Book Reviews  مراجعات الكتب
'On Celâl Esad Arseven’: a translation and commentary of Ekrem Işin’s Introduction (‘Celâl Esad Arseven üzerine’) in Celâl Esad Arseven, Eski İstanbul: Abidat ve Mebanisi (Ancient Istanbul: monuments and buildings) (Istanbul, 1989), 7-16..........................by Maria Vaiou

There are not many monographs on Celâl Esad Arseven (1875-1971)\(^1\). His contribution towards the establishment of art history as a field in

Turkey has been acknowledged and his pioneering works on Turkish architecture. He was not only an art and architectural historian but a painter, novelist, musician, translator, photographer, writer, editor, playwright, politician and filmmaker. He was the first Turkish scholar to publish on Byzantine history and buildings of Byzantine Istanbul, and

---

2 N. Yazıcı, ‘Pioneer art historians in Turkey’, TALID (Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi) 7.14 (2009), 571-608; for a survey of fifty-nine books on art history written in the pre-Republic period (1850-1923), and a discussion of art historiography, see Sürün, Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat.


4 The Byzantinist Charles Diehl comments that it was interesting to see an Ottoman Turk writing about the Byzantine art and history as the study of the Byzantine empire had been carried out before by Greeks, Russians, Germans, British and French: see Ch Diehl, ‘Préface’, in Djelal Essad [Celâl Esad Arseven], Constantinople de Byzance (Paris, 1909), i-iv. For early nineteenth-twentieth centuries studies by European architects and historians on Constantinople, see Crane, ‘Recent literature on the history of Turkish architecture’, 309; see also Ch. Texier, Description de l’Asie Mineure, faite par ordre du gouvernement français, de 1833 à 1837, et publiée par le Ministère de instruction publique, 3 vols. (Paris, 1839-49); and S. Pedone, ‘Charles Félix –Marie Texier and the studies on the Ottoman architecture of Constantinople: a pioneering model’, Eurasian Studies 10 (2012), 281-98; X. Hommaire de Hell, Voyage en Turquie et en Perse exécuté par ordre du gouvernement français, pendant les années 1846, 1847 et 1848, 2 vols. (Paris, 1854-60), F. Sarre, Reise in Kleinasiens (Berlin, 1896); C. Gurlitt, Die Baukunst Konstantinopels, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1907); Max van Berchem, Materiaux pour un Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum, Troisieme Partie, Asie Mineure, Tome Premier, Siwas, Divrigi (Le Caire, 1910); R. M. Riefstahl, Turkish Architecture in Southwestern Anatolia (Cambridge, Mass., 1931); also Yildiz, ‘A review of Byzantine Studies’, 64. For the role of Arseven in the context of the Byzantine studies in the Ottoman empire, see P. Üre, Byzantine heritage, archaeology, and politics between Russia and the Ottoman empire: Russian archaeological Institute in Constantinople (1894-1914) (D. Phil, LSE, 2014), 84-90, 86-8. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries along Arseven’s work there were historical works with nationalist tendencies that gave a negative portrayal of Byzantine empire in contrast with the post-conquest era when Ottoman sultans viewed themselves as representatives of the Roman-Byzantine tradition. On Istanbul’s Byzantine heritage in the twentieth century, and the development of Byzantine studies in Turkey, see A. Dilsiz, ‘The Byzantine inheritance of Istanbul: resource or burden? A study on the surviving ecclesiastical architecture of the historical peninsula within the framework of perception, preservation and research in the Turkish Republican period’, MA thesis in Arts (Koç Univ., 2006), 14-32, 33-44; Yildiz, ‘A review of Byzantine studies’, 64ff. See also M. Ursinus, ‘Byzantine history in late Ottoman Turkish historiography’, BMGS 10 (1986), 211-22; idem ‘Der schlechteste Staat: Ahmed Midhat Efendi (1844-1912) on Byzantine Institutions’, BMGS 11 (1987), 237-43; idem, ‘From Süleyman Pasha to Mehmet Fuat Köprülü.’
Ottoman architectural monuments and buildings providing also reconstruction drawings of them. In his works on the historical topography of Byzantine Istanbul, Arseven follows the tradition of scholars of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, such as A. G. Paspatis, A. D. Mordtmann, van Millingen, J. Ebersolt, I. M. Nomidis, M. Ziya and R. Janin. Arseven’s work *Constantinople, de Byzance à Stamboul* was published in French in 1909 and later translated in Ottoman Turkish and published in 1912/3 (Figure 1). It consists of three chapters: the first provides information on Byzantine history (*Bizans–Ma’lûmât-i Târîhiyye*), the second on topography (*Bizans’ın Ahvâl-I Topoğrafyası*), the third on Byzantine monuments and buildings. Arseven’s work was published in French in 1909 and later translated in Ottoman Turkish and published in 1912/3 (Figure 1). It consists of three chapters: the first provides information on Byzantine history (*Bizans–Ma’lûmât-i Târîhiyye*), the second on topography (*Bizans’ın Ahvâl-I Topoğrafyası*), the third on Byzantine monuments and buildings.


