



# NEWSLETTER



O.I.C. RESEARCH CENTRE FOR ISLAMIC HISTORY, ART AND CULTURE

NOVEMBER 1982

No: 2

## EDITORIAL

Dear Reader!

This is the second issue of the Newsletter and appears immediately after two important events in the short history of IRCICA. The first is the 13th Islamic Foreign Ministers Conference (ICFM) which was held in Niamey, the capital of Niger, between 20-27 August 1982. The Conference was a success from all aspects. It also endorsed the work programme of IRCICA for 1982/83 and approved its budget. A three member delegation headed by the Director General participated in this Conference. We are carrying a brief report on the Conference and also publishing texts of the resolutions pertaining to IRCICA and the International Commission for the Islamic Heritage.

The Official inauguration of the Centre was the second important event of the year and took place on 23rd May 1982. H.E. Habib Chatti, Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, officially inaugurated the Centre. In addition to H.E. Turgut Özal, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State of Turkey, many distinguished personalities of the Islamic world participated in this occasion. A report on the inauguration ceremony is given on the following pages. We published an obituary on the sad death of Mr. Hamid Aytac, the famous calligrapher, in our previous issue. In this issue we are pleased to publish an article on his life and works. We are

hopeful that the article will be of great interest to the lovers of the art of calligraphy.

The Centre published a few books on the eve of the 13th ICFM. These books touch on important points in their respective fields. A brief introduction about these new publications and their contents is being given under the caption "Projects and Publications". The listed publications are priced and can be obtained by writing to the Publication Department of IRCICA.

We are thankful to our readers for sending us their comments about the inaugural issue of the Newsletter, which we are publishing under the heading "Comments from our Readers". Although we are grateful for their interest shown in our Newsletter, we hope that in future they will also let us know their criticisms aimed at helping us in improving the form and contents of the Newsletter. We will also welcome any news or short articles pertaining to Islamic culture in your country.

We are also maintaining some of our permanent features such as "People and Events", "Spotlight on Cultural News", "Social and Cultural Round-up", etc., which I hope shall be read with interest.

May God guide us in the right path!

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Editor-in-Chief

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## THE FORMAL OPENING CEREMONY OF IRCICA



H.E. Habib Chatti, Secretary General of the O.I.C. announcing the formal opening of IRCICA. Standing at extreme left: H.E. Turgut Özal, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State of the Republic of Turkey.

Though the Centre has now been working for the last two and half years, its official opening however was put off many times - due to one reason or another. It finally took place on 23rd May 1982. It was the biggest event in the brief history of the Centre. H.E. Habib Chatti, Secretary General of the OIC, H.E. Turgut Özal, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State of Turkey, H.R.H. Prince Mohamad Al Faisal, Chairman of DMI (Dar al Maal Islami), H.E. Muazzam Ali, Advisor to the President of Pakistan, eminent scholars and personalities of the Islamic world and journalists from different corners of the world were present at this Inauguration Ceremony.

The ceremony started with the recitation of the Holy Quran.

H.E. Habib Chatti, Secretary General of the OIC, announced the formal opening of the Centre. He delivered his speech and thanked the Turkish Government for according him a warm welcome in Turkey. He referred to the presence of H.R.H. Prince Mohammad Al-Faisal in the distinguished gathering and paid tributes to his father, the late King Faisal of Saudi Arabia who had made strenuous efforts for the establishment of the OIC.

He praised the Turkish Government which conceived and initiated the idea of establishing such a Centre at the 7th ICFM that convened in the city of Istanbul in 1976. Regarding its important role, he said, "This institution which was realised by the OIC is one of the important institutions needed by the Islamic world in reviving the era when Islamic countries were leaders in the field of sciences; for spreading cultural development and for broadening the participation of Islamic countries in establishing contemporary world culture."

He underlined the importance of Istanbul as an old centre of Islamic heritage and the role played by the great Turkish nation in carrying forward the eternal message of Islam and said, "The Turkish Government and its people are familiar with cultural patronage in this city of Istanbul which abounds in important scientific centres, universities and various other institutions of learning".

H.E. Turgut Özal, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State of Turkey, who represented the Turkish Government, underlined "increasing sense of solidarity in the Islamic World and the establishment of an organisation to give this

awareness of solidarity a practical shape." He recounted the steps taken by the Turkish Government in providing a place for the Centre and granting it its legal form and diplomatic status. He also mentioned the kind act of H.E. Bülend Ulusu, Prime Minister of Turkey, in offering "Çit Qasr" another more spacious building in the Yıldız Palace to overcome the Centre's problem of space. He went on to say "our Government has always been helpful to the Centre and given importance to its goals. This interest will hopefully grow in future and it is our hope that the member states of OIC will also show a similar degree of interest towards the support of this Centre and its activities."

Underlining the important role which culture can play in the solidarity of the muslim countries, he remarked, "The Islamic world is in dire need of solidarity and this can be achieved by culture which is the basic element in the formation of a society. To realise the ideal of the solidarity of the Muslim Ummah, we have to obtain the goal of cultural solidarity..... We must also remember that we are confronted with many complex problems each claiming a priority but the culture should merit our utmost attention. It is hoped that to obtain the much desired future, this Centre is going to play a pivotal role."

Lastly Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, Director General of the Centre said, "On this auspicious day, we are much honoured with the presence of this distinguished assembly in this historical city

which abounds in cultural heritage, on the occasion of the inauguration of our Centre, whose main objective is to uncover the true facts of our history and cultural heritage.... Today I have the opportunity to present our thanks in sincere appreciation to the Turkish Government, the member countries of the OIC and especially to the Secretary General of the OIC for their continuous support. I would also like to mention with gratitude the aid given by the Islamic Solidarity Fund during the establishment of this Centre." He continued, "It is our duty to give our thanks to institutions in member countries and in Istanbul, where the Centre is located, for understanding the scientific objectives of our Centre and for their constructive cooperation." At the end of his welcoming speech, he gave a brief summary of the projects undertaken so far despite the financial constraints in doing the ground work related to the establishment of the Centre.

At the end of the formal speeches, the guests were given refreshments in the palace gardens and this provided another opportunity for the guests to exchange views and have informal chats. The guests also visited the library, research units and the administrative building and paid a visit to the newly granted 'Çit Qasr' which will be used as the library and research departments of the Centre after its restoration.

H.E. Habib Chatti then gave a press conference in the main hall of the Centre, whereby he answered questions pertaining to the affairs of the Islamic world.



A group of distinguished guests at the opening ceremony of IRCICA

# GLIMPSES FROM THE 13th ISLAMIC FOREIGN MINISTERS CONFERENCE NIAMEY, NIGER - 20 - 27 AUGUST 1982

The 13th ICFM was held in Niamey, the capital of Niger, between 20-27 August 1982. H.E. Col. Seyni Kountché, Chairman of the Supreme Military Council and Head of State of the Republic of Niger formally opened it on 22nd August 1982. In his welcoming speech, he expressed his profound delight over selecting Niger as a venue of the Conference and also immense pride of the people of Niger in welcoming in that "Land of Islam", worthy representatives of the World Islamic Community. He called Niger "a land of synthesis", presenting a fine blend of African Negro and Arab Berber civilisation, which from the 5th Century Hijra onwards "has been one of the privileged axis of the penetration and spreading of the revealed message."

In his speech, H.E. Habib Chatti, Secretary

General of the OIC referred to Niger as "one of the most powerful bastions of Islam and one of the main poles of radiance of Islamic culture and civilisation, the teaching of the Quran and Islamic studies." He particularly stressed "the importance of cooperation and solidarity between Islamic nations in the cultural, social and economic fields."

The OIC Assistant Secretary General for Cultural and Social Affairs and the Islamic Solidarity Fund, H.E. Bakary Drame inaugurated the first meeting of the Cultural and Social Affairs Committee on 21 August 1982 which elected H.E. Abdur Rahman Ketan, Secretary General of the Ministry of Higher Education, Niger, as the Chairman for the present session of the Conference.



