

Full Length Paper

Ex-libris in Turkey

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The article explores the introduction of Ex-libris Art to Turkey, tracing its historical antecedent from Europe and from books about the Ottoman era to its current enthusiasts local to museums, schools and universities in Turkey and in Northern Cyprus. The success of the developmental work necessary for the Ex-libris Turkey, which became a member of the International Federation of Ex-libris Societies (FISAE) in 2000 through the membership of the Ankara Ex-libris Society, is seen in the multitude of awards Turkish nationals have been winning in international competitions since 2008 and in the many international exhibitions and competitions the Istanbul Ex-libris Society which replaces Ankara's has hosted in partnership with the Istanbul Museum of Graphic Arts (IMOGA), Feyziye Schools Foundation and the Işık University. The future of the Ex-libris Art in Turkey is assured as it has become a curriculum of studies with regular undergraduate and graduate student intakes within the Graphic Arts Departments.

Keywords: Aesthetic Art; Calligraphic Structure; Communication Medium; Inscription; Bookplate; Placeholder

INTRODUCTION

Ex-libris is usually small-sized graphic work with names and pictures on various subjects pasted inside book covers by book lovers. It is either a visiting-card or the deed title of the book. Ex-libris introduces the owner of the book, glorifies and exalts him and warns the borrower of the book to return it. Along with being a discretionary possession, indication of an ownership, it may be said that it functions to protect the book from thieves. Its literal meaning is "...s book" or "from ...'s library". <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/ex+libris>

Ex-libris is a significant communication medium. While it is set as the graphic of need, it is a specific master-work that has been designed from aesthetic anxiety. Art from human hands into the books lets others feel its charming warmth. This branch of art which has an older history has become interesting at present time because of its cultural, historical characteristics and has been used by artists and collectors as an important object of issue.

EX-LIBRIS in TURKEY

Ex-libris was introduced to Turkey either by Turks going abroad or via books purchased from the West. Books containing ex-libris, which are used widely in European countries, have been brought to Turkey through second-hand sales, and when book owners passed away, their relatives either donated the books to libraries or sold them to antiquarian booksellers.

Ex-libris are found in books on Turkey bought from auctions conducted in the West. For example, it is possible to see ex-libris in a book, which is in the National Library, on Ottoman History printed in 1777 and bought from Germany in 1954 in exchange for 210 Deutsche Marks. Ex-libris in books that are related to the Ottomans at the library of Henry M. Blackmer were purchased by the Turkish Ministry of Culture from the Sotheby's auction in London in 1989. The Cavit Baysun library donated ex-libris in books bought from abroad to the Yapı Kredi Bank Library and those of the Sedat Simavi and Şevket Rado libraries were donated to the Press Museum, particularly those in French.

The stamps present on handwritten manuscripts and printed books that date back to the Ottoman era may be recognized as signs of ownership. Although stamps do not belong to the ex-libris type, with their original calligraphic structures, they have functioned as the personal coat of arms or logotype of the person they belong to.