5 Celâl Esad Arseven, *Constantinople de Byzance a Stamboul* (Paris, 1909), 151-5; Celâl Es’ad, *Eski İstanbul. Abdâd ve Mebânîşi Şehrin Te’şîbînden Osmâni Fethine Kadar* (Istanbul, 1328/1912). It was later translated in the present-day alphabet: see Celâl Esad Arseven, *Eski İstanbul. Abdâd ve Mebânîşi* (Istanbul, 1989). It was also translated in Russian Celal Esad, *Konstantinopol’, Od Vizonti do Stambula* , tr. P. Bezobranov (Moscow, 1919). The work has a preface by the Byzantinist Charles Diehl, who praised Arseven for his successful undertaking of the study on Byzantine monuments in Constantinople. For an analysis of the *Eski Istanbul*, see Sürün, *Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat*, 73-84. For a Turkish translation of Diehl’s preface, see Sürün, *Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat*, 78-9; see S. Eyice, ‘Diehl, Charles’, *DBIA* (Istanbul, 1994), iii, 48-9; Üre, *Byzantine heritage*, 86ff.. For A. D. Mordtmann’s (d. 1879) and Halil Edhem Bey’s (d. 1938) positive reactions and a Turkish translation of the excerpts, see Sürün, *Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat*, 77, 79-80; see S. Eyice, ‘Mordtmann, Andreas David (Oğul)’, DBIA (Istanbul, 1994), v, 490-1. For Halil Edhem, see www.Biyografya.com/biyografi/17175

7 Celâl Esad Arseven, *Eski Istanbul*, 25-58; Sürün, *Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat*, 80. For an outline of Arseven’s views on Byzantine history and art, his negative views about the
such as Constantinople’s districts (dâ’ireler), streets and squares (sokaklar ve meydanlar), surroundings (Bizans Civâri), islands (adalalar), walls and towers (surlar ve kuleler), gates (kapılar), and the gates of the city walls of Haliç and Marmara (Halic surlarının kapıları, Marmara surlarının kapıları).

The third chapter refers to Byzantine art and monuments (Bizans sinâ’atı ve mebânîsî), contains an outline of Byzantine art (Bizans Sinâ’atı), and continues with information on Byzantine churches (Bizans kiliseleri), palaces (Bizans sarayalari), baths (Bizans hamamları), monuments (Abidâl), aqueducts and cisterns (Su Kemerleri ve Sarıncalar), houses (Bizans

Byzantine emperors and society, his description of the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks, his acknowledgement of the influence of Byzantine art on European and Islamic traditions, the similarities he drew between European perceptions of Byzantine and Turkish art, see Üre, Byzantine heritage, 86-8, 90. For Arseven’s similarities with M. Ziya’s work on Byzantine art and architecture centred on their appropriation of Byzantine legacy vis à vis European rivals, see Üre, Byzantine heritage, 88-90.


Byzantine buildings and their histories, and modern Byzantine monuments which are Islamic monuments (Bizans Zamânmına A'id Binâlar ve Târîhleri, Bizans Mebânîsinin Mu'âsir Olan Mebânî-i İslâmiyye). Arseven, in his writing architectural history, is a representative of the tradition of nationalist historiography and of the discourse of Turkish art and architecture’s innovative and unique character, distinct from Islamic, Byzantine and eastern arts; the didactic role of his works aiming ‘to transform the material culture of Anatolia into a history of the Turks’ has been stressed. This is best illustrated in the first revised edition of Constantinople, titled Türk Sanâtı (Turkish Art), published in Ottoman Turkish in 1928. Arseven was...

---

23 Celâl Esad Arseven, Eski İstanbul, 188-95; Sürün, Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat, 83; Akcan, Architecture in translation, 221; Bertram, Imagining the Turkish house, 85-6.
24 Celâl Esad Arseven, Eski İstanbul, 195-204; Sürün, Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat, 83.
25 On the relationship of Republican and late Ottoman political ideologies to the discourse of art and architecture see the articles in the special issue of Muqarnas 24. On issues of ideology and cultural heritage in the early Republican period in Turkey, the notion of a clear breach with the empires whose territories it inherited and the idea of a new spirit of a modern Turkish nation exemplified in a paragraph from ‘La Turquie Kemaliste’ (No. 47: 1943, 38-9) cited in S. Bosdoğan, Modernism and nation building: Turkish architectural culture in the early Republic (Seattle, London, 2001), 67. For the lack of interest in its Byzantine heritage, and its impact on the development of the Byzantine field in Turkey, see Dilisiz, ‘The Byzantine inheritance’, 22ff., 41ff.. See also M. F. Köprülü, Some observations on the influence of Byzantine institutions on Ottoman institutions (Ankara, 1999) essay of 1931 where he denies any influence that Byzantine institutions had on Ottoman institutions: see H. Berktay, ‘Der Aufstieg und die gegenwärtige Krise der nationalischen Geschichtsschreibung in der Türkei’, Periplus 1 (1991), 102-25; for an opposite view, see N. Özdoğan, ‘Türkiye Cumhuriyeti ve Arkeoloji: Sıysal Yönlendirmeler-Ceşşikler ve Gelişim Süreci’, Bilanço:1923–1998: Türkçe Cumhuriyeti’nin 75 Yılına Toplul Bağış Uluslararası Kongresi, ed. Z. Rona (Istanbul; 1998), 193-204. See also S. Redford, ‘What have you done for Anatolia today?’: Islamic archaeology in the early years of the Turkish Republic’, Muqarnas 24, 243-52, 244, n.13; Sh. Hamadeh ‘Westernization, decadence, and the Turkish baroque: modern constructions of the eighteenth century’, Muqarnas 24,185-97; S. Bozdoğan, ‘Reading Ottoman architecture through modernist lenses: nationalist historiography and the “New Architecture” in the early republic’, Muqarnas 24, 199-221; Akcan, Architecture in translation, 221.
27 D. Kuban, ‘Celâl Esad Arseven ve Türk sanatı kavramı’[Celâl Esad Arseven and the idea of Turkish art], Mimarlık 1xii (Ekim 1969), 18-20; for Arseven’s different views of the Byzantine art and architecture in comparison with his earlier book
critical of orientalist historians who had classified Turkish art and architecture under a single Islamic category, ignoring their uniqueness. His book *Eski Galata* sheds light on the history and topography of Pera-Galata and contains valuable illustrations of topographical locations. Another work on Byzantine sites was his *Plan archéologique de Constantinople, Byzance et Stamboul* (1908/9).