H.E. Col. Seyni Kountché, Head of State of the Republic of Niger, inaugurating the 13th ICFM in Niamey. H.E. Habib Chatti, Secretary General of the O.I.C. is seated on his left.

H.E. Sheikh Ahamd Al Mubarak (Saudi Arabia), H.E. Haj Soliman Bin Haj Sherif (Malaysia) and H.E. Dr. Mahmoud Al Zubair (Republic of Mali) were unanimously approved for the offices of First Vice Chairman, Second Vice Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee respectively. The deliberations of the Committee, spread over many sessions, resulted in decisions which found expression in various draft resolutions.

The draft resolution pertaining to IRCICA (No 5/13-C) approved the work programme of the Centre for 1982/83. An appeal was made to OIC

member countries which have not yet paid their contributions to the Centre's fund, to do so without any further delay and also send generous donations for the "Çit Qasr" restoration project of the Centre. Thanks were also expressed to the Republic of Turkey for the moral and material support extended to the Centre especially for the grant of "Çit Qasr" and the diplomatic status.

The efforts of the Centre's administration aimed at realising the objectives enshrined in the establishment statute, were also highly

appreciated and applauded. Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, Director General of the IRCICA, personally briefed the Committee about the activities of the Centre and apprised its members of the ongoing research projects and about those projects which have already been completed and results published in the form of books. Many delegates took up the rostrum after him and appreciated the work of the Centre and hoped that the Centre shall give a good account of itself in times to come.

Given below is the full text of the resolution on IRCICA.

5/13-C

### **RESOLUTION ON THE RESEARCH CENTRE ON ISLAMIC HISTORY, ART AND CULTURE**

The Thirteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, meeting in Niamey, Republic of Niger, from 3 - 7 Zul Qada, 1402H 22 - 26 August, 1982).

**Recalling** resolution No. 5/12-C of the Twelfth Islamic Conference, ratifying the constitution of an administrative council for this centre,

**Having noted** the report of the Centre on the first meeting of the administrative council in Istanbul, November 10 - 12, 1981,

**Taking cognizance** of the recommendations of the Eighth Session of the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs, held in Tripoli, Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, from 16 to 19 January, 1982,

#### **DECIDES:**

1) To approve the work programme endorsed by the Administrative Council of the Research Centre on Islamic History, Art, and Culture for 1982/83,

2) to urge member states, which have not yet paid their contributions to the Centre's fund to do so at the earliest possible opportunity to enable the Centre to carry out its noble task entrusted to it,

3) To appeal to all Member States to make financial donations to the Centre's administration to enable it to carry out the necessary repairs to Çit Qasr, kindly presented to the Centre by the Turkish government,

4) to express its thanks and appreciation to the Republic of Turkey for its moral and financial support of the Centre, and for granting it diplomatic immunity and exemption from customs and other taxes. It also extends its thanks to the Republic of Turkey for assigning one of the building of Yıldız Palace to house the research and documentation sections of the Centre as well as its library,

5) to pay tribute to the Centre for all its efforts to achieve its objectives.

The resolution No 6/13/C pertains to the International Commission for the Islamic Heritage. The Commission shall have the same headquarters as the IRCICA and will work in close cooperation with it. The members of the Governing Council of IRCICA shall also be ex-officio members of the Commission. The Director General of IRCICA shall be responsible for the secretarial work of the Commission and also submit periodical reports. Below is given the full text of the resolution pertaining to the said Commission.

No. 6/13-C

### **RESOLUTION ON INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE ISLAMIC HERITAGE PRESERVATION OF ISLAMIC CULTURAL HERITAGE.**

The Thirteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, meeting in Niamey, Republic of NIGER, from 3 - 7 Zul Qada, 1402 (22 - 26 August, 1982),

**Having reviewed** Resolution 6/12-C adopted by the 12th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers on the International Commission for the Preservation of the Islamic Civilisation Heritage,

**Emphasising** the resolutions adopted by previous Islamic conferences in connection with this question,

**Taking note** of the recommendations of the Eight Islamic Committee for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs which was held in Tripoli, Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, on 16-19 January, 1982 taking note of the explanatory note submitted by the O.I.C. General Secretariat,

1. **Approves** the Statutes of the International Commission for the Preservation of Islamic cultural Heritage,

1. **Approves** the designation of the following as members in the committee:

- HRH Prince Faisal Bin Fahd, Chairman
- A scholar in Islamic cultural heritage to be nominated by the Palestine Liberation Organisation,
- Dr. Haydar Gulzar of Pakistan.
- Mr. Wisper Louis of Indonesia, and
- Mr. Abdel Hadi Boutaleb, the Director-General of the ISESCO.

3. **Requests** the General Secretariat to make preparations for the first meeting of the International Commission for the Preservation of Islamic cultural Heritage, and to present a report

on the conclusions of that meeting to the Tenth Session of the Islamic Committee for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs.

The Conference was an important social and cultural event and highlighted the strength of faith which is a unifying force of the Muslim Ummah despite a pageantry of ethnic groups, languages and dresses. This was indeed in conformity with the Quranic verse which says:

Verily, this brotherhood of yours is a single Brotherhood. And I am your Lord. And cherisher: Therefore serve me.

(S.XXI V.92)

## PROJECTS AND PUBLICATIONS



A photograph of the publications of IRCICA

The Centre announces with pleasure the publication of the following books which are the end-product of intensive research carried out by the nucleus staff and outside scholars in collaboration with the Centre for the realisation of its objectives.

### 1. An Address Book of Cultural Institutions in OIC Countries

The project was carried out and completed by the nucleus staff of the Centre. A great number of printed sources have been tapped in addition to the information collected through the despatch of the questionnaires in establishing the addresses of the listed institutions. All those institutions directly or indirectly related to the field of culture whether official, semi-official or private have been considered, and listed in the order below:

- Academies
- Societies and Research Institutes
- Libraries and Archives
- Museums
- Universities and Educational Institutions

The distribution of addresses of institutions in this work are as follows:

Libraries	545
Museums	182
Research Centres	43
Universities and institutions	414
Archives	58
	1242

819 of these addresses are in Asia and 423 are in Africa. Up to the present, the Centre has mailed 1557 questionnaires and received 419 complete replies. With the medium of this Newsletter, we kindly ask that related institutions fill in and return our questionnaires so that their establishment can be included in the next edition of the Guide Book of Cultural Institutions.

The present volume includes 1242 cultural institutions founded in the OIC member countries and observer states. It is hoped that the book will

answer a specific need of the scholars working or intending to work in the field of Art.

## **2. The Muslims Pious Foundations and Real Estates in Palestine**

This was also recently published by the Centre and is the result of two years hard work and research undertaken by Mehmed Ipşirli and Mohammad Da'oud Al-Tamimi. The book records all the Holy waqfs and properties of Muslims in various districts of Palestine such as Gazza, Quds Al-Sharif, Safed, Nablus and Ajlun deciphered from the 16th Century Ottoman Tahrir Registers. The book has been published in Arabic.

## **3. Ottoman Year-Books (Salnames and Nevsals)**

This is a bibliographic work and a Union Catalogue of the Ottoman year-books (*salnames*) that could be traced in libraries of Istanbul. The data was compiled by Mr. Hasan Duman after two years' of meticulous research. The book has been published in Turkish with the assumption that those who intend to use it possess knowledge of the language. For others too, it should not pose any great problem as the main part of this work is composed of bibliographic descriptions which do not warrant any advance knowledge of the language. State and provincial *salnames* published between 1847 to 1918 A.D. by the Ottoman State contained general and specific information about a wide geographical area presently occupied by more than 20 states, 15 of which are members of the OIC. These *salnames* are considered reference material "par excellence" pertaining to the periods of their publication. It is thus hoped that the book will be of great use to the world of learning.

