

\*\*\*\*\*HOLIDAY GREETINGS 1989\*\*\*\*\*

This is a time to reminisce and evaluate the events and experiences of the past year, a busy one for me. The beginning of 1989 was devoted to tying up loose ends and, after much work and headaches with a faulty word processor, finally sending off an overdue article for an international volume to appear in Turkey in late 1989; however, there is no sign of it yet. This applies also to another such volume whose date of publication seems to be on hold. For the latter I worked equally hard to convert a paper given at an international congress on the architect Sinan into a rather lengthy article with countless pages of footnotes. Was I relieved when I sent it off within the deadline and in time to start working on lectures I was to give at the Cincinnati Art Museum and the Cleveland Rug Society. The visits to both cities - Cincinnati entirely new to me - turned out to be wonderful experiences beyond all expectations. This was true for the scholarly-artistic sphere as well as for human contacts, old friendships and new ones. I loved both cities, the superb museums, the architecture and the people. The reception in both places was so cordial that I hated to leave.

My work as president of the Princeton Rug Society, writing its newsletters, getting speakers, setting up the meeting places, etc. kept me occupied, too. I also continued attending many lectures and, as before, many concerts, too. Moreover, I still kept up, albeit on a limited scale, my singing in a church choir. I undertook several small trips to Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia and innumerable ones to New York for meetings, museum exhibitions, lectures and conferences.

In early summer I enjoyed enormously brief visits with friends in the San Diego area and with Thomas in Los Angeles, where I attended his graduation from the Business School of UCLA and proudly watched him receive a special award. Later on I stayed with friends in New England, which was as wonderful as last year. It is due to their very kind renewed invitation to the Volvo Tennis Tournaments that, I must confess, I have turned into an addict - of spectator tennis. From Vermont I drove to upstate New York for a niece's lovely wedding. The exceptionally warm spirit of this happy occasion created a memorable close-knit family-style atmosphere, even among the many unrelated guests. It was a great send-off for my extended European trip to start just two days later.

A two weeks' rest with friends at an idyllic Austrian lake-side resort restored me to full vigor, much needed for the following rigors of an impressive international congress in Sofia and of driving through parts of beautiful Bulgaria, entirely unknown to me, to visit important museums and archaeological sites. I was very grateful for the invaluable help of a Bulgarian scholar, the dean of architectural historians and archaeologists, who was intimately familiar with the sites and people involved. Thanks to his help I had access to special collections and was wonderfully received everywhere. I was

grateful for the friendliness and helpfulness of so many, just as I was greatly taken by Sofia, its fine architecture, city planning, and its superb museums, as well as the other picturesque towns and sites I visited. Just at the time of the sadly strained relations between Bulgaria and Turkey I flew on to Istanbul for an informative international congress and spectacular international exhibition of Iznik pottery, all very successful events on the scholarly and exhibition front, as well as for personal contacts. Moreover, the splendid celebrations were cleverly created in the vein of festivities in Ottoman miniatures. A brief invitational Iznik trip was a glorious ending to the special events. Thanks to kind Turkish scholars I was also able to visit, together with several other participants, some türbe's with particularly fine tile decorations. This was a great finale for my Turkish sojourn. From there I traveled to southern France to visit old friends from the States, getting settled in a beautiful 15th century stone house in the middle of a fortified medieval village in the hilly Tarn region. It was a most enjoyable week with the whole family, visiting the neighborhood and many other beautiful old settlements including renowned Albi. From there I flew to Paris for one day's tour of the Louvre's Islamic Department. My reception was extremely cordial and the storerooms were opened for me, too. I felt overwhelmed by the marvelous treasures, as well as the kindness of my friends in the department. Of course I admired I.M. Pey's spectacularly beautiful pyramid, but I felt that, alas, due to its location it obstructs the formerly sweeping view of the magnificent old architectural ensemble. Before returning home I was glad to visit briefly the fine building and exhibitions of the Institute du Monde Arabe, too.

Shortly after my return on the last of September, the long exposure to a continuous cold blast from a faulty air conditioner gave me a severe case of the flu with high fever, sinusitis and bronchitis. Luckily it was not legionnaires' disease. It is only now, over 2½ months later, that I am almost alright. In mid November, when feeling better, I decided to go ahead with my long-planned tour of North Yemen, rightly assuming that also my health would benefit because of its dry pure air and altitude, which I always relish. Indeed, I felt renewed there, although still vulnerable. I enjoyed fully the extraordinary, varied and unusual natural and artistic beauty of the country and its friendly and handsome inhabitants. It was a unique and unforgettable experience, heightened by pleasant company, especially that of my roommate, an old friend. Alas, a "bug" lurking in the plane on my return flight brought back my infection which only now I am able to throw off - in time for Christmas, which, to my delight, I will celebrate here together with Stephen and Thomas. Their very busy lives keep them at their jobs in New York until late hours, Steve as a fellow at Memorial-Sloane Kettering Hospital and Tom at Banque Paribas.

May the holidays be happy ones for you and the New Year bring peace and understanding to a kinder and gentler world.

*Dein geliebter Onkel oben. Ich hoffe, dass Deine Schmerzen und Schrecknisse nur mehr in Deiner Erinnerung leben und bis 1990 ein gesundes und gutes Jahr für Dich und Deine Familie sein wird. Alles Liebe, Herzlichst Deine Lieserl (Eoringhausen)*

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