As Ottoman modernization in late nineteenth century rapidly built a modern cultural conception, a generation of intellectuals came about able to interpret the intellectual output in both historical and aesthetical perspectives. The issue of ancient works brought into the agenda by Münif Paşa (d. 1910) and his circle had soon developed into an archaeological collection thanks to the efforts of Fethi Ahmed Paşa (d. 1858), the minister of war. This important enterprise was protected and maintained under *Müze-i-Hümayûn* (The imperial museum) with the support of Osman Hamdi Bey (d. 1910), Halil Edhem Bey (d. 1938) and Ismail Ghalib Bey (d. 1895) while constituting a solid step towards a modern consciousness which was to shed light on Turkish art within the framework of world art history.

---


30 Arseven, Celal Esad, *Plan archéologique de Constantinople, Byzance et Stamboul* (İstanbul, 1908/9).


36 N. Altinyildiz ‘The architectural heritage of Istanbul and the ideology of preservation’, *Muqarnas* 24, 281-305. For the Ottoman interest in ancient monuments seen in the context of modernisation process as part of the *Tanzimat* period reforms, see Üre, *Byzantine heritage*, 99. For the function and development of archaeology in the Ottoman empire, and the objective of the founders of the imperial museum, see Üre, *Byzantine heritage*, 93ff., 109ff., 123-4; see also W. Shaw, ‘Museums and narratives of display from the Ottoman empire to the Turkish Republic’, *Muqarnas* 24, 253-79.
Turkish art as a mere copy of Islamic civilization and could insist on the importance of differences as well as similarities in the creation of a unique cultural dynamic, were doubtlessly led by Mehmed Raif (d. 1916 or 1917 or 1919)\(^\text{37}\), Mehmed Ziya (Gökalp) (d. 1924)\(^\text{38}\) and Celâl Esad Arseven.

Influenced to a large extent by the encyclopedist approach of the previous generation, Celâl Esad’s interest in art was wide ranging. His works on art, literature, theatre, music, film, urban development, architecture and art history demonstrates the huge range of his interests. Although his individual works, being produced within such a wide range, could be regarded as vulgarization, it can not be denied that through such examples as he produced he showed the way and provided material for subsequent analytical research. On the other hand, Celâl Esad is not exactly a vulgarizer in the whole sense. He is a professional especially when it comes to urban monographies and decorative arts. A typical Istanbul writer, the fundamental achievement of Celâl Esad lies in having aroused the art taste of a society which was caught in tight patterns.\(^\text{39}\)

Celâl Esad Arseven\(^\text{40}\) was born in Beşiktaş in 1875. His mother was Fatma Suzidil Hanım, daughter of Sakızlı Mustafa Efendi; his father was the well-known Tanzimat (1839-76)\(^\text{41}\) dignitary Sadrazam Ahmed Esad.
Paşa (1828-75). Upon the premature death of his father, he was raised by his paternal uncle Kâzım Paşa (1839-1936).

Life in the mansion in Beşiktaş occupies a crucial part of Celâl Esad’s childhood. A nineteenth century mansion is a living space in which the cultural relations between modern knowledge, skills and objects brought into our social life through the Westernization movement are reflected into practice; it is a scale of values establishing a bond between the individual and the world outside. The upper level Ottoman family has found its identity in this creative post-Tanzimat environment; points of conflict and conciliation among family members have shaped the modern life style at the mansion. Celâl Esad meets the art of painting within the framework provided by such an environment.

In 1881 he starts primary school at Beşiktaş Taş Mektep. The primary school right across the palace kitchens at Akaretler was an institution which like others of its kind provided an education in the old, in other words traditional, way called ‘usul-i-ati’ka; the windows were iron-

---

42 Vak’a Nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efend Tarihi (Ankara, 1988), 17-22; Rağnâme-I Ceride-I Havâdis, no. 2099 (19 Zilhicce 1289), no. 2758 (20 Rebiü’l-evvel 1292), no. 2943 (2 Zilkade 1292); S. Eyice, ‘Celâl Esad Arseven. 1875-1971’, Belleten xxxvi (1972), 173-202, 175; Ahmed Midhat, Menfâ (İstanbul, 1293), 69; Abdurrahman şeref, Tarih Musahâbeleri (İstanbul, 1340), 182; Ebüzziya Tevfik, Yeni Osmanlılar Tarihi (İstanbul, 1973), 205-6; F. Abdullah Tansel, Namık Kemal’ın Hususi Mektupları (Ankara, 1967), 387; Sürün, Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat, 73.

