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Editor's Note:

It's another spring. The sound of this one is rusty, its coil released through the dusty cushion of a stained mattress in an abandoned tenement, somewhere in Istanbul, or New York, unseemly, out of sight, but not out of mind.

The second issue of Fictive went smoothly, at a brisk pace. A few archival works resurfaced from my freelance journalism in the form of narratives and interviews, later accompanied by a robust representation of artists and creatives who have been honing their respective crafts in the fields of poetry, music, visual art, essay, and various forms of storytelling for ages.

The list of genre and media goes on. But this is not a series of listings. Instead, Fictive has become an agglomeration of insights and perspectives, directions and behaviors, a variety show led by tricksters starring themselves, a cultural review for those whose curiosity has kept them alive.

Fictive began with a moneyless vision, and remains broke, yet not halved. While researching and applying for a budget to properly commission contributors to focus and develop the initial editorial idea, many unexpected, strong and colorful voices have emerged from the crowd, brightening the field with a voluntary output of invaluable work.

So, whole, even if unknown to ourselves, we stumble and stammer into the lightning-shocked horizon and wonder if this is the right way. And even if we are lost, sometimes anywhere is fine to say we arrived alive enough to call it a day, at least for the night, or hell, make it a season, and if it passes sweetly, maybe a year, a lifetime, or more, if there is more. Who knows? Not I, not now.

Matt AH

April 25 2021

Motorcycle Maintenance by Metin Kitapçı

The sculptor worried about his motorbike. He brought it to an unfamiliar shop for repairs. Kemal Tufan sat in a loft above his studio in Maslak as he prepared mentally for summer travels across Europe. An impressive shelf of liquors gleamed behind him. He served strong black tea. The bike would be ready after his return from Cappadocia. He planned to paraglide and unwind. His university post and the incessant drive to power through metal and stone had taken its toll.

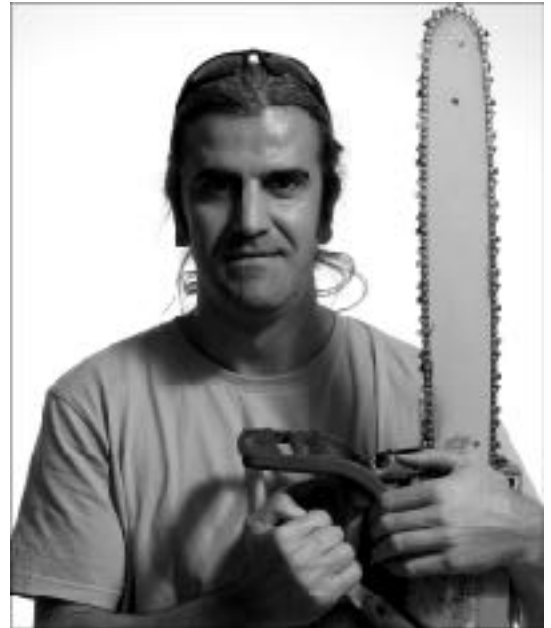
“Everything goes very fast in Istanbul. You meet someone and continue the connections, suddenly it’s wide open,” said Tufan, reminiscing about his first exhibition in 1998, at a venue that was well-known in its day, Artisan Art Gallery.

Artisan invited him to produce a solo show. He was thrilled. It was a place of prestige, especially for a young artist. That year, Artisan participated in an art fair, which he admits was not necessarily of good quality by today’s standards, but the leading galleries were all in simply because options were limited. That was before Contemporary Istanbul.

After his 1998 debut, Tufan mounted a new solo exhibition every year, exhibiting every other show between Artisan, and Pg Art Gallery.

“It was really difficult, but when you are young and dynamic and want to show everything, it’s okay,” he said.

As the years passed, especially following his first show with Pg from February to March of 2001, his association with Artisan eventually ceased as they went under. But he remained true to Pg, exhibiting solo shows biannually.



Since the emergence of Contemporary Istanbul in 2006, he has exhibited artworks represented by Pg every year. In fact, he first contributed to Contemporary Istanbul in a manner akin to his inaugural solo show at Pg, with his *U-Boat* (2001), a gargantuan, lead metal sculpture that he dressed in a flamboyant, multicolored palette of old clothes, a piece that he had initially exhibited in that form at the edge of a forest grove in Kirkcudbright, Scotland.



“*U-Boat*” is one of the many outdoor sculptural installations that he conceived in his very global career that began in Bacau, Romania with “*Palace of Snails*” (1996), eventually exhibiting on nearly every continent. Together with Pg, they receive ample commissions.

“In the last five years, the contemporary art scene and art market in Istanbul has become very active, alive, busy. There is a lot of action, exhibitions, and fairs. It’s good for us,” he said.

“In the beginning it was so hard. Twenty to fifteen years ago we would have a show, nothing sold and we closed it. It was hard times. I had to make money other ways. As an independent artist it was really, really tough to survive.”

