

## NEWSLETTER OF ASSOCIATION SUISSE TURQUIE

No 34

APRIL 2022

After a long pause, we are very happy to be back! While we were greeted by snow on April 1st in Geneva and in many parts of Switzerland, summer and travel plans are already on our minds. For those visiting Istanbul this summer, we recommend a trip to the Harem in Topkapı Palace, which will soon reopen a section it had been renovating for the past two years.

According to İlhan Kocaman, head of Topkapı Palace Museum, the Harem is composed of two sections: the first one is for the imperial family and the second one for servants. It is the latter which was being renovated and it includes not only its own hammams and sleeping quarters, but also the Harem's hospital.



Renovation site

While Westerners often thought of Harem as a den of iniquity where the Sultan would indulge all his fantasies with innumerable concubines, those that explore it will discover interesting facts. According to Ottoman history professor Leslie Peirce, Harem was a spiritual term which denoted respect, religious purity, and honour.

For example, the most sacred places in the 16th century Ottoman world, the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, were and remain the two most revered harems in the Islamic world. The Great Mosque of Mecca is named Masjid al-Haram and one of the most important titles from 1517 for Ottoman sultans, was “the servant of the two noble sanctuaries” (hadimul haremeyn ül-şerifeyn). Other examples include the central Muslim religious compound in Jerusalem, Islam's third most holy city, also known as the “noble sanctuary” (harem-i şerif) and the inner courtyard of mosques — their sanctuary — which were named harem in Ottoman times.

Although not directly divine, the sultan, “God's shadow on Earth,” can create sacred spaces with his presence. Because he lived in the inner, male only precinct of the royal palace, it became known as “the imperial harem” (harem-i hümayûn). When towards the end of the sixteenth century he established a second area for women and children of the royal household, the latter area also began to be referred to as “the imperial harem” because of the presence not of women but of the sultan.

The Harem is a space to which general access is forbidden or controlled and where certain individuals or certain modes of behavior s are forbidden. That the private quarters in a domestic residence and by extension its female residents are also referred to as a “harem”, comes from the Islamic practice of restricting access to

these quarters, specifically access by males beyond a particular degree of consanguinity with the resident females.

As such, the imperial harem was more like a convent in its hierarchical organization and the enforced chastity of the great majority of its members.

The painstaking restoration work should be completed in a few months, and this will almost double the area of the Harem open to visitors. According to İlhan Kocaman, “the most important work here is the hand labour, meticulously carried out by our masters in its original form.” We hope you will be able to enjoy and appreciate this spectacular restoration the next time you visit Istanbul.

For further reading, please find below the full articles that inspired us:

[https://www.sozcu.com.tr/hayatim/kultur-sanat-haberleri/harem-i-humayun-yuzde-80-tamam/?utm\\_source=anasayfa&utm\\_medium=free&utm\\_campaign=hayat\\_alt\\_altli](https://www.sozcu.com.tr/hayatim/kultur-sanat-haberleri/harem-i-humayun-yuzde-80-tamam/?utm_source=anasayfa&utm_medium=free&utm_campaign=hayat_alt_altli)

<https://www.indyturk.com/node/98251/k%C3%BClt%C3%BCr/ger%C3%A7ekler-ve-efsaneler-aras%C4%B1nda-harem>

<https://www.icraa.org/myth-and-reality-of-the-ottoman-harem/>

We wish you a wonderful spring time and to all our member children, a Happy April 23 Children’s Day.

Editors

Please keep us posted on events and news that you would like to share at [editorsassosuisseturquie@gmail.com](mailto:editorsassosuisseturquie@gmail.com)

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## APRIL AND MAY EVENTS

### Future Association Events

- Celebration of Children’s Day – April 30 at 2:30 pm, location tbc

Gathering of children, past and present. Artist and pedagogue Sandra Albukrek will kindly organise artistic and fun activities for the celebration of the 102th Children’s Day.

RSVP [assosuisseturquie@gmail.com](mailto:assosuisseturquie@gmail.com)

- Guided tour of Ruches, Fondation Arche des Abeilles – June 11 at 2:00 pm at Satigny

This apicultural visit will end with a “goûter” and include a honey tasting session of the Fondation Arches des Abeilles

- Happy Hour – June 16 at 6 pm at Studio ART

Exhibition opening of “Behind my Strokes”, paintings by Ms. Izim Çetindağ sponsored by Association Suisse-Turquie

For future Association events : [www.assochttr.ch](http://www.assochttr.ch)

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## MEMBER EVENTS

- “Le Temps d’une Rêverie”

Museum d’Histoire Naturelle  
May 15 at 2pm

This is an event postponed from last year and will include the visit of ornithology galleries of the museum, followed by a dreamlike concert including pieces by Camille Saint-Saens’ and ending with our member Sandra Albukrek and Julia Dasic’s animation movie that accompanies Saint Saen’s “The Carnival of Animals”. <https://www.festivaldeslutins.com/fr/programme>

- Tasting Alaçatı

Alaçatı, Izmir  
May 27-29

Organized by our member Nalan Miri Sözer, Tasting Alaçatı will include the exploration of regional food and ingredients as well as workshops and music.

<https://kurabiyeotel.com/alacatida-yasamak/tasting-alacati-fest>

- Voyage October 15-22

Travel to Carya Golf Club, in Antalya’s Belek Region, at Hôtel Regnum, organized by our member golf coach, Leila Üngün.