43 Kickingereder, ‘Celâl Esad Arseven’s Memoirs’, 38, 43; Sürün, Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat, 73.


46 Bayram Kodaman, Abdüllahid Devri Eğitim Sistemi (İstanbul, 1980), 116; Özgönül Aksoy, Osmanlı Devri İstanbul Sibyan Mektepleri Üzerine Bir İnceleme (İstanbul,
barred and the place looked like medrese cells. Frequenting this school, in which the educational aim was limited to the reading of the Koran only for a short while, Celâl Esad passed on to Beşiktaş İbitdaişi which offered modern education. He graduates in 1884 and in 1885 he is enrolled to Galatasaray Sultanisi as a boarding student. Having already had French lessons from an elderly governess his father Esad Paşa had brought over from France, Celâl Esad finds an opportunity to develop his language skills for another year at Galatasaray. However, his uncle Kâzım Paşa’s wish is to raise him as a perfect soldier in keeping with the family tradition; thus Celâl Esad finds himself obliged to quit school. In 1885/6 he enters Beşiktaş Rüşdiye-I Askeriyyesi (military school). From this day on, he would continuously come into conflict with the ideal soldier identity his family projected for him, thus falter to find his true identity between the family heritage which treasures above all the passion for the uniform and the universal influence of Western taste for art. Taking into consideration the year he spent at Galatasaray, he is directly transferred to second grade at the Rüşdiye. Here he is introduced to oil painting for the first time. Young graduates of Mühendishane (academy of engineering) and Mekteb-I Harbiyye (military academy) have been giving art lessons at the Rüşdiye, however these lessons did not go beyond simple sketches. Nevertheless, it was at Beşiktaş Rüşdiye-I Askeriyyesi where Celâl Esad received his basic knowledge on art. Right after he graduates in 1889, with a sudden decision he enrols himself in Mekteb-I Mülkiyye (academy for civil servants) instead of Harbiyye. For the youth of the time, enrolment in Mülkiyye was in a way the first step into the opposition against Abdülhamid.

---

48 Yeni Istanbul, no. 1902 (5 Mart 1955); Sürün, Cumhuriyet Oncesi Sanat, 73.
49 Eyice, ‘Celâl Esad Arseven’, 175; Yeni İstanbul, no. 1903 (6 Mart 1955); Sürün, Cumhuriyet Oncesi Sanat, 73.
50 Kickingereder, ‘Celâl Esad Arseven’s Memoirs’, 38, n.6; Sürün, Cumhuriyet Oncesi Sanat, 73; Gurpinar, Ottoman imperial diplomacy, 123-4.
51 Sürün, Cumhuriyet Oncesi Sanat, 73.
52 Sürün, Cumhuriyet Oncesi Sanat, 73; Kickingereder, ‘Celâl Esad Arseven’s Memoirs’, 38, n.7.
(Tarcan) (d. 1956)\textsuperscript{55}, he follows the Jön Türk (Young Turks) movement as far as the political climate allows.\textsuperscript{56} The close interest he has towards the problems of his country and the world has also turned Arseven into an amateur publisher. He clandestinely distributes among his schoolmates the caricature magazine Kahkaha (laughter) which he publishes at home using a kind of lithography technique (şapirografi)\textsuperscript{57}. During these years, Çelâl Esad followed the path of those Ottoman intellectuals who made their first steps into the authorial career by translating popular articles. His translations of many Muhasebe-I fenniyé (accounts of sciences), which could perhaps be regarded the only kind of writing able to pass the censorship of the era, and his sending these translations to Ahmed Midhad, owner of the newspaper İkdam, demonstrate his sympathy with Ottoman encyclopedism. This sympathy would gradually get systematized and determine the general characteristics of his works on art history. Again in the years he spent at Mülkiyye, Çelâl Esad was to find a new area of interest which brought together art and technical matters: photography. The exhilaration of seeing daily life through the lens has affected him at least as deeply as painting.\textsuperscript{58} However, painting was not favoured at Mülkiyye and the students who painted were a matter of complaint. Çelâl Esad argued with the academy director Abdurrahman Şeref Bey (d. 1925), a famous historian, on this matter and when nothing comes out of the argument the idea of passing on to Sanayi-I Nefise Mektebi (academy of fine arts) spontaneously develops.\textsuperscript{59} The majority of the students at Sanayi-I Nefise Mektebi, operating under the Tokapi Sarayı Asar-I Şarkiyye Müzesi (Topkapı palace museum for eastern works of art), consisted of Greeks (Rum) and Armenians, with only three Turkish students: İsmail Hakki Altunbezer, one of the most famous of latest calligraphers; painter Galib Bey and İhsan Bey, one of the first Turkish sculptors. A Turkish youth’s being interested in art, especially in painting, however, was regarded odd in a manner which actually contradicted the ideals of Ottoman modernization. This manner is well reflected in Kâzım Paşa’s words to Çelâl Esad: ‘How can the son of Sadr-I Azam Esad Paşa become a painter? Would this befit our family


\textsuperscript{56} Üre, Byzantine heritage, 120ff.

\textsuperscript{57} Yeni İstanbul, no. 1904 (7 Mart 1955); Dünya, no. 2633 (28 Ocak 1960).

\textsuperscript{58} Yeni İstanbul no.1904 (7 Mart 1955).