## **4. Documentary Film on the Late Hamid Aytaç**

The Centre was able to complete a half-hour documentary film on the artistic life and works of this genius of the world of calligraphy during his last months. Mr. Aytaç passed away in Istanbul on 19th May 1982. The Arabic version is ready for screening and copies are available for purchasing. The English copy will shortly be released after being dubbed. Interested people are kindly requested to contact IRCICA. The Centre can rightfully take pride in introducing this master calligrapher of the Century to all art lovers especially to the lovers of the art of calligraphy.

# **ONGOING RESEARCH PROJECTS MONITOR**

## **1. A Bibliography of the Translations of the Meanings of the Holy Quran**

The first phase of this project has been completed with a collection of bibliographic information about the translations of the Holy Quran found in major libraries and museums around the world and mentioned in catalogues and other printed material.

The translations of the Holy Quran available in the Cairo National Library and Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, are also being scanned by a group of scholars. A scholar from Pakistan is doing preliminary research on Quranic translations done in Urdu and other regional languages of Pakistan. At the end, translations of the Holy Quran in manuscript form available both in libraries and museums and in private hands shall be examined for ultimate publication of a comprehensive bibliography.

## **2. A Guidebook of Islamic Cultural Institutions**

An interim address-book of cultural institutions in OIC member countries and observer states has recently been published. The work now has begun on the second phase of the project in which information will be collected regarding cultural institutions founded in such non-member countries which once witnessed the flowering of Islamic culture and civilisation such as India, Spain, the Balkan countries and the countries of Central Asia which now form part of USSR. In the third and final phase, relevant cultural institutions found in all other countries of the world shall be examined.

# ÇIT QASR' RESTORATION AND REHABILITATION PROJECT

'Çit Qasr' ("Çit" is pronounced as "Chit") is the new building in the Yıldız Palace put recently at the disposal of the Centre by the Turkish Government. 'Çit Qasr' has a historical background and was used as a library and reception hall during the reign of Sultan Abdulaziz and Sultan Abdulhamid II.

Today the building needs repairs and restoration work before it can be put to use. The project known as the "Çit Qasr Restoration Project" shall be supervised by a famous Turkish architect, Mr. Nevzat İhan, who has already completed the related technical requirements.

Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Saudi Arabian Government and the Turkish Government are among the first contributors to this restoration project.

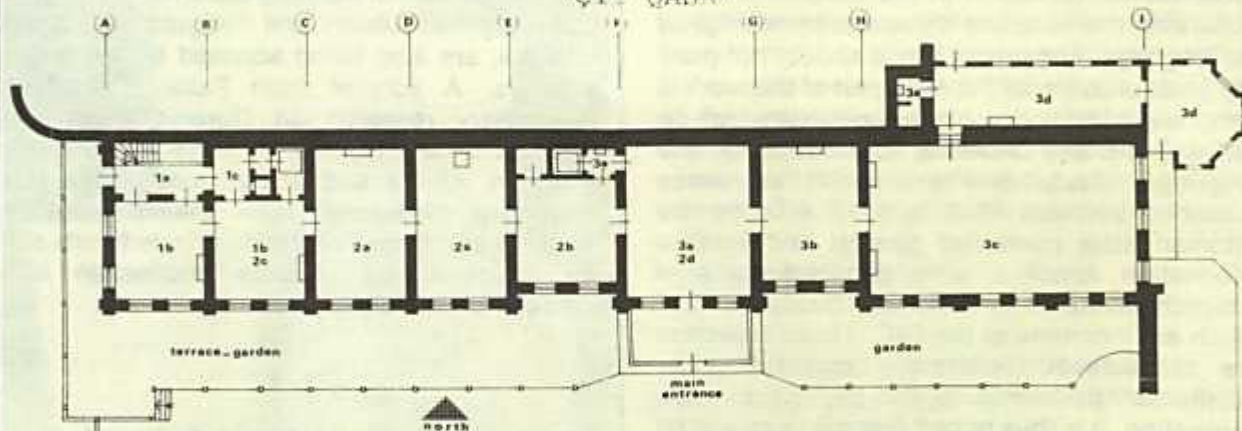
All donations shall be gratefully acknowledged and a "plaque d'honneur" carrying the names of the donors will be displayed in the main entrance and exhibition hall. (Unless someone wishes otherwise and prefers to remain anonymous).

Technical data concerning spaces and uses inside the "Çit Qasr" is being placed here in the form of map drawings for perusal of those who will be interested in such details.

H.E. Habib Chatti, Secretary General of the OIC, made the following call concerning this project:

## TECHNICAL DATA FOR SPACES AND USES

"ÇIT" QASR"



### 1. RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

- 1a. Side entrance hall
- 1b. Scholars, Consultants
- 1c. Lavatories

### 2. DOCUMENTATION & LIBRARY DEPARTMENT

- 2a. Reference library
- 2b. Documentation
- 2c. Data-bank
- 2d. Main entrance hall

### 3. CULTURAL ACTIVITIES & PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

- 3a. Main entrance & Exhibition hall
- 3b. Public Relations
- 3c. Multipurpose hall (100 persons)
- 3d. Archives & Audio-visual materials
- 3e. Lavatories

For this reason, the Centre makes an appeal to all Islamic Governments, Institutions, and individuals to send donations for the "Çit Qasr Project". The Centre opened a special account at its bank for these donations. The name of the bank and account number are as under:

Arab Turkish Bank  
Istanbul Branch  
Eimadağ, Istanbul  
**TURKEY**

Account number 0828

"... I wish to call on all the Member States and institutions to send generous donations for the restoration of Çit Qasr, which was recently allocated to the Centre by the Turkish Government. "Çit Qasr" is one of the pavilions in the beautiful historical Yıldız Palace complex."

The 13th Islamic Foreign Ministers Conference held in Niamey, Niger, on 20-27 August 1982, also agreed on Resolution No 5/13-C, Which reads, "to appeal to all member states to make financial donations to the Centre's administration to enable it to carry out the necessary repairs to "Çit Qasr", kindly presented to the Centre by the Turkish Government."

# INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON "THE COMMON PRINCIPLES, FORMS AND THEMES OF ISLAMIC ART" 18 - 22 APRIL 1983



The Centre is going ahead with its plan to hold an international symposium on the above-noted subject in Istanbul on 18-22 April 1983. Invitations have been sent out to eminent art consultants, architects and scholars in addition to Member States of the O.I.C. and cultural institutions. The response is very satisfactory as more and more affirmative replies are coming in.

The participants are expected to submit an abstract of one (1) typewritten page by 15th December 1982. Final text of the paper should reach the Centre by 1st February 1983 at the latest. The paper can be prepared in any one of the three official languages of the O.I.C., namely, Arabic, English and French, and not exceed ten (10) typewritten pages. The organising committee of the symposium is composed of the following scholars:

1. Dr. Afif Bahnassi
2. Dr. Nadjum-ud-din Bammat
3. Dr. Oktay Aslanapa
4. Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu

The Organising Committee met in Istanbul on 21-22 October 1982 to review the preparations being made in connection with the Symposium and expressed their satisfaction on the progress made. The Committee also scrutinised the titles and outlines of the papers going to be presented in the Symposium. About thirty five eminent scholars of Islamic Arts have so far confirmed their participation with a paper.

The Turkish Government have also now chalked out an elaborate programme for an exhibition on Islamic Arts decided to be held during the same week as this Symposium. The exhibition is being held in connection with the advent of 15th Century Hijra celebrations decided upon by the Organisation of the Islamic Conference.

Detailed information about this exhibition is given under "Spotlight on Cultural News".

The early responses are encouraging and augur well for the success of the seminar.

The participants of the International Symposium would be taken to Bursa and Iznik for an excursion trip. The two places have a historical past and are known for their cultural heritage.