The Sculpting

Tufan was fixated on the forms of ships. For his inaugural solo exhibition at Pg in the late winter of 2001, he created his seminal work “*U-Boat*”, a metal sculpture — metal framed construction covered with lead sheets — set to the outlandish dimensions, 580x240x90cm, now permanently exhibited on a hilltop overlooking the Çoruh Valley near the Black Sea at the Baksı Museum.

“The funny thing is, in Pg Art Gallery [in Bebek], there were only two rooms, and I made a huge submarine, so one was room was full with that submarine,” said Tufan. “It was my first time [at the gallery].”

“U-Boat was six meters of lead. This was a submarine. I put it in three pieces, and also separated the tower. It was so heavy, being lead you know. We carried it by hand. I measured each door for the entrance, which was one meter. I made it 95 centimeters exactly, so that it could just pass inside the door and then inside piece by piece. And then we put them together in the gallery. The submarine filled the whole room,” Tufan recounted coolly.

Inside his U-Boat, Tufan installed a TV monitor. It lopped a making-of video



from the time when he sculpted a marble shark underwater for a project he titled simply, “The Shark” (2000).

Diving for two weeks, he carved sunken marble blocks in Kaş. His team found a man who had a diving boat in Kaş who volunteered to make the

video“ (and that man also supported the project with his boat and the diving equipments, etc.) working at night while submerged in the dark depths with his hammer and chisel.

For the opening, 100 people dove the relatively shallow 7 meters to see the work, including the local mayor and governor. “The Shark” (2,6 meters) is still on the sea floor in Kaş.

As a young, starving artist in Istanbul and spanning over three decades of work scattered throughout the world, Tufan consistently and unceasingly makes colossal impressions by the sheer size and physical presence of his works, born of his remarkably enterprising mind for conceptual originality.

It was not until he started designing U-Boat when he had the idea to place the video of him making “The Shark” inside it. But he developed that as a recurring motif in his later works, such as for “Rolling Stones” (2010) and “Deep” (2005), in which video monitors are embedded in his post-naturalist, mixed-media sculptures.

“From his early years he felt a close connection with the sea as the living infinite, constantly beckoning to be explored,” wrote Jerome Symons, for Tufan’s 2014 book, “sculptures”, highlighting his upbringing on the coast of the Sea of Marmara in Silivri. “Of course, you need a ship to explore the sea, to sail by different winds and across different waves towards the horizon, towards freedom.”

The idea for “The Shark” project came about simply while diving in Kaş and working as a stone sculptor. Finding the sponsors to make an underwater video eighteen years ago was an obstacle in Turkey. He intended to document the whole process as a motion picture. It was then when he met the head of a diving club who believed in the project so much that he descended into the water with his video equipment gratis for two weeks.

“I was lucky. We didn’t do much advertising or marketing in those years. We just focused on the project. There was no Instagram, no Facebook, the internet was so-so. There are many underwater museums now, one in Mexico, and even in Turkey. It was actually a performance. Many people visited while I worked underwater. As it was a very popular diving spot in Kaş, everyday hundreds of

people passed by and asked, ‘What are you doing here?’” said Tufan, as his partner Ayla Turan, also an artist, walked into the studio to join the conversation.

Turan was there with him in Kaş at the time, and at his first show, which they remember with a few good chuckles. “There was a Chinese restaurant in the basement of the gallery [in Bebek]. We asked the waiters for help. They were wearing red costumes like Chinese soldiers. It was the performance part actually.”

“We always asked favors from people, because we didn’t have money. Everything goes by friendships, just good relationships with people. The underwater sculpture project, The Shark went like this. The videographer helped me. He didn’t know me until that time. A guy from the marble quarry gave me the marble for free. Someone handled transportation. The municipality gave us rooms for our stay. We only dove and worked,” said Tufan.

“From that moment till now we did many crazy projects. Another was ‘Do You Hear Me?’ when I carved under ice in frozen sea between Sweden and Finland for Lulea’s Winter Biennial. We made a hole with chainsaws. Every morning I went under the ice and carved the negative. Outside it was -20, the water 4 degrees. In one week, I sculpted an ear, “Ice Ear” (2002). In one group show at Pg, I showed the video in my piece ‘Rolling Stones’.”



The Materials

For his outdoor sculptures, Tufan has mainly worked with marble stone, for its durability and strength in weather. In his academic training, he learned to

carve other types of stone, such as granite. The scale of outdoor sculptures are not fit for galleries, where commercial curators prefer smaller pieces for the pragmatics of sale, especially true in the early days of his career.

Tufan adapted, working with wood, which is not only great for indoor exhibitions, but is also cheap, and shapes quickly. In that way, he mostly worked with wood and small pieces of natural stone, particularly river stones, because they're free.

His many projects with these materials included Lick it/Liquid (2010) at Pg Art Gallery and Landlocked Sea (1998) for Artisan Art Gallery, in which he carved space for paper boats to float on water inside the stones.

"At that time, I had no money. I had to find material that was cheap, or free, so I started to find these round, natural stones from the river," Tufan explained, going back to his early career when his creativity merged with his resourcefulness, as entertaining as his sense of humor.