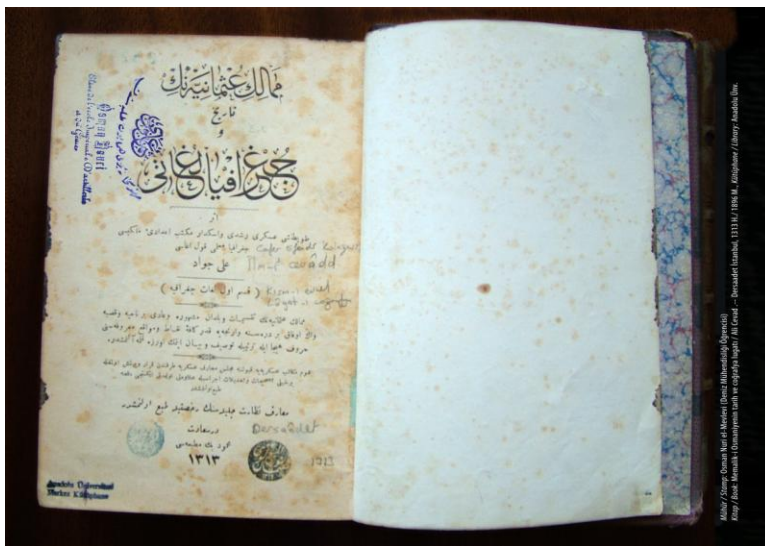


Figure 1: Sealed Book

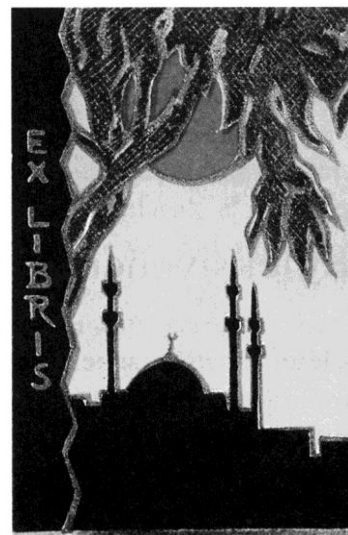


Figure 2: Ex-libris from Students of Robert College

It can be argued that those who first received ex-libris made in the real sense of the art, in Turkey, were the expatriate bibliophiles of that period. That the expatriate teachers who served in foreign schools such as the Üsküdar American Academy and the Robert College made ex-libris can be seen when the inside covers of the books they donated to the libraries of these schools are examined. In the majority of the books of the Robert College library, which now belongs to the Boğaziçi University, a standard ex-libris is found. Starting from the 1920s, student yearbooks of the Robert College featured ex-libris that also contained blank placeholders for the owners of the yearbook to inscribe their names. Designed and applied by those in charge of the artistic aspects of the yearbook, this tradition was unfortunately suspended during the 1950s.

<http://www.ebay.com/itm/RARE-ANT-1930-EX-LIBRIS-ROBERT-COLLEGE-BOOK-TURKEY-ISTANBUL-CONSTANTINOPLE-/261016963508>

Ex-libris, Protection against Theft

Although, neither enthusiasts nor collectors of this recently spreading art are many in Turkey the number of bibliophiles as well as others, who invest in ex-libris as a measure against theft by borrowers of books from their libraries is increasing every other day. For example, İ. Gündoğdu Kayaoğlu, folk-culture expert and researcher-writer possesses the ex-libris comprising a cartoon of Tan Oral with the inscription “Yâ Kebikeç” in Arabic which was done on it in 1985. (In the past, the word “Kebikeç”, which was thought to be the “Sultan of the Bugs” was inscribed on handwritten manuscript books to protect them from worms. The bugs were believed to be scared of the Kebikeç and avoid approaching the books which have this word on them.)

http://www.zaman.com.tr/nazan-bekiroglu/kebikec-bocegi_943978.html

<http://www.oburmizah.com/oburmizah/hpektas/galeri-hpektas.html>

The Ankara Ex-libris Society and FISAE Membership

Yapı Kredi Cultural Activities Arts and Publishing Inc. published Hasip Pektaş's book “Ekslibris” in 1996 and the extended Second Edition of the book was printed by the Ankara Ex-libris Society in 2003.

The Ankara Ex-libris Society was accepted into FISAE, with membership of 40 countries, in the year 2000 and Turkey participated in the FISAE Boston Congress, that same year.

From time to time, people who have just heard about the existence of such an art seem to get interested in ex-libris with great enthusiasm. Nevertheless, these individuals will first have to deal with its functional side, and in time, just like the other collectors abroad, they will adopt it and start accumulating in line with their areas of interest. As long as book owners, collectors, and artists continue to be enamored of ex-libris in Turkey, it is certain this tradition will be well established here, as well.

<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/45528646204790907/>

<http://www.pinterest.com/hasippektas/ex-librises-from-the-world/>

The Istanbul Ex-libris Society

First established in Ankara in 1997, the Ex-libris Society in Turkey has continued its activities in Istanbul under the name of the Istanbul Ex-libris Society since 2008. As one of the 10 museums all around the World, the Istanbul Ex-libris Museum was established under the Istanbul Museum of Graphic Arts (IMOGA) in 2008, and with its collection of more than 17.000 ex-libris and a library, it has created great opportunities for researchers.

