

Traugott Fuchs



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A Life History

TRAUGOTT FUCHS - A Life History

1906

Born on November, 23 in Lohr as fourth of the six children of the Lutheran pastor Karl Fuchs and his wife Marie Adelheid Krencker

1912-1918

Early childhood and education in Karlsruhe and Metz in Lothringen

1918-1925

Moves to Schmalkalden, Thuringen, where he completes his Abitur

1925-1932

Studies Romance languages and German philology at the universities of Berlin, Heidelberg, Marburg, and Köln as a student of Gustav Roethe, Eduard Spranger, Max Friedländer, Friedrich Gundolf, Ernst Bertram, and Leo Spitzer

1932-1933

Begins his doctoral studies under Professor Spitzer whilst working as his assistant at Köln University in Romance Languages and Literature

1933-1934

Upon the seizure of power by the National Socialists Spitzer loses his post at university on account of his Jewish roots and consequently Fuchs, who protests against his tutor's dismissal is no longer employed as an assistant; becomes an instructor at the university of Caen in Normandy, France; attempts to resume his studies in Köln under Prof. Curtius, but gives up on account of the students' pro-Nazi leanings.

1934

Scholars who come under oppression because of their ethnic origins or their opposition to the Nazi regime begin to leave Germany from 1933 onwards; a select of group of scholars among them are invited to Turkey, as a result of Atatürk's plan to Europeanise Turkish higher education. Spitzer and Auerbach are invited to teach at Istanbul University and Fuchs follows soon after.

1934-1943

Prepares his doctoral thesis entitled "Das Je ne sais quoi in Romanischen Sprachen" under the supervision of Professor Spitzer; his completed thesis is approved by Spitzer but is burnt in a fire before he is able to submit it formally. His research material can never be amassed again because of financial problems and the lack of adequate research facilities.

1934-1943

At Istanbul University, he is assigned by Spitzer and Auerbach to the post of instructor in French and later introduces courses in German language and literature, thus laying the foundation of the Department of German Philology at Istanbul University.

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1943-1971

Joins Robert College as an instructor in German language and literature on the recommendation of Professor Auerbach while continuing to teach at Istanbul University

1944-1945

Following the declaration of war by Turkey, he is interned in Çorum, Anatolia along with other German nationals, where he produces his collection of Çorum paintings.

1952-1953

Spends a year at the Sorbonne in Paris where he teaches German and French translation courses

1971-1977

Teaches German language and literature as lecturer at Boğaziçi University (formerly Robert College)

1977-1983

Upon applying for retirement in 1977, it is discovered that so far he has not been admitted to any pension scheme at either university. Through the mediation of Erdal İnönü, the ex- Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Boğaziçi University, he is re-appointed as a full-time Assistant Professor and thus qualifies for official retirement.

1983-1997

In his retirement continues to live in Rumelihisar in the vicinity of Boğaziçi University in close association and academic cooperation with his former students and colleagues. In 1991 he suffers a minor stroke from which he recovers, but due to his advanced age and ill health, he is provided with residential facilities in the Austrian hospital of Saint George at Galata in Beyoğlu, Istanbul.

1995

Receives an honorary doctorate by Boğaziçi University on July 7th.

1997

Traugott passes away on June 21st in Istanbul and is interred at the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery. His family and inheritors of his assets, under the supervision of their representative and his nephew Dr. Hermann Fuchs, resolve to keep his collection of manuscripts, correspondence and paintings in Turkey in accordance with Fuchs' wish.

2005 -2007

The collection was preserved through the efforts of his colleagues and family and placed in the custody of Professor Süheyla Artemel. Hitherto it was kept in various locations, mainly at Yeditepe and Boğaziçi universities, and is currently in the process of being archived within the framework of a project under the direction of Prof.Selçuk Esenbel of the History Department at Boğaziçi University.