\textsuperscript{59} Yeni İstanbul, no.1905 (8 Mart 1955); Dünya, no. 2625 (20 Ocak, 1960); Kickingereder, ‘Çelâl Esad Arseven’s Memoirs’, 38, n.8; S. A. Somel, The modernization of public education in the Ottoman empire, 1838-1908, Islamization, autocracy and discipline (Leiden, 2001), 52; Sürün, Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat, 73.
honor? Does this not run all your education to waste? You should be a great man serving this state, this nation, just like your father. Let’s make you a scribe to Bâb-I Alî. Or if you wish we can put you in Harbiyye, you would come out as an officer and become a paşa some day'. 60 Though Celâl Esad resists the pressure of his family, at some point he has to submit to the will of Abdülhamid II (d. 1918) and enrols in the ‘Zadegân’ class of Mekteb-I Harbiyye in 1891. 61 In this special class which consists of sons of high ranking dignitaries (paşas) he finds a convenient artistic environment in which he could develop himself more as a painter rather than a soldier. The large hall at the Hüinkar department of the academy has been transformed into a painting studio. Students practiced under the tutorship of the leading names of Turkish art such as Şeker Ahmed Paşa and Üsküdarli Hoca Ali Rıza. 62 Having found the opportunity to develop his oil painting technique at Harbiyye, Celâl Esad is influenced especially by Hoca Ali Rıza and this influence prepares the grounds for the establishment of a fruitful friendship based on their work in the years to come. 63 The years at Harbiyye have been a period of identity building for Celâl Esad. When the Turkish-Greek war breaks out, he graduates from the Harbiyye as Mülâzım-I sâni (second lieutenant), without finishing his last year, and is appointed to Yıldız Palace as personal aide-de-camp to Abdülhamid. 64

The years after his graduation constitute a period of creativity in which Celâl Esad dedicated himself entirely to art. His exhibition in Beyoğlu and his writings on art published in Malûmat on one hand, and on the other hand his acquaintance with and taking lessons from the famous painter [Fausto] Zonaro (d.1929) demonstrate his determination on developing himself as a painter. 65 It is also during this period that he finds an opportunity to work with a nude model, which he never has before, at the night studio three painters, namely Sanayi-I Nefise students Paulidis, Basmacidis and Alektoridis, have opened at Beyoğlu Parmakkapı. Celâl Esad also made his first journey to Europe after graduating. He went to Vienna, Paris and Berlin. In Berlin, he frequents

---

60 Yeni Istanbul, no.1905 (8 Mart 1955).
62 Sürün, Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat, 73-4
63 Kickingereider, ‘Celâl Esad Arseven’s Memoirs’, 41 ,n.34; Shaw, Ottoman painting, 33.
64 Süürün, Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat, 74.
65 Süürün, Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat, 74; O. Öndeş, E. Makzume, Fausto Zonaro, Ottoman court painter (İstanbul, 2003).
a zincography studio together with the calligrapher İsmail Hakkı Bey (d. 1946) and learns modern photoengraving techniques.

In the years between 1895-1903, Celâl Esad published a series of books on painting techniques. The first book under the series ‘Resim Kütüphanesi’ (Painting library) is Resim Dersleri (art lessons), was published in 1313/1895. The second book is Ressam ve Mimarlara Mahsus Menâzir (Perspectives for painters and architects) dated 1316/1899. The third is Ressamlara Rehber (Guide for painters) dated 1318/1901 and the last work of the series is Renkler, Renkli Resimler ve Yağlıboya (Colors, paintings and oil paint) published in 1319/1903. Fotografya (Photography), a result of his interest in photography, published in 1316/1899 is another product of this period.

We see the painter and publisher Celâl Esad shifting his interest toward history of art and architecture after 1903. On the suggestion of Pangalo, an American he met in 1903, he prepares a model for the Turkish pavilion to be built in an international exhibition in St. Louise. His research on Byzantine and Ottoman Istanbul for his project prepares the ground work for Constantinople, De Byzance à Stamboul, a book to be published by Renouard-H. Laurens in Paris in 1909. The book stimulates great interest and finds its place as a reference within the literature on Byzantine Istanbul. Celâl Esad prepares the project on old Istanbul neighbourhoods and Kapalıçarşı in the course of one month, however he is not allowed to go to the United States. The project finds praise in the press.

Among his pre-II. Meşrutiyet (constitutional period) works, the project for Fehim Paşa’s (d. 1908), one of Abdülhamid’s favorites, baroque mansion with 30 rooms at the ridges of İhlamur and his 1323/1907 dated Yapı Malzemesi (construction material) are particularly worth noting. During this period, Celâl Esad also shows...
his talent for literature with his book *Sevda Çağısı* (era of love) (1319/1903).

With the proclamation of II. Meşrutiyet a flood of publications cover the market, Celâl Esad and his friend Salâh Cimcoz join the flood with the newspaper *Kalem* (Pen).  

Young and famous artists gathered around *Kalem*, ‘a political and satirical’ publication as Celâl Esad calls it, including well-known names such as Cenab Şahabettin (d. 1934), Refik Halit (d. 1965) and Hüseyin Suad (d. 1942). The caricatures, on the other hand, are made by the famous caricaturist Cem (d. 1950) and Celâl Esad. When the first issue of *Kalem* appears on August 21, 1324, Celâl Esad had not yet resigned from his duty as an officer.