<http://www.fisae.org/ankBiennaleGB.htm>

<http://www.aed.org.tr/English/Content.aspx?ID=2>



Figure 3: Hasip Pektaş



Figure 4: Hasip Pektaş



Figure 5: H. Müjde Ayan



**ISTANBUL
EX-LIBRIS
SOCIETY**

The Istanbul Ex-libris Society has opened exhibitions in 14 cities in Turkey as well as in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), Denmark, China, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Finland, Belarus, Canada, and Russia and thus publicized ex-libris.

Numerous conferences have been organised to promote the art of ex-libris and workshops, and conducted particularly in schools.

The Istanbul Ex-libris Society also organized 3 international ex-libris competitions in 2003, 2007, and 2010. In 2010, the Society, in cooperation with the Feyziye Schools Foundation and Işık University, organized the International Federation of Ex-libris Societies (FISAE) XXXIII International Congress of Ex-libris and welcomed 280 artists and collectors from 40 different countries in Istanbul. In addition to the third International Ex-libris Competition Exhibition, the Collections of Japanese collector Ichigoro Uchida, Austrian collector Heinrich R. Scheffer, Moscow Ex-libris Museum, China Ex-libris Association, and Shanghai Fu Xian Zhai Ex-libris Society as well as Stamped Old Book Pages, which reflect our tradition of stamping, a type of ex-libris, were exhibited. Işık University also organized a national ex-libris competition for high-school students in 2012. <http://web.natur.cuni.cz/exlibris/>



Figure 6: Nazan Tekbaş Tanyu



Figure 7: Elif Varol Ergen

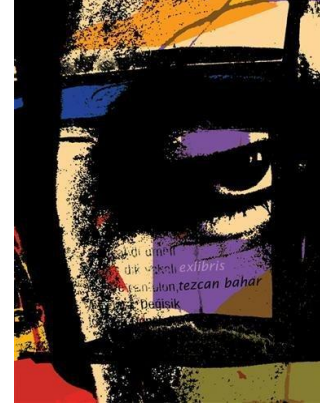


Figure 8: Tezcan Bahar

CONCLUSION: Ex-libris Promotions, Competitions and Winners

Since 2000, particularly due to the encouragement and support of faculties and establishments in Turkey that provide fine-arts education; youths that make ex-libris have started to evolve as masters in this field. Turkish artists are currently claiming awards in exhibitions and competitions organized abroad and are having their voices heard through activities carried out in international settings. In addition, it is also a fact that 13 graduate theses have already been completed so far on ex-libris, a subject matter that is still quite new in Turkey.

<http://vacd.emu.edu.tr/index.php/en/events-and-activites/39-events/55-1st-international-ex-libris-competition-north-cyprus2010-final-results>

The Istanbul Ex-libris Academy Society established in 1998 is also actively working to spread ex-libris. It organized the competitions titled “Ex-libris Istanbul” in 2000 and “Ex-libris Nazım Hikmet” in 2002 and an exhibition titled “Ex-libris Mediteranean” in 2010. However, it should be remembered that ex-libris is not made for the purpose of tourism or after the name of a deceased person. Ex-libris can only be functional if performed in the name of individuals and organization that are alive.

The number of artists and designers, who participate and win awards in numerous international ex-libris exhibitions in addition to the exhibitions of ex-libris in Turkey, is increasing every day. These Turkish artists are enamored of ex-libris, and are working seriously in their fields to spread ex-libris. The names that come to mind from among these include Güler Akalan, Tülin Aktar, Mine Arasan, Nurgül Arıkan, Hakan Arslan, İsmail Aslan, Mehmet Aslan, H. Müjde Ayan, Mehmet Aydoğdu, Erdal Aygenç, Durmuş Murat Bahar, Lütfiye A Bahar, Tezcan Bahar, Hatice Bengisu, Nurhayat Berker, Elif Varol Ergen, Hakan Erkam, Erdoğan Ergün, Ayşen Erte, Murat Ertürk, Şükrü Ertürk, İlknur Dedeoğlu, Hakan Demir, Hüseyin Demir, Salih Denli, Ali Doğan, Mine Saraç Doğan,