A concert of classical Turkish music pertaining to the 14th Century and afterwards is also being envisaged in honour of the participants and delegates to the Symposium. The Concert would be conducted by Dr. Nevzat Atlığ, chief of the Istanbul State Turkish Classical Music Orchestra. Another side light of the Symposium would be an exhibition of the Calligraphic works of Mr. Hasan Çelebi, a famous Istanbul Calligrapher and student of the late Mr. Hamid Aytac, a legendary figure of the world of Calligraphy, on whose life and works a special article is being given in the present issue.

A special "Sema" performance will also be given by Whirling Dervishes of Hazrat Moulana Jalal'ud-Din Rumi. The Whirling Dervishes and their "Sema" are known all over the world particularly in the Islamic World.

# INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON "ARAB ISLAMIC ART AND ASIA"

An international seminar on "Arab Islamic Art and Asia" was jointly organised by the Turkish Foreign Ministry, UNESCO and IRCICA in Istanbul on 7-12 September 1982. Scholars from England, Tunisia, France, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Egypt, USSR and Turkey studied and discussed the effects of Islam on the arts of Asia.

The opening speeches were given by Mr. Uğurtan Akıncı from the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNESCO Representative Mr. Muhammad Aziza, Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu Director General of IRCICA and Dr. Erol Kulaksızoğlu, Deputy Rector of the Istanbul Technical University.

The papers presented at this Seminar will be published in book form by UNESCO and are as follows:

1. **Ali Louati** - "Reflections Concerning Moslem Conceptions on Space in Architecture and Plastic Arts" (TUNISIA)
2. **Abou Saleh El Alfi** - "Criteria of Islamic Art and its General Character" (EGYPT)
3. **Oktay Aslanapa** - "Turkish Carpets" (TURKEY)
4. **Aptullah Kuran** - "Turkish Architecture" (TURKEY)
5. **Günsel Renda** - "Turkish Miniatures" (TURKEY)
6. **Çinuçen Tanrıkorur** - "Monodic Music Universe or Endless Micrometrical Sounds" (TURKEY)
7. **Zelfa Hourani** - "Interrelation of Styles in Central Asian-Persian and Arabic Miniatures" (LEBANON)
8. **Jabaroğlu Kerim Kerimov** - "Islamic Art of Moslem Republics in the USSR" (USSR)
9. **Shaukat Mahmood** - "Islamic Architecture in Pakistan, Specifications and Influence" (PAKISTAN)

10. **Mulk Raj Anand** - "Islamic Legacy in Architecture of Indian Mosque" (INDIA)

11. **Abdul Matin Sarker** - "Islamic Art in Bangladesh - Specifications and Influences" (BANGLADESH)

12. **Othman Bin Mohd. Yatim** - "Islamic Art in Malaya - Specifications and Influences" (MALAYSIA)

13. **Ahmad Sadali** - "Arabo-Islamic Art in South Eastern Asia: Panorama of Islamic Art in Indonesia - Specifications and Influences" (INDONESIA)

14. **Buland Al-Haidari** - "Handicrafts in Contemporary Arabic Art" (IRAQ)

15. **Hossein Zenderoudi** - "Arab-Moslem Calligraphic Legacy in my Work" (IRAN)



Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, Director General of IRCICA delivering his opening address at the UNESCO Conference in Istanbul.

## FOCUS ON ISLAMIC CALLIGRAPHY:

### CALLIGRAPHER HAMID AYTAÇ AND HIS WORKS



Mr. Hamid Aytaç (Master Calligrapher) with Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, Director General of IRCICA Seated at extreme right: Mr. Hasan Çelebi (famous calligrapher and student of Mr. Hamid Aytaç)

A wise man of the olden times said: "Fine utterances in elegant handwriting are a pleasure to the eye and a joy to the heart and fragrant to the soul."

This is true of the calligraphy which presents a fascinating success story as an important art in the domain of Islamic culture. Encyclopaedia Britannica defines calligraphy:

"As free hand in which the freedom is so nicely reconciled with order that the understanding eye is pleased to contemplate it. Hence, we immediately recognise the beauty resulting from right proportion of the components to the whole of a letter and between the parts to the whole of a word."

Truly speaking, from the beginning Muslims had the inspiration of adorning and beautifying their script and writings and the Holy Prophet Himself encouraged his followers in the art of writing.

Holy Quran also appreciates the art of writing when it says:

"Nun. By the Pen and  
By the (Record) which (men) write..."  
(S.LXVIII.V.I)

The main scripts used in Islamic calligraphy are: (1) Kufic, which carried angular letters and was also used in the letters of the Holy Prophet written to various monarchs preaching Islam. (2) Naskh or round script which replaced Kufic script that had become obsolete because of its being unrelated to the needs of practical life.

Ibn Mukla (Abu Ali Mohammad), the most renowned calligrapher of the Abbasid period, was the inventor of Naskh script besides many other scripts such as Raihani, Sulus, Tawqi, Muhaqqaq, etc., which he either invented or improved. The other notable scripts are: Maghrib (or Khairawan)

script; Andalusian or Cordovan script; Timbuktoo or Sudani script and Urdu Rasm-i Khat.

The Islamic calligraphy and calligraphers have always enjoyed respect and esteem both in the eyes of the rulers and the people. That is why Islamic history is replete with names of great calligraphers. The late Mr. Hamid Aytac (Hamid Al-Hamidi) from Turkey was one such towering personality of the world of calligraphy.

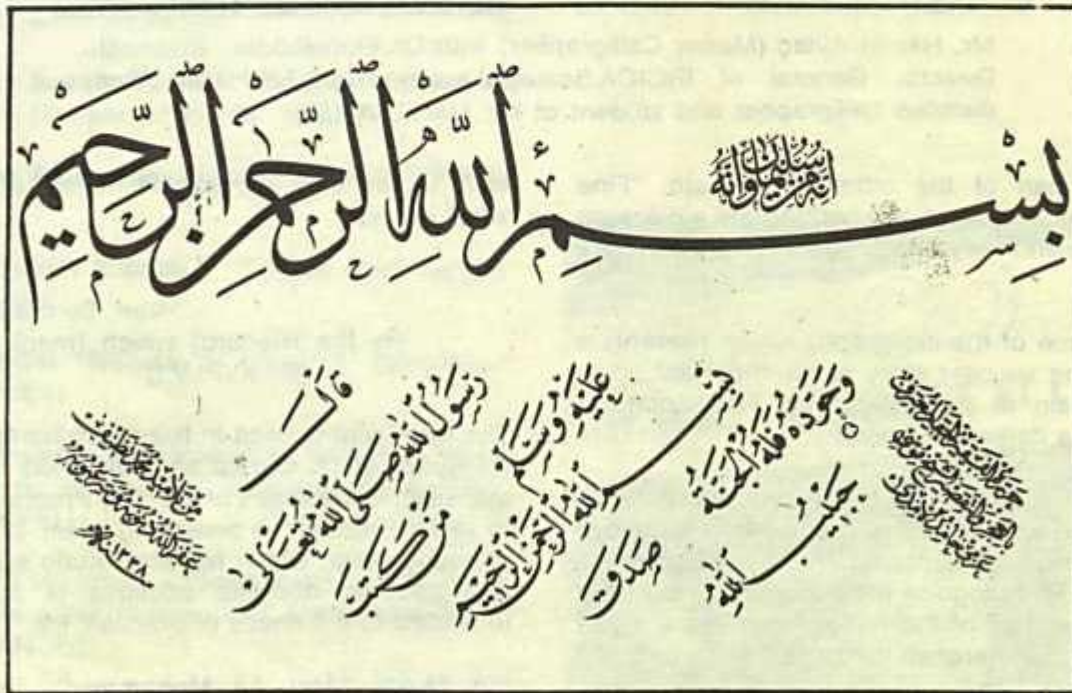
He was born in Diyârbekr (Âmid) in 1891 and was named Musa Azmi. He was interested in calligraphy while very young and took lessons from local teachers. He recalled that, "... one day I was not able to resist my love of writing and imitating the "nesih" script wrote a verse on the margin of the Holy Quran. My teacher did not approve of this and punished me. I was very much interested in calligraphy and my sole aim was to go to İstanbul, which everyone said was the most beautiful city in the world, and improve my art."