"One exhibition I used a friend's piece of wood. He was another artist. One day, he came, and said, 'Where's my wood? I put it here.' The next day it was in the exhibition. I said, 'Which one?'"

Tufan has also sculpted metal since his earliest days as an exhibiting artist, beginning with Needlefish Passage (1998) and Fish Square (1998), both for Artisan Art Gallery, the latter of which still hangs in his Maslak studio.

"There are classical materials in sculpture, like wood, stone and the metals, bronze and aluminum. If you follow my exhibitions, each has a material concept, like painted wood for Camouflage (2007). You have to select material to make a



continuous concept,” he said, citing his last solo exhibition, titled “Time Ocean / Thy Motion”, making kinetic sculptures out of steel.

“I’m interested in all materials. I carve ice, snow. It doesn’t matter. With an idea, a good concept in your mind, you just go for it and make it, trying many different materials.”

He pointed to a swaying duo of hammerhead shark figures suspending over the doorway to his cluttered, industrial studio. They were made with polyester fiberglass covered in sheep fur for a show themed to leather.

Whether it is video, water, paper, granite, Tufan sculpts it all. “For the material, every year it changes,” he said. “The basic concept for my sculptures is contrasts and contradictions. It’s a contrast, fur with a hammerhead shark. Life is full of contradictions.”

“Some artists focus on one material, like marble, and become experts. I believe that you have to renew yourself, and always try to catch the contemporary moment. Otherwise, you miss the train and become old-fashioned. The artist finds new sources and new concepts. Material is the last creative decision. It’s much more important to update your mind,” said Tufan, who is constructively aware of critics and his own artistic conscience.

“From the ancient to the futuristic, you can use everything. That’s why I’m using stones that are millions of years old. In contrast, the full HD video screen that I put inside will be seen as old a few years from now.”

“When choosing materials you have to be curious to try new techniques, you have to follow technology, daily life, politics. Art can never be separated from politics. Comics are very powerful under authoritarianism. Turkish humor comes from political pressure,” said Tufan.

“If everything is perfect, with everyone relaxed, rich, happy, you can only create decorative stuff. If there is political pressure, creative concepts become stronger. Look at the history of art, like ‘Guernica’ by Picasso. But it shouldn’t

always be that obvious. If the message is too direct, it's not as effective artistically. It's more like a political slogan. I like hidden layers."

The Themes

"Turkey is a very strange country. As they say, 98% of Turkey is Islamic. On the other hand in Istanbul you see transvestite bars, gay clubs and so on. It's a mixture of everything. The people somehow accept it, and this makes the culture rich and you can feed yourself from this richness. These contradictions feed the artist," said Tufan.

"The sources come from everywhere, because Turkey has a deep history. Most of the works are affected by the history of Anatolia, for instance. When I make boats, or the skeleton of these boats I'm actually taking references from ancient times, and nature, because I use all of these beautiful natural materials."

Contemporary artists have trended towards alternate materials and away from the more classic variety that remains central to Tufan's focus. Stone and wood, for example, are relatively old-fashioned, but while others may not see him as a contemporary sculptor, Tufan asserts that he lives on the edge where history and the present converge.

In many respects, he is a proponent of archaism, which sees the path to the future of civilization as a regression to the sources of time in thought and creativity. One of its chief designers was the dissident author Terrence McKenna, who coined the phrase "archaic revival" to advocate the primordial use of hallucinogens as an evolutionary technique by which humanity might overcome its modern neuroses from the orders of ecocide and patriarchy that bedevil life-affirming progress.

Where others cry degenerate, archaic revivalists move to claim the prehistoric heritage of the world as a goldmine from which to build and beautify the means toward a truly novel future. It is the case that much of prehistoric culture is lost due simply to worldly impermanence, but it is special to the

consciousness of artists who live on the knife edge of the Western pale where the frontiers of the past are seen to mark uncharted terrain on the ever-revolving course of time, which to the ancients and indigenous, is incontrovertibly cyclical.

“Take the risk to walk on both sides of contradictions, on the knife edge. I have taken this risk for many years because I believe I have nothing to lose. If you stay on the safe side you can never see the other side. It’s like living in Turkey, to know how to use its contradictions for the creation of art, even if they’re bad, like the politics. The form of ‘U-Boat’ is like a big phallus, representing political power. I made submarines covered in colorful clothes, like for the first Contemporary Istanbul art fair. The painters were so unhappy because of the size,” he said with unfading, though friendly sarcasm.

“Clothes represented the skin or armor of the submarine, but also the people. We are giving the power to the authorities actually. It’s a contradiction. If you say this isn’t right for democracy and human rights many people are jailed, still half of the population supports this. That’s why Turkey continues to be in chaos. Instead of making a penis, I made a submarine.”

Tufan’s cutting political satire is inevitable, at home and abroad. The internationalism of the contemporary art world facilitates that role, actuating protest with clever misdirections, making it all the more important as an avenue by which Turkish cultural expression finds a voice on the world stage, as opposed to the dimly lit and censorial mockery that exists in the tightly controlled national sphere.