After resigning from the military he goes to Paris. He settles in Madame Sauvage’s guesthouse on Victor Hugo Avenue and steps in the intensive life of Parisian artistic circles. He commissions caricatures to D’ Ostaya, a painter he met there, to be published in *Kalem*. Meanwhile, inspired by the fashion painter Malatier, he does research on Old Turkish costumes. During these years he also publishes *Plan Archéologique de Constantinople*, an archaeological map of Istanbul containing both Byzantine and the Ottoman periods.

Within the atmosphere of freedom of 1908, Celâl Esad brings to life his hitherto unrealized theatre project together with his friend Salâh Cimcoz. Having planned to write the script for Selim-I Salis long before 1908, Celâl Esad thought of escaping from Abdülhamid’s despotism and having the play performed in Paris. However, such an escape never happens. The work operates around the historical relation between Ottoman modernization, Napoleonic France and the reforms of Selim III (d. 1808). The general subject matter of the play belonged to Celâl Esad, Salâh Cimcoz had filled in the historical details. The play has been put on

---


74 *Yeni Istanbul*, no.1908 (11 Mart 1955).


stage by Mınakyan’s *Osmanlı Dram Kumpanyası at Beyoğlu Varyete Tiyatrosu* on September 6, 1910.\(^77\)

In 1912, Celâl Esad brings his traits as artist and researcher together with the administrative tasks he undertakes within bureaucracy and produces work on urban administration. His first active job at the Municipality was at the *Tahrir-I Musakkafat Reisiği* (department of waqf income derived from house property).\(^78\) He assumes an influential role within the new structure with the appointment of Mayor Cemil Paşa as *İstanbul Şehremeni* (mayor) and vice governor on August 21, 1912, on the order of *İttihat ve Terakki*. In the same year, he publishes the original of *Constantinople, De Byzance à Stamboul*, which had been published in France in 1909, under the name *Eski İstanbul. Abidat ve Mebanisi. Şehrin Tesisinden Osmanlı Fethine Kadar* (Old Istanbul. Monuments and foundations. From the foundation of the city to the Ottoman conquest). Again in the same year, he publishes an extended edition of his *İstilahat-I Mimariyye* (Architectural Terms).\(^79\) In 1913, he is appointed as assistant to *Şehremeneti Umur-I Fenniyeye ve İstatistik Müdürlüğünü* (Municipality Department of Technological matters and Statistics).\(^80\)

In 1913, disagreements between the Mayor Cemil Paşa and Celâl Esad on urban administration and urban planning come to the surface. Cemil Paşa’s approach to the development lies more in favour of parks and gardens financed by the municipality budget, whereas Celâl Esad argues for the immediate need to deal with the inefficient infrastructure of the city.\(^81\) He cannot get along with Mr. Auric, whom Cemil Paşa appointed


\(^{78}\) Sürün, *Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat*, 74.

\(^{79}\) [Arseven], Celâl Esad, *İstilahât-I Mimariye* (Istanbul, 1908); for an outline of the work, see Sürün, *Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat*, 122; D. Mazlum, ‘Öncü Bir Mimarlık Sözülügü: Celâl Esad Arseven’in İstilahât-i-Mimariye’si’, *Sanat Tarihi Defterleri* 9 (Istanbul, 2005), 9-32; see also another dictionary Arseven wrote: *İstilahât-i İliyeye Enrümeni Tараrфından Sanayi-I Nefisede Mevcut Kelimât ve Tabirât* (Istanbul, 1914); and for a modern Turkish translation, see Güzell Sanatlar Terimleri Alanında Öncü Bir Çalışma Sanâyi’-i Nefse İstilahât-ı Mecmiası (Istanbul, 2012); for this work, see Sürün, *Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat*, 123-34.


as head of the Technology Commission, and is finally appointed as
director to the department of Kadıköy Municipality. In 1913, the second
of his works on Istanbul Eski Galata ve Binaları (Old Galata and its
buildings) is published. The work was initially printed as a series in
Servet-I Fünun starting from the 1159th issue on and then compiled and
published as a book in the same year.

Focusing primarily on the infrastructure problems in regards to the
urban development of Istanbul, Celâl Esad makes a journey to Europe
with Cemil Paşa on the eve of World War I. On this expedition designed
to explore urban trends, he takes Cemil Paşa on a rowboat ride along the
sewers of Paris to prove his point about the importance of the
infrastructure problems he stresses.\(^{82}\)

As World War I rapidly advances, Celâl Esad’s operations as mayor
of Kadıköy continue incessantly. Kadıköy municipality, which operated
at a wooden mansion in Çarıkçı neighbourhood is carried to its present
location at the pier square (present-being the time when this article was
written). The square is re-arranged and the sporadic settlement between
the pier and the market is removed. By his own initiative, he also
decorates the walls of the municipality building with panels
commissioned to famous artists.\(^{83}\) The third work concerning his
research on Istanbul, Kadıköy Hakkinda Tedkikât-ı Belediyye (Municipal
examinations on Kadıköy) is a concrete product of his efforts of the
period. Celâl Esad demonstrated his expertise in municipal
administration in the three works, primarily related to administrative
regulations, published in 1915-6: Belediyelerde Evrakin Kayd ve Tasnifi
Nasıl Olmalıdır (Recording and classification of documents in
municipalities) (1331/1915); Belediyelerde İnşaatın Emâneten İdaresi
(Administration of construction in trust for municipalities) (1331/1915);
Belediyeler ve Teşkilâtı (Municipalities and organization) (1331/1916).
In 1917, he is elected as a member of Muhaçaza-ı Abidat Encümeni
(Committee for the preservation of monuments) founded under the
Istanbul Archaeological Museum.\(^{84}\)

One of the main issues occupying the agenda of Ottoman foreign
affairs during the war years was the organization of propaganda activity

---

\(^{82}\) Dünya, no. 2639 (3 Şubat 1960).

