grundstock des wenige Jahre später gegründeten Historischen Museums der Stadt Wien. Der seither wesentlich vermehrte Sammlungsbesitz ermöglichte es dem Veranstalter, ein gutes Drittel der rund 1500 Exponate seines jetzigen Unternehmens aus museumseigenen Beständen beizusteuern. Die übrigen Ausstellungsstücke stammen von 130 privaten und öffentlichen Leihgebern aus über einem Dutzend europäischer Länder. Die im Künstlerhaus und zu einem kleineren Teil im Historischen Museum selbst präsentierte Ausstellung ist die „zentrale Veranstaltung des Türkenjahres 1983“, dessen offizielles Programm noch zwölf(!) weitere Türkenausstellungen in Wien und Umgebung offeriert. Insoweit setzt das „Türkenjahr“ den seit Jahren anhaltenden Trend zur Veranstaltung opulenter historischer Jubiläumsausstellungen fort, die seitens der Öffentlichkeit zunehmendes Interesse finden, in Fachkreisen jedoch eine lebhaftige Diskussion ausgelöst haben.

Nachdem bisher ganzer Herrscherdynastien gedacht und berühmten Gestalten der Geschichte Reverenz erwiesen wurde, ist die Wiener Türkenausstellung einem einzelnen historischen Ereignis gewidmet, freilich einem von allgemeiner Bekanntheit und gesamteuropäischer Bedeutung. Diesem Faktum sucht sie — wie schon der Untertitel der Ausstellung erwarten läßt — in ihrer wissenschaftlichen Konzeption