It is part of a wider theme that runs parallel to gallery exhibitions, encouraging artists to participate in the global scene where free expression is unrestrained and appreciated exactly for its socially critical effect.

When in the middle of his project, “The Shark”, Tufan documented the brunt of surveillant state oppression of all places underwater. As authorities deemed his project forbidden, a night patrol came in search of him, finding his worksite on the sea floor at night. They stayed in place for a time, staring him down. He couldn’t tell if they were police, but they soon flashed spotlights on him. He kept working nonstop, and in time, they left, disappearing through the darkness (this was the concept of the video /performance”).

“You can not be so obvious, you have to hide messages. It should only be in the concept. If you say the whole story, and are too obvious, it loses power,” he said.

In 2003, for his second solo show at Pg Art Gallery, titled “Protection”, Tufan produced metal cast egg-shaped sculptures akin to metaphorical armor as when he covered U-Boat in colored clothes for Contemporary Istanbul.

And equally, it is based on his interpretation of the political situations in Turkey, by saying that people should protect themselves because they are not really safe inside the country. It is an atmosphere in which someone might disappear, end up in jail and spend years proving that they are, in fact innocent, only to emerge from a cell with a routine apology.

“You have to know how to protect yourself, or hide, or be careful about what you are talking about. To be a hero and stupidity are very close here. If you make a performance in Taksim Square to say that you are against the dictator, and then five minutes later the police take you, you do not exist. They can not hear your shout. You have to be careful and clever. ‘Protection’ comes from this concept. We are not safe. So, protect yourself,” said Tufan, with a serious tone.

“Since my childhood till now I don’t remember peace in Turkey. Governments change, but nothing else. We grow up with political problems. It’s the



beginning of worse. For many years, the government kept the economy at a good level, but this is fake. They sell everything of what they have, so they keep the economy good. Now, the problem is there is nothing to sell. We say in Turkish, “deniz bitti”, the sea is finished.

The Essence

It doesn't take Tufan long to prepare his solo exhibitions. He works hard, day and night for three to four months. Pg gallery is small, and consequently the works are also relatively small for him. He sees sculpture as a constant challenge, regardless of limited gallery space in the greater context of his work as a sculptor of immense, outdoor installations.

The need to create many pieces in a short time, and to employ multiple skills, such as welding, cutting, carving, and painting, and to keep the concept fresh and the work exciting are his prime motivators. Prolonging the time that it takes him to make a piece is deflating, because he gets other worthwhile ideas in the process.

“There are thousands of projects in my mind. Their realization is very few. If I make 1% of what comes to my brain, it's a big success. Some people have one idea, then go and create a thousand sculptures. I really appreciate these people,” he said with a long belly laugh.

“I like to make my art and my lifestyle similar. What I make and what I like to do is all connected in my artistic production. I like dancing, music, flying, diving.”

Now, as an older artist, Tufan feels that time is more valuable than anything, and the need to go faster is ever-pressing, as the advance of technology marches forward at an increasing clip.

The only exception to his overall approach to exhibiting was his very first piece, U-Boat. He filled the gallery on purpose, but in every other case he measures his works and the space before installing. Although he has since shown smaller works for better commercial prospects, he stresses that art is not a business.

Three years ago, Tufan exhibited “Dictionary”, his series of oversized sculptures in the shape of pens (some of them were metal but others were made with books, old reading glasses and even wooden pen had video screens inside).

Passersby could see the entire exhibition from the gallery window. There were six pens, five of which he recently sent to Germany for another show at Nordart that opened the 8th of June, 2018, located about an hour north of Hamburg.

It was a huge exhibition, with a lot of sculptures, paintings and installations. He had previously installed stainless steel versions, titled “Magic Pen” in Jing An Sculpture Park in Shanghai, China in 2012, and in Buyukcekmece, Istanbul in 2009.



For his signature piece in *Dictionarium*, he laser-cut metal to form a Nazim Hikmet poem in the manual alphabet of sign language. On the outside, the pen form is deceptive. It seems to be a decorative object, formed with a textural, lace-like exterior, but it has layers. Firstly, it is in the shape of hands, and ultimately, forms the poem. On a deeper level, the meaning of the poem is relevant to the piece as a whole.

Dictionarium furthers Tufan's unique approach to archaic revivalism, as it is essentially an exercise in preliterate consciousness, an exploration of language as visual, as a material extension of the human body and its tools. His venture into the realm of modern literature contrasts, in that sense, with his concentration on the timeless forms of the past.

Metin Kitapçı is a writer based in Istanbul



Flaschenpost by İrem Günaydın



I OWE YOU / THE TRUTH IN PAINTING / AND I WILL / TELL IT TO
YOU

Sieve

[Separating wanted elements from unwanted material or for characterizing the particle size distribution of a sample, typically using a woven screen such as a mesh or net or metal.]