Yunus Güneş, Mürşide İçmeli, İsmail İlhan, Ayşegül İzer, Berran Kancal, Ahmet Aydın Kaptan, Serpil Güvendi Kaptan, Devabil Kara, Erkin Keskin, Yusuf Keş, Hasan Kıran, Emin Koç, Gülbin Koçak, Musa Köksal, Mustafa Okan, Gökhan Okur, Erol N. Olcay, Fatih Özdemir, Hasan Pekmezci, Sevgi Can Pekmezci, Hasip Pektaş, Özden Pektaş Turgut, Zülfikar Sayın, Emre Şengün, Nazan Tekbaş Tanyu, Sema Ilgaz Temel, Gözde Eda Tekcan, Süleyman Saim Tekcan, Handan Tepe, Ali Tomak, Ercan Tuna, Serdar Tuna, Ozan Uyanık, and Fedail Yılmaz.



Figure 9: Şükrü Ertürk

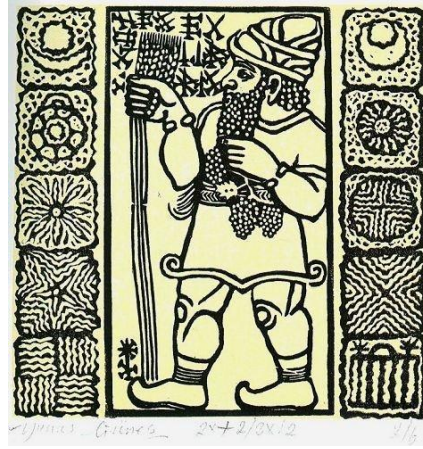


Figure 10: Yunus Güneş



Figure 11: Onur Aşkın

We should also mention the artists and young people, who have adopted the art of ex-libris within such a short period of time and have made Turkey proud with their original and successful contributions. In 2013, Onur Aşkın claimed the First CGD Prize in the Moscow Second International Ex-Libris Competition for Young Artists. In 2012, Aytolun Cansu Ece Gür, Eda Gizem Uğur, Esra Diken, Taha Elgün, and Yusuf Aşım claimed Honors awards at the Işık University First National Student Ex-libris Competition; Lütfiye Bahar, Tezcan Bahar, Musa Köksal, Sevgi Koyuncu, Hasip Pektaş, Erhun Şengül, Emre Şengün, Ozan Uyanık, and Fedail Yılmaz claimed the Participant Award in 3rd Erotic Ex-libris Exhibition Beijing, People's Republic of China; Erkin Keskin claimed the Third Prize in the Shanghai Lajuazui Meiyuancup International Ex-libris Competition; and Tezcan Bahar claimed the IMOGA Special Prize in the Hacettepe University Department of Information Management International Ex-libris Competition. In 2011, Irem Çamlıca won the First CGD Prize in the First International Ex-Libris Competition for Young Artists in Russia; Murat Ertürk won the Second CDG Prize in the 5th International Ex-Libris and Small Graphic Forms Competition in Gdansk, Poland, and Emre Şengün won the Gdansk Community Foundation President's Prize in the same competition. In 2010, Tezcan Bahar won the Mehmet Rafet Atalık Special Prize in the FISAE XXXIII International Congress of Ex-libris organized by the Istanbul Ex-libris Society, Feyziye Schools Foundation in collaboration with Işık University. Burçin Demir and Emre Şengün won the Success Prize in the Northern Cyprus Near East University, Rauf Denktaş International Ex-libris Competition; Tezcan Bahar won the Johan Bosschem Special Prize in the

Northern Cyprus Eastern Mediterranean University First International Ex-libris Competition; Tezcan Bahar claimed the First CGD Prize in the 4th International Ex-libris and Small Graphic Forms Competition in Gdansk, Poland and Emre Şengün won the Gdansk Community Foundation President's Prize in the same competition.