He came to İstanbul after finishing the Idâdî (Senior High School) at the age of fifteen. He enrolled in the Mekteb-i Kuzat (Faculty of law). After a year, at the insistence of his teacher Mithad Bey, he started attending the Academy of Fine Arts. He had to discontinue this education

due to the death of his father and was obliged to work for his living. He found a job as a teacher of "Penmanship and Drawing" at a state School. For brief spells he worked at Rusûmat Matbaası (Tax Office Printing House) and the printing house of the Military School. During this period, he was able to take one single lesson from Nazih Bey, the Chief Calligrapher of Erkân-ı Harbiye Matbaası (Printing House of the General Staff) before his teacher died.

He then transferred to the Erkân-ı Harbiye Matbaası and worked together with Mehmed Emin Bey. He also went to Germany for one year to specialise in cartography. On his return, due to financial straits, he opened an office in Bab-ı Âli (district of the journalists) and took up writing under the pseudonym of "Hamid". As a government employee, he was prohibited to work privately which resulted in his resignation and working on his own. In his own words, "I was determined to learn calligraphy as Azmi (determined) and accepted the name Hamid (thankfulness) for my achievements".

In İstanbul he benefitted from the teachings and experiences of famous contemporary calligraphers like Tuğrakeş İsmail Hakkı Altunbezer, Hulusi Efendi, Neyzen Emin Efendi and Kâmil Akdik.



Specimens of - Sulus script (top)  
Nesih script (bottom)  
Icazet script (sides)  
from the late Mr. Hamid Aytac

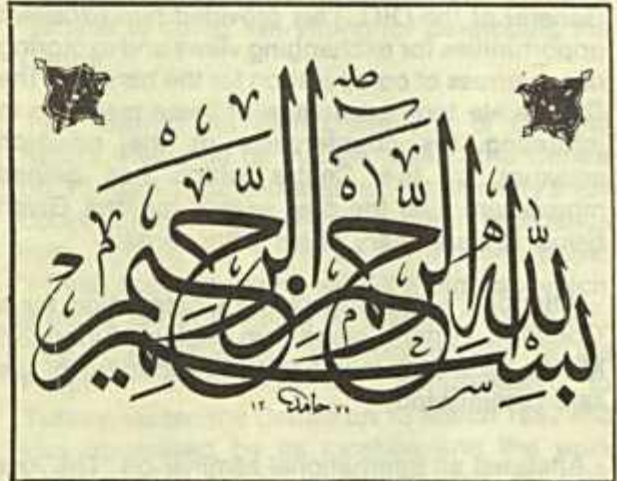
In addition to his works in all styles of calligraphy, one came across his script and signature in different types of work like introductory pages of books, headings on newspapers and periodicals.

Calligraphy of the two Mushafs are among his most outstanding works. Other include the calligraphy of the domes of the Kocatepe Mosque in Ankara and the Eyüp Mosque in Istanbul; the calligraphy over the doorways of Söğütluçeşme and Paşabahçe Mosques in Istanbul; Hacı Küçük Mosque; the outside portico of Kasımpaşa Mosque in Istanbul; Çan Mosque in Çanakkale; Tavas Mosque in Denizli; Moda, Fındıklı; Kartal, Pendik and Şişli Mosques in Istanbul.

His memories concerning the Şişli Mosque are noteworthy. "I was requested to write the inscriptions of Şişli Mosque. Necmeddin Okyay and I chose a verse from the "Tevbe" surah. I was apprehensive in case I would not be able to write it. I practiced for a long time. I was not able to place the letter "elif lam". I was tired. When I was half asleep, the inscription took shape before my eyes. "Elif lam" were in their proper place. This was God's gift to me."

Other miscellaneous works of art produced by this Master are the **Alphabet Booklets, 40 Sayings of the Prophet, Life and Works of Hazret-i Mevlana, Cevşen-ül Kebir, Hizb-ül Envar** and **Hilye** (plates describing the personal virtues and qualities of the Prophet). Some of the poems of Yunus Emre, Fuzulî Al-Bağdadî, Şeyh Galib, Nâbi, Yahya Kemâl and Islamic poet Muhammad Iqbal are also worth mentioning.

His students hail from many countries. Most notables among them are: Halim Özyazıcı (1898-1964), Hasan Çelebi, Husrev Subaşı, Hüseyin Kutlu, Ahmed Fatih and Refet Kavukçu from Turkey; Haşim-i Bağdadî, Yusuf Zennun, Ali Rawi, Merwan-ül Harbî, Al-Semma Al-Halebî from Arabic countries. Cennet (Musul, Iraq) and



A specimen of 'Sulus script' from the late Master Calligrapher

Minako (Japan) are two female students from abroad. This great master of calligraphy passed away on 18th May 1982 in Istanbul.

As has been mentioned elsewhere in the Newsletter, IRCICA completed a half-hourly documentary film on Mr. Hamid Aytaç during the past few months of his life. Arabic copies of this documentary are ready, the English version shall very soon be released for the benefit of all art lovers, especially the admirers and critics of the art of calligraphy.



A specimen of 'Celi-divani' script from the late Mr. Hamid Aytaç

## SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ROUND-UP

The Director General of IRCICA had a busy schedule and itinerary during the last two quarters of 1982. He visited many countries, places and institutions as Director General of IRCICA and as a representative of the Secretary General of the OIC. This provided him excellent opportunities for exchanging views and exploring new avenues of co-operation for the benefit of the Centre. He took advantage of these meetings in informing his counterparts of the research activities of the Centre which has gained momentum over the past several months. Given below is a summary of his visits abroad.

- Attended a meeting of the Commission for a Common Lunar Calendar in Algiers during 2-5 March 1982 as a member and rapporteur of the said commission.

- Attended an international seminar on "The Arts in the Islamic Lands" organised by the newly established Islamic Arts Foundation, in Farnham Castle, London, between 26-28 March 1982. Also presented a paper on "The Islamic Cultural Heritage year 1410/1990 or The Future of Islamic Arts 1410/1990 (Proposal of Co-Action Plan for Communication and Co-operation)".

- Attended UNESCO's "Working Group on Art in Islamic Culture and Society", held in London on 29-31 March 1982, under the chairmanship of Dr. N. Bammate.

- On 5th April 1982, the meeting of "First Joint Committee of OIC and UNESCO" took place to discuss the collaboration between the two organisations. H.E. Bakary Drame, Assistant Secretary General for Cultural and Social Affairs, headed the delegation of OIC. IRCICA was represented by its Director General.

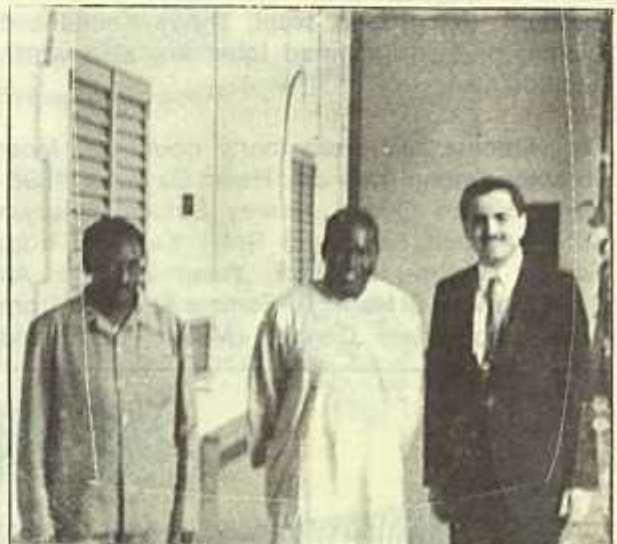
- Attended the first meeting of the "Royal Academy of Islamic Civilisation Research" as member of the Commission for Encyclopaedia of Islamic Civilisation, on 8-15 April 1982.