Dearest

Call me İrem. I'm a rather young person - never mind how old precisely. It is as an artist that I'm writing this letter to you. The nature of my work for the last five years has brought me into here, writing to you in the middle of a night (not exactly at ten o'clock, not even at eleven sharp, nor on November eleven as opposed to the tenth or twelfth). This is a long letter, but it's not at all bound

to be answered. Possibly, if it's answered and directed to İrem Günaydın, it might be missed.

The other one, the one called İrem, is the one things happen to. She's been working as a front desk clerk, then as a foreign exchange operations specialist, and finally has become a very important person at the foreign exchange office. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that ours is a bizarre relationship. I live, contrive to make my art, but she's the one who makes a living for us in an office. Don't get me wrong I'm extremely grateful for her job. Our story is not a mix of pulp fiction and tragedy. I must confess that she has achieved a lot, but those things cannot save me. It seems unfair though on her to make her pay for everything. What if she dragged us for a job in an art organization, such as auction houses? I know that she wouldn't do that to us, not in a billion years. But then I remember that we must give up trying to know those to whom we're linked by something essential.



THE PEARS THE PEACHES THE
APPLES THE ONIONS PINE ASH
OAK WALNUT ACRYLIC

CHARCOAL OIL VAES BOWLS BASKETS BOTTLES CERAMIC
METAL ALUMINUM MARBLES

CAST POLYESTER RESIN POWDER-COATED STEEL FIRE CLAY
POLYURETHANE RUBBER FIBERGLASS GLASS SILICONE RUBBER
ENGRAVED ALUMINUM EPOXY PVC PLYWOOD

C-TYPE PRINT VINYL 16MM FILM WITH SOUND NEON
EMBROIDERED FABRIC FORMICA RUBBER ENGRAVED BRASS
OIL PAINT ON PAPER TERRACOTTA HAND-THROWN GLAZED
CERAMIC

Once upon a time in the ancient world, all the gods were invited to the wedding of Peleus and Thetis except one goddess for her troublesome nature. Upon turning up uninvited, she decided to cause chaos by throwing a golden apple into the midst of the goddesses, with an inscription on it; to the most beautiful...Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite. Once they saw the apple, all three goddesses wanted to know who



the apple was for, and ultimately who was the most beautiful of the goddesses. Wisely, the gods decided it was best not to intervene, and instead nominated a human delegate, Paris the Prince of Troy, to choose. Choose the most beautiful. Choose the true owner of the golden apple.

Maceration

[A process of breaking down and softening various substances.]

"Therefore, the apple draws the Earth, as well as the Earth draws the apple." There's no evidence to suggest an apple actually landed on Newton's head, but (he wondered what force made the apple fall downward instead of simply

floating away) his observation inspires him to eventually develop his law of universal gravitation: Every object in the Universe attracts every other object with a force directly proportional to the produce of their masses and inversely proportional to the square of the distance between them. To put it simply all objects tend to fall towards the Earth's surface. The other İrem is my gravity. She is the one keeping me from falling down perpendicularly towards the Earth's surface. She is pulling me down to the ground, and I launch her high in the sky. Ours is a feet on the ground head in the sky sort of relationship. Besides, considering the fact that writing takes up a lot in my practice I can't imagine writing in a weightless state: for this purpose, I would have to be secured to the tabletop, for example, by means of leather straps in order to remain at the table at all (without having to hold on). I recently went to a gig, and I met with the Disc Jockey there. Disc J. was playing all three records simultaneously. If the beat on the new record hits before the beat on the current record, then the new record is too fast; Choose Hera says DJ to Paris the Prince of Troy. I saw three turntables in front of the Disc Jockey. Disc J. was playing all three records simultaneously. If the beat on the new record hits after the beat on the current record, then the new record is too slow; Choose Aphrodite says DJ to Paris the Prince of Troy.

Somethin's been troubling me about the pill scene since I watched the Matrix. Neo - the protagonist - is offered by Morpheus the choice between the blue pill and to continue to live in a synthesized, fictional world, or taking the red pill and joining the "real world" and to escape the Matrix. And Neo chooses the red pill. He chooses his future.

He chooses a purpose. He chooses a love story. I bet you've been just there, on a couch or a chair, maybe with your bosom buddies, cat, or your dog, perhaps



drinking coffee or a beer, filled with hope, joy, and curiosity when watching the burned-out asteroid protagonist have to make to with what he's got.

Yes! Disc J. was playing all three records simultaneously. Paris the Prince of Troy asks what if you don't align the beats so the rhythms do clash when played together? You definitely choose Athena answers DJ to Paris the Prince of Troy.

And DJ provided the audience a three-deck ride unrestrained into unknown territories. In one of these territories, the place is unroofed. There are no bodies but draperies, no sumptuous buildings but colonnades, no whole numbers but numbers with decimal values. There is the disparaged 'other hand' that does not write but picking nose, holding a cup, playing with a mobile phone, itching ears, and wiping mouth with a napkin when one squeezes. Because it's the one that does grasp. There are niches, shelves, half-open cupboards but no objects placed within. An elephant, a goat, a reindeer, a donkey, a chamois, a camel, an ox, a bear, a dog cast a light on the wall but we see no hand which makes the shadow. In cutting vegetables the disparaged non-knife hand is the hand that grasps, while knife hand's only job is to keep the tip of the knife down and cut with a circular motion. Up, down, forward, and return. The non-knife hand becomes the brain of the operation. And the knife hand becomes the dumb hand. There is a woman with the laundry, a mountain, the seated man, early morning strollers, the boy leaning over and plunging his two arms in the water as if to wash his hands or pick up a stone, the pedestrian hurrying along the path, trees, and a rock that lies here and there but there's no choreography. Only the landscape is leading the gaze. There is a tabletop but no flowers, no fruits, no hour-glass, no skull, and no other printed ephemera are lying on it.