https://www.google.com.tr/search?q=EX-libris+Society%2C+Ankara%2C+Turkey&rlz=1C1OPRB_enTR565TR565&oq=EX-libris+Society%2C+Ankara%2C+Turkey&aqs=chrome..69i57.29158j0j8&sourceid=chrome&espv=210&es_sm=122&ie=UTF8#q=Moscow+Second+International+Ex+Libris+Competition+for+Young+Artists

In 2009, Hasip Pektaş won the Second Prize in the Russia Yaroslavl International Ex-libris Competition; and Yetkin Yağcı won the First Prize in the CGD Ex-libris Competition organized by the Photoshop Magazine. In 2007, Prof. Dr. Sitkı M. Erinç won a prize with his article titled, "Ex-libris as a Branch of Art" (<http://www.aed.org.tr/yarismakatalog/files/search/searchtext.xml>) in the competition organized in memory of Italian ex-libris collector and writer Remo Palmirani. In 2007, İsmail Aslan won the Third Prize in the "2'be eu" – Rousse 2007 International Ex-libris Competition in Bulgaria; in the 2nd International Ex-libris Competition of the Hacettepe University and Ankara Ex-libris Society, Mustafa Okan won the Çankaya Municipality Special Prize and Yunus Güneş won the Hüseyin Bilgin Special Prize and Tezcan Bahar won the Ali Şükrü Fidan Special Prize; and Yunus Güneş won the Third Prize in the "Bread-Cultural Heritage" Ex-libris Competition in Serbia. In the 2nd FISAE International CGD Ex-libris Competition held in Belgium in 2006, Nurdan Adıgüzel won the First Prize, Tezcan Bahar won the Second Prize, and Atanur Sevim won the Fifth Prize. In the 1st FISAE International CGD Ex-libris Competition held in 2004, Mine Saraç won the Sint-Niklaas Special Prize and Ozan Ayıtkan won the Best Erotic Ex-libris Award. In 2003, İlknur Dedeoğlu won the Çankaya Municipality Special Prize in the 1st International Ex-libris Competition of the Hacettepe University and Ankara Ex-libris Society. In 2002, Gülbin Koçak won the First Prize and Ali Doğan won the Third Prize in the Istanbul Ex-libris Academy, International Ex-libris Nazım Hikmet Competition; and İlknur Dedeoğlu won the Belgrade Ex-libris Society Special Prize and Ali Doğan won the Joan Records Company Special Prize in the Yugoslavia 1st International Balkan Ex-libris Triennial. In 2001, Erdal Aygenç won the Third Prize in Argentina "Gral. José de San Martín -150" International Ex-libris Competition; and in 2000, Sevim Arslan won the First Prize in the Istanbul Exlibris Academy Society International Exlibris Istanbul Competition. In 1997, Sema Ilgaz Temel won the Third Prize in the "Ex Musicis" Ex-libris Competition in Ortona, Italy; and in 1996, Hasip Pektaş won the First Prize and İsmail İlhan won the Second Prize in the "3rd Italy - Turkey Ex-libris Biennial" in Ortona, Italy.



Figure 12: Nurgül Arıkan



Figure 13: Özden Pektaş Turgut

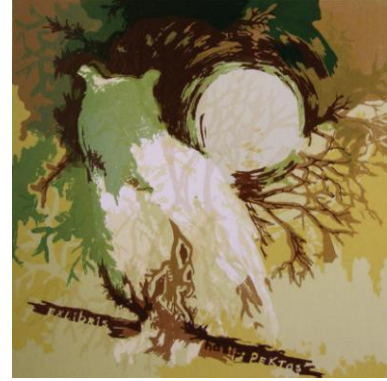


Figure 14: Vedat Çolak

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http://www.aed.org.tr/yarismakatalog/yarisma_index.html

The International Ex-libris Collections Catalogue

http://www.aed.org.tr/koleksiyonkatalog/koleksiyon_index.html

The Pictures of the Old Books with Ex-libris Stamps

<http://www.aed.org.tr/muhurlukitaplar/muhurlukitaplar.html>