- Visited Qatar on 21st April 1982, at the invitation of His Highness the Amir of Qatar. He visited various cultural institutions in Doha.

- On 3-5 May 1982 he attended the Constituent Conference of ISESCO (The Islamic Education, Science and Culture Organisation) in Fez, Morocco and chaired the commission which prepared the first work plan of the Organisation.

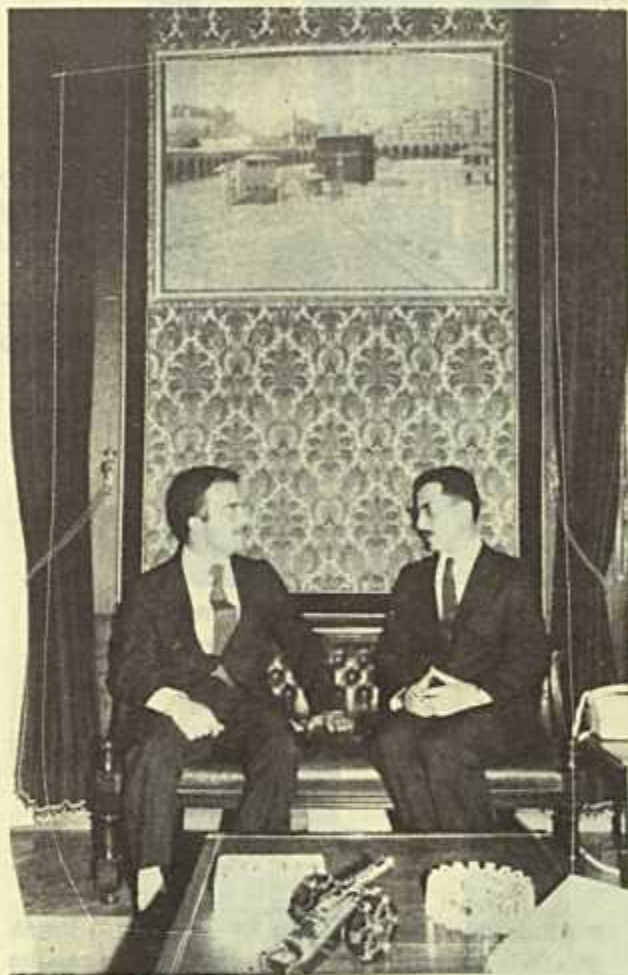
- Visited Tripoli, Libya from 13th to 15th August 1982 at the invitation of Dr. Mohammed Al-Shariff, Secretary General of "Call to Islam Society".

- Attended the 13th ICFM in Niamey, Republic of Niger, at the head of a three-man delegation from IRCICA. (18-27 August 1982). At the conclusion of the Conference he visited adjoining OIC member countries such as the Republic of Mali where he was received by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Cultural Affairs; and the Republic of Senegal where he met the Minister of Culture.



H.E. M. Alioune Blondine Beye, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Mali and Dr. Mahmoud el-Zouber, Director of Ahmed Baba Center, Timbuctou, Mali (also member of Governing Council of IRCICA), with Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu during the latter's visit to Mali.

## PEOPLE AND EVENTS



H.R.H.Prince Hasan Bin Tallal, Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (left) in conversation with Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, Director General of IRCICA.

During the last quarter, many important personalities of the Islamic world visited the IRCICA. They were briefed about the research projects and the problems being encountered by the Centre. They appreciated the work being done and promised to assist in whatever manner they could. The Centre feels honoured and gratified by their visits and the interest shown by them in the affairs of the Centre and highly values their suggestions and wise counsels. Given below is a brief narration of the Visits of these distinguished persons and their impressions.

on 22 March 1982 and showed a keen interest in the various research projects on hand. She

wrote in the Visitor's Book: "Whatever I have seen and felt in the Istanbul Centre, is worth taking pride in by all Muslims. The Director General is doing everything for developing the Centre.

- H.E. Bashir Bin Slama, Minister of Cultural Affairs, Republic of Tunisia, visited the Centre on 16 April 1982 and assured his Ministry's full cooperation in providing cultural assistance from Tunisia. He wrote in the Visitor's book: "I think that the centre will fill a big gap which is being felt in the field of Islamic civilization".
- H.E. C.M. Murshed, the Ambassador of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh to Turkey, visited the Centre on 13 March 1982 and was impressed by its location and the work being carried out by its limited staff. He said, "The institution has been set up in the right surroundings and is doing a magnificent job under the able guidance of the Director General."
- H.R.H. Princess Wijdan Ali, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, being a painter, critic and connoisseur of art was impressed by the rich artistic heritage of Istanbul. She visited Centre



H.E. Niaz Mohammad Arbab, Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Pakistan inspecting a copy of the Holy Quran during his visit to the Centre.



H.E. Bashir Bin Slama, Minister of Cultural Affairs, Republic of Tunisia (second from left) and H.E. Abdul Karim Gana, Ambassador of Tunisia to Turkey (extreme left) during their visit to IRCICA

- Professor Dr. Semih Tezcan, Rector of the Bosphorus University, Istanbul, came to the Centre on 13 May 1982 and recorded his impressions in the Visitor's Book whereby he said, "I also believe that with the dynamic knowledge and hard work of Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, a valuable scholar, the values of Islamic history, art and culture and the brotherly ties in the Islamic world will reach much higher levels."

H.E. Habib Chatti, Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, paid a visit to the Centre on 22nd May 1982. He showed a keen interest in the research projects being carried out and evinced an abiding concern of the difficulties being encountered by the Centre. He was shown the budding library of the Centre which now possesses a fair collection of rare books. He also paid a short visit to "Çit Qasr" the new additional building granted to the Centre by the Turkish Government, and recorded in the Visitor's Book: "The Centre answers to a great need of the Islamic Ummah with a view to re-

evaluating and promoting its heritage. I thank Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu for promising results achieved and his colleagues for their untiring work."

- H.R.H. Prince Hassan Bil Tallal, Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan paid a visit to the Centre on 10 July 1982. His Royal Highness's impressions are recorded in the Visitor's Book: "..... I was immensely pleased with what I saw in the Centre; a determination to serve in the cause of Islamic culture. I think in the present times, concerted work is needed in various fields to find the Islamic answer to the perplexing questions facing the Muslims."

- H.E. Datu Patingi Amar Haji Abdul Taib Bin Mahmud, Chief Minister of Sarawak, Malaysia, came to the Centre on 10th August 1982. He thought that Turkey was a fit place for the establishment of the Centre and wrote in the Visitor's Book: "Turkey is the natural place to be the site of research in Islamic history, and arts because it is in Turkey that the Islamic heritage

came to a full bloom."

- H.E. Niaz Mohammad Arbab, Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Pakistan visited the Centre on 17 August 1982 and praised the work being undertaken by the staff. He wrote in the Visitor's Book: " .... it was indeed very heartening to find Dr. İhsanoğlu so keen and enthusiastic about the difficult task he has undertaken."

Other visitors who were received at the IRCICA thus providing an opportunity for exchanging views and mutual consultations are as follows:

**12 May 1982** - Dr. Abdullah Nassif, Rector of King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah, Saudi

Arabia.

**7 July 1982** - Dr. Adnan Badran, President of Yarmouk University, Amman, Jordan.

**6 August 1982** - Dr. Abdullah B. Abdul Muhsin Al-Turki, Rector of Islamic University of Imam Muhammed Bin Saud, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

**7 August 1982** - Mr. Abdullah Hussain, Secretary, Ministry of Planning, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

**3 September 1982** - Professor Fuat Sezgin from the Institute of Islamic Studies, University of Frankfurt. (Winner of the 1980 King Faisal Award).