I've been repeatedly re-enacting the pill scene from the Matrix in my mind with every possibility and something very bizarre emerged from these repetitions: Paul Cézanne; the painter of a painting of a dish of apples, René Magritte; the painter of a painting of This Is Not a Pipe, Nicolas Poussin; the classicist who ended up remembered as the landscapist, and finally the one and

only Cornelius Norbertus Gijsbrechts: a Flemish-born painter who makes things that do not exist appear to exist. The reason for this bizarreness was immediately apparent: my work station, my mind, and my heart belong to these guys for a very long time.

Folding

[Combining ingredients together gently without stirring and beating.]

In one of my visions, Cézanne is expected to make a choice between the blue pill and the red pill as in the case with Neo from the Matrix. The narration continues like this; Cézanne kindly asks if he's allowed to take both pills and since he is Cézanne, of course, he gets yes as an answer. He blends the red pill with the blue one



on his tongue, checking in the mirror if he gets the perfect violet without any gradient. He gets it but the more he looks at it the more he hates it. He remembers how much he hates gradients for a moment of unsettling silence. Then he starts breaking down colours from gradients into their simplest forms. The colours that now come out are not precisely the same that were just mixed on Cézanne's tongue: the blue became cobalt and the red scarlet. Then he spits them on a camera and voila! The phrase appears, "With a cobalt next to scarlet I will astonish the Matrix."

In another vision René Magritte appears in a bowler hat - as usual - which explicitly explains the consequences of his action as in the same case with Neo and Cézanne, and finally, when asked which pill he prefers to choose, he takes off his hat and says, "Do not try to convince me. That's impossible. Instead,

only realize this is not a pill. Then you will see that it is not the pill that changes the state of the Matrix, it is yourself." And then he pulls a flatly painted bird out of his hat, the bird eats the pills, and transforms into a bird filled with cloud. Meanwhile, Mr. Magritte carves out a space behind the screen and the bird fades into there.

I'd want you to meet with the Flemish painter Cornelius Gijsbrechts, a good friend of mine from 1660. Mr.

Gijsbrechts is a guy from two point five dimensions. He lives after the right part of the decimal separator. His relation to the real goes back to the oil on canvas and some odd surfaces. And last but not least he can travel between the dimensions such as one point five or two point nine. And finally, the same blue or red pill question is asked to Mr.



Gijsbrechts. "You take the blue pill, the story ends, you wake up in your bed and believe whatever you want to believe. You take the red pill, you stay in wonderland," said Morpheus while Mr. Gijsbrechts was chilling in his cozy atelier. He started to tell of a competition as a response which took place in the second half of the fifth century BC between two famous painters from Ancient Greece, Zeuxis and Parrhasios. Zeuxis painted a bunch of grapes that were so realistic that the birds flew down to peck at them. Parrhasios painted a curtain that was so lifelike that when Zeuxis came to inspect the finished work, he asked Parrhasios to draw the curtain aside and show him the painting hidden behind it! Zeuxis then had to admit defeat: he had fooled the birds, but Parrhasios had fooled him. Then Mr. Gijsbrechts smiles and says, "So you see nothing is what it seems. Now I'd rather you leave me alone and don't forget to

take your meds." Morpheus never found his way out. Neither the curtains nor the doors and windows in the atelier were three dimensional. As a last resort, Morpheus took both pills and waited for something to happen. Unfortunately, nothing happened.

Then Nicolas Poussin goes onstage.

Dear reader consider the following passages as a series of zig-zag and curve pathways that gradually lead the eye from foreground to middle ground to background. Stick to the path and try not to go astray.



I want you to imagine a small hillock which slopes sharply to the edge of the painting on the left side of the painting Mr. Poussin says. In front of it, there is a man who is seized by a monstrous snake; the snake binds around his body, and intertwines his arms and legs by several turns, squeezes them, poisons them with its venom. This man is already dead. We see the stiffness of all his limbs. His skin is already greenish-gray.

"The body cannot live without the mind," says Morpheus.

There is another man, the running man. He sees the snake around the dead man, he stops suddenly; one of his feet remains suspended; he raises one arm above as if to make a sign, the other falls below, but both hands open. His gestures and movement show his fear and surprise.

"Welcome to the desert of the real," says Morpheus.

Behind the small hillock, there is a woman with laundry who sees the running man but cannot see the dead man, and the landscape makes kind of a curtain between her and the dead man. The fear of the running man makes him immobile whereas the washerwoman can't hold anything back. She lets herself



show what she feels. She's terrified of the running man's gestures.