Information and pre-registration: [info@golf-fit.ch](mailto:info@golf-fit.ch)

- Presentation of Ali Rıza Tuna on his new book “From Myth to Art: Anatolian Kilims”

To be scheduled

Ali Rıza Tuna, who is also our member, is an independent researcher and textile collector in various aspects of early Anatolian carpets. His research focuses on aesthetics and design development of Turkish carpets from 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, as well as on Anatolian kilims and other weavings.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- New website

Please note: to improve the security of our website, we have changed our web address to

[www.assoctr.ch](http://www.assoctr.ch)

- “Lausanne Bizim Lozan”

The much-praised book published by our Association is available for purchase at:

Bookstore Letu in Geneva

Online on our website [www.assoctr.ch](http://www.assoctr.ch)

and also on

<https://www.abebooks.com/servlet/BookDetailsPL?bi=22298731039&searchurl=sortBy%3D0%26vci%3D601833>

We believe it will be a much-appreciated gift by your friends and family!

- Cornucopia Magazine

Our annual sponsor and the source of many events that take place in Turkey and around the world, is now also digital and includes all the past editions.

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## RECENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Wine Tasting

On March 26th, a wine tasting session between the Association Suisse-Turquie, the Swiss Consulate and the Şarap Dostları Derneği was organised at the Four Seasons Bosphorous, Istanbul. We'd like to thank Swiss Ambassador and to all those who joined. It was a great event to showcase Swiss wines to Turkish wine lovers.

- Turkey is the 4th largest exporter of olive oil

According to the National Statistics Office, in 2021, there were 189 million olive trees in Turkey, of which 158 million produced olives. Globally, Turkey is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest producer of olives with 14.2% of world production. However, due to various factors, including climatic changes, while in 2000, one tree would yield about 20kg of olives, this figure nearly was 8.3kg in 2020.

- A Fondue making Robot called Bouébot

A Wallis company, specializing in robotics, developed a new robot that can make fondue, but not any fondue, a moitié-moitié! Called Bouébot, it made its first demonstration in March in Paris at Salon de l'Agriculture. Next, it will participate at the Swiss Fondue Festival in November in Fribourg.

- Late Roman mosaic depicting feast has been found in Kahramanmaraş

During the excavations in the ancient city of Caesarea Germanicia in the southern Turkish province of Kahramanmaraş, a mosaic describing an open-air feast where several tableaux including one where three women are dancing to music, has been unearthed. The seventh year of archaeological excavations in Germanicia, located in the city's Bağlarbaşı neighborhood, has come to an end. During the excavations, the remains of 1'500-year-old architectural structures and baths, as well as this particular mosaic measuring 50 square meters, have been found.



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## ARTS UPDATE sponsored by Cornucopia Magazine

### Exhibitions

- Recess

SALT Galata  
Until April 24, 2022

[https://www.cornucopia.net/events/recess/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=March+2022+Arts+Diary&utm\\_source=YMLP](https://www.cornucopia.net/events/recess/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=March+2022+Arts+Diary&utm_source=YMLP)

- The Prince's Extraordinary World: Abdulmecid Efendi

Sakıp Sabancı Museum, Istanbul  
Until May 1, 2022

[https://www.cornucopia.net/events/the-princes-extraordinary-world/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=March+2022+Arts+Diary&utm\\_source=YMLP](https://www.cornucopia.net/events/the-princes-extraordinary-world/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=March+2022+Arts+Diary&utm_source=YMLP)

- Don't Look Back, Deep is the Past

Odunpazarı Modern Museum, Şarkıye Mah. Atatürk Bul. No: 37, Odunpazarı Eskişehir  
Until May 31, 2022

[https://www.cornucopia.net/events/dont-look-back/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=March+2022+Arts+Diary&utm\\_source=YMLP](https://www.cornucopia.net/events/dont-look-back/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=March+2022+Arts+Diary&utm_source=YMLP)

- Intersecting Past and Present

ANAMED Research Center, Istanbul  
Until October 17, 2022

[https://www.cornucopia.net/events/intersecting-past-and-present/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=March+2022+Arts+Diary&utm\\_source=YMLP](https://www.cornucopia.net/events/intersecting-past-and-present/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=March+2022+Arts+Diary&utm_source=YMLP)

- Lasting Impressions : People, Power, Piety

Dumbarton Oaks Research Library, Washington DC  
Until November 1, 2022

[https://www.cornucopia.net/events/lasting-impressions/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=March+2022+Arts+Diary&utm\\_source=YMLP](https://www.cornucopia.net/events/lasting-impressions/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=March+2022+Arts+Diary&utm_source=YMLP)

## **Festivals**

- 50<sup>th</sup> Istanbul Music Festival, June 6-24

Booking well in advanced is recommended

<https://www.cornucopia.net/events/iksv-50th-music-festival/>

## **Lectures**

- The Grand Tour in The Ottoman Empire:  
Power, Pleasure and Ruins  
By Dr.Philip Mansel

May 10 at 6pm

- Nomads Tent, Edinburgh

<https://www.cornucopia.net/events/the-grand-tour-in-the-ottoman-empire/>

- Douglas Baird, Head of Excavations at Boncuklu Höyük The Oriental Institute, North America

May 26 at 7pm EST

<https://www.cornucopia.net/events/the-braidwood-visiting-scholar-lecture/>

## **RICH PICKINGS FROM THE CORNUCOPIA BOOKSHOP**

For the complete selection: <https://www.cornucopia.net/store/books>

Blue Guide: Mediterranean Turkey: From Muğla to Antakya, by Paola Pugsley  
<https://www.cornucopia.net/store/books/blue-guide-mediterranean-turkey/>

Vol 2 of Impressions of Istanbul: Voyage to Constantinople,

A magnificent compendium of selected titles in the Ömer Koç Collection, covering the years 1821–50 <https://www.cornucopia.net/store/books/impressions-of-istanbul-voyage-to-constantinople-vol-2/>

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