H.E. Datu Patingi Amar Haji Abdul Taib Bin Mahmud, Chief Minister of Sarawak, Malaysia, signing the Visitor's Book of the Centre. Seated on his left: H.E. Abdullah Zawawi Bin Haji Muhammed, Malaysian Ambassador to Turkey.

## SPOTLIGHT ON CULTURAL NEWS

### ISLAMIC ARTS EXHIBITION, ISTANBUL, TURKEY - April 1983

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Government of Turkey will hold an international exhibition on works of Islamic Arts in April 1983. The exhibition is being held in connection with 15th Century Hijra celebrations and all museums and libraries of Istanbul, rich in collections of Islamic Arts are expected to participate. The opening of this exhibition is likely to coincide with the international Seminar on Islamic Art being organised by IRCICA on 18-22 April 1983. The preparations for the exhibition are going at a good pace.

This exhibition shall consist of the following seven branches of Islamic Arts:

1. Islamic pottery (traditional and modern)
2. Islamic calligraphy and miniature paintings
3. Carpets and rugs
4. Islamic Art objects related to worship
5. Islamic architecture (through films, slides and photographs)
6. Metal and woodworks
7. Holy relics

#### Institute of Arab Manuscripts

P.O.Box 26897 Safat, Kuwait

The institute has now started to work in its new premises in Kuwait. It was formerly located in Cairo. The nomination of Dr. Khaled Abdel Kerimi Jumaa as the President of the Institute of Arab Manuscripts inaugurated a new page in the history of the Institute.

Three issues of the monthly newsletter "Arab Heritage Newsletter" and the first part of the first volume of the half-yearly review "Review of the Institute of Arab Manuscripts" are already published.

Dr. Khaleefah Al-Weigayyan and Mr. Abdullah Ali Al Falih (member of this institute) also visited our Centre.

We wish success to this institute and to its new staff and ask God Almighty to help them in their future work.

### THE 4th TURCOLOGY CONGRESS, ISTANBUL, TURKEY

4th International Congress of Turcology was held in Istanbul on 20-25 September 1982. The congress was organised by the "Turcology

Research Centre" in the Faculty of Letters, Istanbul University. The Director of the Turcology Research Centre, Professor Dr. Sadettin Buluç was also the Chairman of the Congress. The Vice-Chairman of the Congress was Professor Dr. Oktay Aslanapa who is also associated with IRCICA in the execution of the project on Islamic art. He is also a member of the organising committee of the International Symposium being held under the auspices of the Centre.

Nearly 225 Turkish and 200 foreign scholars from 30 different countries participated in the Congress. The papers were related to the Turkish language, literature, history, history of art, and music.

Some of these scholars also visited the IRCICA on 24th September on the invitation of the Director General.

### INTERNATIONAL SEERAH AWARD PAKISTAN

The Ministry of Religious Affairs, Government of Pakistan have announced the institution of three prizes of US\$ 15,000, \$ 10,000, and \$ 5,000 for the best three books written on Seerah of the Holy Prophet in any of the following languages.

- |               |             |             |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. Arabic     | 2. Bengali  | 3. Chinese  |
| 4. English    | 5. French   | 6. German   |
| 7. Indonesian | 8. Italian  | 9. Japanese |
| 10. Malay     | 11. Persian | 12. Spanish |
| 13. Swahili   | 14. Turkish | 15. Urdu    |

The Seerah book should be published by 12 Rabi-ul Awwal, 1403 A.H. (December 1982) and the authors have been requested to send five copies of their book by 5 February 1983 to:

The Director (Seerah)  
Ministry of Religious Affairs  
Islamabad  
Pakistan

### Exhibition on Islamic Civilization Houston, U.S.A.

An exhibition on Islam is scheduled to open in Houston, Texas, in March 1983, and then will be shown in several other U.S. cities terminating at the Smithsonian Institution in 1984. The exhibition will focus on the following six fields.

- History
- Architecture and Ornamentation
- Holy Quran and calligraphy

- Science and technology
- Plastic Arts (Metalware, ceramics, textiles and glass)
- Islamic Arts and poetry

The project will be chaired and supervised by a retired U.S. ambassador, Mr. William Crawford.

### **'Orientalism Seminar' Doha, Qatar**

An international seminar on Orientalism will be held in Doha, Qatar, in 1984. This will be in continuation of a similar seminar held in February 1982 in Azamgarh, India, under the auspices of "Darul Mussanifeen" (Writers Guild). It was also decided in that seminar to create a permanent section within the 'Guild' to serve as a monitor and watch-dog on the orientalist movement. The seminar also recommended producing standard text books on the subject of Islamic studies for graduate and post-graduate students, uncovering the bright aspects of Islamic culture and civilization.

### **Islamic Book Fair, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**

This fair was organised during the month of May 1982 by Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, Riyadh in collaboration with the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education. Nearly 20,000 titles on Islam and related subjects published during the last two years in all major languages were displayed. This was the Arab World's first Islamic book fair and was a great success. More than 300 publishers, research academies, and Government-run educational institutions from 28 countries including 18 Muslim countries participated in this book fair. The fair highlighted the shortage of text-books for children and books on applied sciences and technology.

### **The Arab Education Bureau for the Gulf States, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**

The Arab Education Bureau for the Gulf States has appointed a committee with the task of publishing a book aimed at exposing the distortions and fallacies about the Islamic history. The Committee is composed of representatives from the bureau, the Arab Organisation for Education, Culture and Sciences, the Arab League, the Muslim World League, and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference. The Committee has started probing the matter.

### **Sri Lanka**

Two important seminars were held in Colombo, Sri Lanka during the first two quarters of 1982.

#### **(i) Seminar on "Universality of Islam"**

This seminar was organised by the Government of Sri Lanka in collaboration with the World Muslim Congress (WMC) in continuation of the 15th Century Hijra Celebrations.

The international seminar was opened by H.E.T.R. Tayewardene, President of Sri Lanka who commended the muslim community of Sri Lanka especially in their role as friends and traders. A concrete outcome of the seminar was the creation of a separate department of Muslim religion and cultural affairs under Mr. M. Hanifa Mohammad who also holds the portfolio of transport in the Government of Sri Lanka.

#### **(ii) Conference on "Christian-Muslim Dialogue", Colombo**

The Government of Sri Lanka was also host to this Conference which was held with the collaboration of the World Council of Churches and the World Muslim Congress (WMC) just on the heels of the seminar on "Universality of Islam". The relations between the two communities were discussed under the broad theme "Christians and Muslims Living and Working Together". A document was issued at the end of the conference which in the words of the document, "fostered a closer understanding of each other and the determination to work together in the interests of peace, justice and humanity, thus exemplifying our united commitment to achieve God's purpose for man."

### **Exhibition on "Tulips, Arabesques, and Turbans, Decorative Arts from the Ottoman Empire", London**

This exhibition was arranged in the 'winter studio' of Leighton House situated in Holland Park of London during the month of May 1982. The exhibition portrayed 5 major branches of Ottoman decorative art - i.e. textiles, metal work, calligraphy, ceramics and painting. The objects on display in exhibition reflected five main stylistic developments of Ottoman decoration namely Rumi, Hatai, Saz, floral and stylised tradition.

## IRCICA STAFF

Starting from this issue, an introduction of our staff is being given under the above caption. The IRCICA, since its inception, has been working under constraints due to the shortage of staff. The rapid expansion of staff was rather impossible in view of meagre financial resources at the disposal of the Centre. The space was also very inadequate. This situation is still persisting, though the problem of space would greatly be solved after the restoration of the new building 'Çit Qasr' is completed, which is now going apace.

The Centre administration therefore adopted a policy of gradual expansion of staff in line with the development of resources and research projects. The staff consists of regular and contract employees in addition to advisors and consultants. New faces from Turkey as well as from other OIC member countries have joined our staff since the Centre became operational in 1980. In this issue, a brief introduction is given of two of our staff members.