"You have to let it all go. Fear, doubt, and disbelief. Free your mind," says Morpheus.

There's a group by the shoreline: three men. On the left two men face to face: one sitting, one kneeling, and the other stretched out full length on the grass, his torso propped up left, and two bare feet kicking idly. He's dressed in a blue robe and he's looking back!

"Remember, all I'm offering is the truth. Nothing more," says Morpheus.

Three fishermen in the boat are not far above the running man. One of them leans forward and seems ready to fall, it is because he is drawing a net; two others, leaning back, row with effort. "There's a difference between knowing the path and walking the path," says Morpheus. There is a pair of tiny figures standing at the top of the hill by the farmstead. Over their heads is a clump of dark leaves. The red and blue of what they're wearing are electric.

"You've been living in a dream world," says Morpheus.

Separating Eggs

[The egg yolk is removed from the egg white.]

This is the moment when the image of the Bugs Bunny on Mr. Poussin's atelier wall occurs accordingly to the light. He looks like an outline trace. Bugs Bunny

is wearing a toga, in the manner of the ancients. His whole body centered within a frame, his right arm stretched to one side of the frame with one finger getting to the outside of it. Bugs Bunny looks stern and formidable a figure, one obviously not given to compromise or deviation from his chosen path just like Mr. Cézanne, Mr. Magritte, Mr. Gijsbrechts, and Mr. Poussin. This is apparent in the erect pose of his body, the fixity of his gaze and his finger sticking out from the frame. He looks more like black ink impregnating the surface layer of the wall paint. The slender traces of bits of legs, the head, and the torso would maybe come off in due course, with few strokes of the eraser. But the finger, oh the finger which sticks out of the frame would require a more extensive rubbing. The hard eraser passing back and forth over the outer finger wouldn't have much effect. One must scratch the finger with the corner of a razor blade. Even succeed, the concave shape that the frame took after the finger sticks out of it remains there forever. Bugs Bunny popped into my mind as I was writing this. "What's required to change the world is not choosing one pill over another, but rather being able to say I would prefer not to. Being here no matter how many times we get told we don't belong, and believing in the finger which sticks out of the frame. Because that finger is the one not to budge and fall in line because that finger is the one that will leave a palimpsest of inscriptions even when scratched," said he.

Dearest, I wonder, as an artist dare I manage to build my own game like Mr. Cézanne, Gods in the Troy story, DJ, Mr. Magritte, the other İrem, Mr. Poussin, Bugs Bunny, Mr. Gijsbrechts, and every finger which sticks out of the frame or will I fall into the ocean of infinite mediocrity just like Neo, Hera, Athena, Aphrodite, Morpheus, and the Paris the Prince of Troy. I will tell you that I recognized in



myself the right to have this fear and yet my existence is cheered by a naïve hope. Let's discover simple forms behind the glimmering veil of appearances. Let's break down colours from complex gradients into their simplest forms. What if we don't choose to smooth the transition from one song to another. What if we don't bring the beats back in sync again. I suggest we get our priorities right.

First things first; let me astonish myself with an apple.

As this letter is undated and consequently might have been written at any time, it also follows from this that it might be read at any time. As soon as this letter has been put into orbit, none of this will be important.

It's as an artist that I wrote and signed this letter. İrem Günaydın

İrem Günaydın (b. 1989, Istanbul) explores the relationship between text and image, and the ways in which words and images circulate between discursive and pictorial realms, investigating the objecthood of language and the grammar of images. İrem holds a Foundation diploma from Chelsea College of Art and Design (2011), and her BA in Fine Art from Central Saint Martins, London (2014). She lives and works in Istanbul.

FICTIVE

Sicilian Defence* by Ali Cabbar



The Coronavirus confinement started right in the middle of the preparations of this book, distracting everybody, including the writers of Typo and myself. Staying safe and at home for two months was not as easy as one might think. But it gave us a chance to dust the bookshelves and organize old photographs. During these tidying sessions, some of you might have discovered a long forgotten object that once was of great significance to you. Well, I don't know about you, but I certainly did! I discovered something of deep sentimental value for me—both historically and psychologically—stashed in a small box: a set of handcrafted chess pieces.



My interest in chess goes back to my teenage years when I was a student at boarding school where playing chess was a long-established tradition at the time. I was not as good as some of my friends who were in the school's champion chess team, but I wasn't totally rubbish either. I tried to solve the chess puzzles published in the newspapers, knew the names of the greatest chess players by heart, and bought books to improve my game. I had a book by the Cuban World Champion José Raúl Capablanca to help me learn new opening tactics. I still remember how we followed the 1972 World Chess Championship match between Bobby Fischer and Boris Spassky. We eagerly waited to see the game moves published the next day in the papers; it was so thrilling.

In another discarded box, I found my mini chess computer that was bought 35 years ago. Is the machine still working? Can I still play as good as I used to do? It remains to be seen. It was an exciting discovery, but certainly nothing compared to finding the handmade pieces. To elucidate their significance, I need to explain a period in Turkey's recent history.