\(^{83}\) N. Berk, Istanbul Resim ve Heykel Müzesi (Istanbul, 1972), 20; Yeni İstanbul 1910
(13 Mart 1955).

\(^{84}\) Sürün, Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat, 74; for an outline of the architectural preservation
of Byzantine heritage in the context of urban development policies in twentieth century

- 39 -
to present the Turks as a modern nation in the eyes of the allied forces and thus secure foreign aid. The Intelligence Department at the Ministry of War, taking initiative in this, requested a report from Celâl Esad by the suggestion of its director Miralay (Colonel) Seyfi Bey. In this report, Celâl Esad suggests organizing art exhibitions and concerts in the capital cities of the allied forces, these would demonstrate the dimension of Ottoman modernization\(^{85}\). The report is accepted and preparations begin. First, the conductor of the Private Chamber (Mabeyn-I Hümayûn) orchestra Zeki Bey is asked to establish an orchestra of eighty musicians. With a repertoire of selected works of Beethoven, Wagner, Schubert and Haydn the orchestra performs its first rehearsal at Gümüşsuyu Barracks. After a successful European tour organized in the name of Salîb-I Ahmer (Red Cross), the orchestra returns home in 1918.\(^{86}\) Upon Seyfi Bey’s demand for paintings with primarily military subject-matter, painting activity commences at the huge studio built in Şişli.\(^{87}\) Among the painters taking part in the project are the famous names of Turkish painting: Çallî İbrahim, Feyhaman, Namık İsmail, Hikmet Onat, Sami Yetik and Ali Sami. The exhibition is first launched in Beyoğlu,\(^{88}\) and then sent to Vienna and Berlin with Celâl Esad presiding.\(^{89}\)

During the years of war, Celâl Esad also served as a member of the managing board of Darülbedayî (city theatre in Istanbul).\(^{90}\) After the French theatre expert Antoine left his job at Darülbedayî, which was still in the foundation phase, the administrative void was filled with the ‘Hey’et-I Idâre’ (Administrative Commitee) established by the initiative of mayor İsmet Bey. Celâl Esad served in this committee together with Salâh Cimcoz, İbnüreّfelik Ahmed Nuri, Cenab Şehabeddin and Hüseyin Suad.\(^{91}\) The first committee meeting was realised on April 23, 1331, at Letafet Apartments in Şehzadebaşı; İsmail Cenani was elected president

---

\(^{85}\) Bozdoğan, ‘Reading Ottoman architecture’.
\(^{87}\) Yeni İstanbul 1910 (13 Mart 1955); Dünya, no. 2642 (6 Şubat 1960).
\(^{88}\) Halil Edhem. Elvâh-I Naksiyye Koleksionu (Istanbul, 1340), 34
\(^{89}\) Eyice, 176; Dünya, no.2643 (7 Şubat 1960); Sürün, Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat, 74; for the building of a nationalist character of music in the early republican era in Turkey, see N. Sinan Turan, B. Işıktaş, ‘The deadlock of nation-state: the problem of nationalisation of music during the early Republican era in Turkey’, Rast Müzikoloji Dergisi, Cilt IV, Sayı 1 (2016), 1076-92, 1079.
\(^{91}\) Özdemir Nuru, Darülbedayî’ın, 27.
Towards the end of the war, Celâl Esad, keeping his membership of the committee, wrote an operetta named Şaban. The music of the work, based on Russian polyphonic music and adorned with motifs from Turkish composers like Dede Efendi and Itri, was composed by Viktor Radeglia, a master at Darülbedayi. This operetta was performed at Volksoper theatre in Vienna with the staging of Herr von Mainau. The work was received with so much interest among the intellectuals that the same Halide Edib, too, wrote a libretto, namely Kenan Çobanları (Shepards of Canaan), which was then composed by Vedi Sabra. A committee was formed for organizing the performance of this opera; based on his expertise in this field Celâl Esad was included in the committee together with Halide Edib herself, Falih Rıfkı and Muhsin Ertuğrul; and he undertook to have the scenery be produced in Vienna.

Following painting, art history, music and theatre, another field of art Celâl Esad showed interest in during the years of truce was film. During the occupation of Istanbul, he meets the photographer Kenan Reşid in Berlin and upon his request writes the script Die Tote Wacht. With the participation of Neemeddin Molla and Ismail Hakkı Bey-consul at München- he founds Trans-Orient Film company for the production of the film. Featuring German actors, Die Tote Wacht does not meet enough interest in the presence of American productions which have invaded post-war Europe.

Having been out of the country during the War of Independence, Celâl Esad returns to Istanbul when war is over. Upon the invitation of Hamdullah Suphi, vice minister of education, he is appointed as History of architecture teacher at Sanayi Nefise Mektebi.