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1. Dr. Hidayet Yavuz Nuhoglu - Born in 1938 in Konya, Turkey, did his B.A. in Oriental Literature (Arabic, Persian) from Ankara University, and M.A. in Arabic language from Baghdad University. Took his Ph.D. degree in linguistics from the University of Durham in England in 1974. Worked as the head of the section of the manuscripts and rare books in the National Library of Turkey (1975-78) and as a lecturer in Department of Library Science in Hacettepe University in Ankara (1978-80). Read papers at many academic conferences and has many publications to his credit. He joined IRCICA staff in 1980.

2. Mr. Ahmed Lajimi - Born in 1951 in La Marsa (Tunisia); did his M.A. in History from the University of Tunis, Tunisia in 1979. Proficient in French apart from Arabic. Joined IRCICA in December 1981 as a junior researcher. He is also preparing his Doctorate thesis in history.

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## RARE BOOKS FROM IRCICA'S LIBRARY



In the collection of the Centre's Library, there are some rare items, like books, albums, maps etc. Although small in number, these items are considered important acquisitions of the library. In this issue of our Newsletter and those which follow, these rare items, mainly the books, shall be briefly reviewed for the benefit of the world of learning.

### **Alcorani Textus Universus**

By Ludovico Marraccio  
Patavii (1698)

Ludovico Marraccio (1612-1700) was a famous Italian theologian, an expert on Arabic culture and language. He knew Arabic well and was a member of the Papal Commission for the Arabic publication of the Bible which was printed in 1671. His most important work is Alcoran Textus Universus which is essentially a biased study of the Qur'an with a view to rejecting its authenticity. This work had been dedicated to Pope Innocentii XI.

This work is composed of two books of which the first one is an introduction to the second book, that is "Refutation Alcorani" meaning Rejection to Qur'an. Marraccio, in the first book, introduces Islam and Qur'an through the life of Prophet Muhammad (A.S.) in four parts. The main book which is the second book of the Alcoran Textus Universus is a translation and a commentary of Qur'an in Latin. Here the text of Qur'an is also given in Arabic characters.

The commentary is given as notes and it is followed by the rejections of Marraccio.

This work has been used as one of the main reference works on Qur'anic studies. It, besides being a biased work, is considered one of the famous translations of the Qur'an in Latin.

★★★

## DR. ZAKI ALI AND HIS LIBRARY DONATION

This is the story of how the publication of an interview led to the donation of a valuable personal library to IRCICA.

The Islamic history is full with examples of patronage bestowed upon learning and scholarship and noble gestures to be emulated by others. Dr. Zaki Ali from Geneva, Switzerland, provides another illustrious proof that the world is not even now, extinct of such lofty persons and ideas.

Dr. Zaki Ali has decided to donate his valuable personal library to IRCICA. The formalities are now being worked out. How all this came about has an interesting background. But first a brief introduction of Dr. Zaki Ali. Dr. Zaki Ali, a medical doctor by profession, is a notable scholar and writer on Islam and Islamic Civilisation. He was born in Egypt in 1905, got his Ph.D. degree in Medicine from a European university. He has been living in Europe for quite a long time and has dedicated himself to the exposition and propagation of Islam in the West. He has written many books in Arabic, English, French and German touching upon various aspects of Islam and its civilisation. The following are some of his books:-

1. Arabic Medicine and its Influence on European Civilisation.
2. Islam in the Contemporary World.
3. Glimpses of Islam.
4. Europe and Islam.

5. Influence of Islamic Culture to the West.

In addition to the above, he has also to his credit, about 14 publications on medical science published in professional journals of international repute.

All this started with the publication, in the reputed journal "Al-Muslimun" of London (No.42, August 13, 1982), of a detailed interview of Dr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoğlu, Director General of IRCICA, given to a correspondent of the Journal sometime ago. In this interview, the Director commented on ideals which resulted in the establishment of the Centre and the targets which the Centre has set for itself. The said interview so inspired Dr. Zaki Ali and fired his imagination that he wrote to Dr. Hamidullah, an eminent Islamic scholar residing in Paris, asking for the mailing address of the Director General. This resulted in his writing a long appreciative letter to Dr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoğlu, in which he also made the gracious offer of donating his personal library to the Centre. The offer has been accepted in principle and it has also been decided to place these books in a special corner in the IRCICA Library dedicated to the name of the donator.

Letters regarding the transfer of the library have been exchanged and in mid-November the Director General will visit Dr. Zaki Ali and personally give his thanks for his generosity.

It is hoped that this noble gesture of Dr. Zaki Ali will inspire others to take this lead, Inshallah.

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## COMMENTS FROM OUR READERS

We are publishing below a few comments from our esteemed readers. We are thankful to them and hope that they will continue sending us their valuable comments and preferably their suggestions aimed at improvement of the Newsletter. Thanks.

Editor-in-Chief

"I have received the first issue of the newsletter and was pleased with its contents. It is a good mirror reflecting the increasing momentum of activities of the Centre. I consider it essential and useful in attracting the attention of and strengthening relations with specialists and cultural groups"

Dr. Afif Bahnassi  
Director General  
Museums and Antiquities  
Damascus, Syria  
and  
Chairman of the Governing  
Council of IRCICA

"Thank you so much for sending your newsletter. We got it and it is useful for us and I hope you continue it regularly and let us hear more from you."

Afshar  
Quran Foundation  
P.O. Box 2121  
Tehran, Iran

"We are pleased to receive the first issue of your Newsletter, which we find to be very informative and interesting. We shall be grateful if you please let us have any future issues, as this publication will be of great value to our Reading Room, for the benefit of our students and visitors."

Director  
Middle East Centre  
University of Cambridge  
Faculty of Oriental Studies  
Cambridge, England

"I am extremely pleased to go through the copy of your "Newsletter", a bi-annual magazine intended to unfold to the world the Islamic history, its art and culture. It is an established fact that Islam acclaims the oneness of God and that He is God of the



A side view of the present premises of IRCICA

Universe. Logically, Islam is meant for the entire human race and it advocates the right path to attain God by living a disciplined life in accordance with the charter laid down by Him. This charter is such that it provides happy, prosperous and peaceful life on this earth and also grants eligibility to attain a rightful place in the domain of spiritualism. Your magazine is rendering commendable work in this direction, for which I congratulate your Research Centre..."

Alhaj Mohammad Azizullah  
Secretary General  
Islamic Cultural Centre  
Hyderabad - 20  
India

In this issue:

1- Editorial .....	p.1
2- The Formal Opening Ceremony of IRCICA.....	p.2
3- Glimpses from the 13th. Islamic Foreign Ministers Conference, Niamey, Niger.....	p.4
4- Projects and Publications.....	p.6
5- Ongoing Research Projects Monitor.....	p.7
6- Çit Qasr Restoration and Rehabilitation Project.....	p.8
7- International Seminar on "Arab Islamic Art And Asia".....	p.9
8- International Symposium on "The Commun Principles, Formes and Themes of Islamic Art".....	p.10
9- Focus on Islamic Calligraphy; Calligrapher Hamid Aytaç and his work.....	p.11
10- Social and Cultural Round-up.....	p.14
11- People and events .....	p.15
12- Spotlight on Culturals News.....	p.17
13- IRCICA Staff .....	p.20
14- Rare Books from IRCICA's Library .....	p.21
15- Dr. Zaki Ali and his library donation.....	p.22
16- Comments from our Readers .....	p.23
17- Contents.....	p.24

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## REQUIRED

The Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture. Istanbul, is looking for a well-qualified and experienced Editor-cum-Supervisor for its publications. Command of English, French and Arabic languages essential. Work will include editing articles in the three languages and translations. Only nationals of the O.I.C. member countries need apply. Please write in confidence to the address below along with Curriculum Vitae and one recent passport size photograph.

Personnel Department  
The Research Centre for Islamic  
History,  
Art and Culture  
P.O. Box 24  
Beşiktaş, Istanbul  
TURKEY