Leaving aside Büyük Yarın (The Great Tomorrow), a play in three acts, written in 1923, and Notlar ve Kütüphanelere Dair Usul-I Tasnif (Classification methods for libraries and notes) published the year after, during the first years of the Republic his area of interest lay in architectural history and urban development. In 1923, he works as

---

93 Dünya no.2639 (3 Şubat 1960), no. 2643 (7 Şubat 1960); Gazimihali, Türk Askeri Mızikaları Tarihi, 131.
94 Özdemir Nutku, Darülbedayi nin, 41; İkdâm (10 Mart 1334); İkdâm (13 Mart 1334)
95 Özdemir Nutku, Darülbedayi nin, 43; Temasâ (15 Ağustos 1334)
96 Burhan Arpad, ‘Koruyan Ölü’, Hafta 10 (9 Mart 1956); Yeni İstanbul no. 1911 (14 Mart 1955); Sürün, Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat, 74.
97 Yeni İstanbul 1913 (16 Mart 1955); Eyice, 177; Kickingereider, ‘Celâl Esad Arseven’s Memoirs’, 38-9, n.15; Sürün, Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat, 74.
consultant to Prof. H. Jansen in constructing the development plan of Ankara.99 In 1926, he translates and publishes Camillo Sitte’s work under the name of Şehir Mimarisi (Urban Architecture).100 This could be considered as an extension of the lessons he gave at Sanayi-I Nefise Mektebi. He tries to find a remedy to the terminological deficiency in the field of arts to some extent with Fransızcadan Türkçeye Türkçeden Fransızcaya Sanat Kamusu (Dictionary of art terms from French to Turkish and from Turkish to French) published in 1925-6 in two volumes.101 In 1928, this dictionary is followed by the first part of Mimari Tarihi (Architectural history) subtitled Kunun-I Kadime (Old Ages). In 1926, he is appointed as general director of Darülbedayi and simultaneously carries on his position as Publications Director of Istanbul Chamber of Commerce. He presides over the trip organized by Istanbul Chamber of Commerce to present and publicize Turkish goods in foreign markets; upon his return he publishes his impressions in Seyyar Sergi ile Seyahat İntibaları (Impressions of a journey with the traveling exhibition).

An important cultural debate dominated Republican Turkey in early 1930s. Several studies were conducted in various disciplines such as history, philology, art and anthropology with the aim of investigating the origins of Turkish culture. All these studies finally came to agree that Turks were entitled to one of the oldest civilizations. The pre-Islamic periods of Turkish culture were emphasized; based on the available data the presence of a cultural continuity from Middle Asia until the present was underlined. As early as 1928, Celâl Esad had made a successful presentation of this argument in Türk Sanatı (Turkish Art) published among Türk Ocakları Neşriyatı.102 An extended edition of this work was published in 1939 in French with the title L’art Turc.103 Keeping in mind the necessities dictated by the present in terms of both art and architecture, Celâl Esad has investigated the part played primarily by modern architecture in social development and in his Yeni Mimari (New architecture) dated 1931 he has emphasized the functionality of

99 Eyice, 177; Sürün, Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat, 74.
100 This was one of other works on urbanisation that were translated in the context of attempts made to improve the city; see Ozaslan, Historic urban fabric, 96 n.39
101 The first modern Ottoman Turkish dictionary of art terminology: [Arseven], Celâl Esad, Fransızcadan Türkçeye Türkçeden Fransızcaya Sanat Kamusu: Dictionnaire des termes d’art Français –Turc, Turc-Français (İstanbul, 1926); see Sürün, Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat, 121, n.223.
103 Celal Esad Arseven, L’art Turc: depuis son origine jusqu’a nos jours (İstanbul, 1939).
architectural aesthetics freed from conservatism. He has carried on this approach in his translation of E. G. Benito’s *Yeni Resim Hakkında* (On New Art) published in 1947.

When *Türk Tarihinin Ana Hatları* (Outlines of Turkish history), prepared in 1930 with the initiative of Cemal Atatürk (d. 1938), was re-handled as a comprehensive project in 1932, Celâl Esad appears as a contributor. He writes *Türklerde Mimari* (Architecture of the Turks) (1932) with this purpose in mind. This little booklet is revised and published again in 1934 with the title *Türklerde Mimari: Eti ve Selçuk Mimarileri* (Architecture of the Turks: Architecture of Hitites and Selcukids). In 1937, when he was the director of Kadıköy Halkevi, he publishes *Şehircilik* (Urbanism). In *Les arts décoratifs Turcs*, he examines Turkish decorative arts and meticulously specifies the differences between Turkish style of motifs and Arabic-Iranian ornamentation. This work is followed by his colossal five-volume work *Sanat Ansiklopedisi* (Encyclopedia of art) published as single issues between 1943 and 1952. He was voted member of the parliament in 1942 and 1946. In 1951 he was made a member of *Gayrimenkul Eski Eserler ve Anıtlar Yüksek Kurulu*, which he chaired between 1951 and 1953. Having received the State Culture Award on 24 October 1971, Celâl Esad passed away on 13 November 1971.

---

109 Sürün, *Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat*, 74; Kickingereder, ‘Çelâl Esad Arseven’s Memoirs’, n.16. The surname Arseven (‘The one who loves art’) was chosen by Celâl Esad when surnames became compulsory in 1934.
110 Eyyice, 177; Sürün, *Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat*, 74.
111 Sürün, *Cumhuriyet Öncesi Sanat*, 74.