This year marks the 40th anniversary of the coup d'état that has shaped the country I was born and—for a certain period—lived in happily. On 12th September 1980, after years of political turmoil and terror, the army seized power amid a military coup in Turkey. Jeeps, tanks, armoured vehicles, and patrolling soldiers carrying automatic weapons invaded the streets. People were stopped and searched with their hands up, faces turned against a wall, reminiscent of the invading German army during World War II. All political parties and political activities were declared illegal. Hundreds of thousands of people were arrested, tortured, locked up, accused of treason. They were tried in military courts, denied defence, and sentenced to long-term imprisonments.

And some were sentenced to death; just like 17-year-old Erdal Eren, who was executed by hanging on the 13th of December 1980. All left-wing press was banned. Mainstream media were heavily censored before going to press, with several pages or columns appearing blank in print. A retired general was





appointed to form a cabinet to run the country under the supervision of the military junta. Another general was appointed as the head of the state-run TRT, the country's only TV and radio station at the time. Some ousted mainstream political party leaders and their wives were taken into custody and kept as hostages in army bases.

Most of the arrested were university students and young workers who were members or sympathizers of revolutionary socialist parties. I was one of those students. As a member, I was responsible for designing the

publications. When the secret police raided our office and arrested me on the 10th of April 1981, I was laying-out the new issue of our underground anti-militarist magazine. I was put in a police jeep and taken to the "Second Division" Police Headquarters in Eminönü; when I got there, I realized that I was not alone. Apparently, after weeks of intelligence gathering and tracking, most of my friends and the leaders of the organization had also been arrested. That was the start of something I couldn't have foreseen that day, a new "phase" that stole more than three years of my life and changed me forever.

Immediately after seizing power, the military regime extended the police custody period from two weeks to three months. They must have thought they would need more time for questioning—and torturing—the detainees, as well as working their way into getting them to sign statements accepting all the accusations brought forth by the police, whether true or false. Later, we were moved to the notorious Gayrettepe "First Division" Police Headquarters, which specialized in the interrogation of political dissidents. They put us in two square meter cells deep in the underground of the building. As we were

always blindfolded with our heads forced down, there was no way of knowing where we were or where they were taking us. Is disorientating the suspect the first rule of a successful interrogation? Hmmmm, where could I have seen this lately? Guantanamo perhaps?

We spent 90 days in those cells, sometimes eight of us together in one cell. They were overcrowded and unsanitary, devoid of light or fresh air. The loud and heavy metallic cell door had a small window used by the guards to check on us. Every day, several people were taken “upstairs”—as we called it among ourselves—in blindfolds to be interrogated. I don’t want to go into grueling details of the interrogations. I would rather concentrate on life “downstairs,” in the cells.



We were allowed very quick uses of the toilet twice a day, but not given time to shower, shave, change clothes, or brush our teeth. We could eat, but only if we paid for the food, and only what was available in the police canteen: bread; Karper cheese (similar to La Vache qui rit); black olives wrapped in a piece of newspaper; jam in mini plastic boxes, similar to the ones served at breakfast in some cheap hotels; and maybe a soft drink, not bottled but in cartons. There was no room in the cell for more food than that anyway. I don’t remember exactly, but I think the food “service” came only once a day.

A favourite pastime in the cooped-up cell, where there was no room for walking or lying down, was singing and chatting very quietly while standing or squatting. This was where I made those chess pieces— two sets— and smuggled one to a close friend in the opposite cell who liked playing chess. We whispered the moves to each other. Although the cells didn’t have lighting, there was always a faint light leaking from the corridor which was enough to



see the pieces as our eyes adjusted to the dark. I have no recollection of how many games we played or who won the games, but I managed to take my set with me out of the police dungeons to the military prison where we were transferred at the end of the 90- day interrogation. Later on, I must have given them to my family with my laundry during one of their visits, for they kept it safe for me until my release 3 years later. Some pieces are missing. I have no idea where they've gone, but I am glad that most are still with me.

I like to think of these chess pieces as my first “sculptures.” They are made of

chewed and dried bread. The black pieces, on the other hand, had olives remember our daily menu?—as the extra ingredient to give them a darker colour. Yes! You're seeing the “local” Mediterranean touch of the chef! It's been 40 years since I made these pieces, but they seem to be as solid as a rock, yet with the fragility of ceramic. I am so proud of them, and so happy to have rediscovered them in the cupboard thanks to the “Corontine” boredom.

Who would have thought that bread would survive that long? Perhaps we shouldn't underestimate the magical “varnishing” qualities of human saliva. You can see the photos of the chess set on pages 52-53 of the artist book.

I believe that the founding stones of today's Turkish political system were laid during those days; a system where no leftist political view can legally get organized and gain power in the country. I have always wanted to do an exhibition based on my memories of the 80s. In place of the exhibition I am yet unable to have, I decided to publish this book. I hope it is visually strong



enough to convey my feelings, because I can't really express them enough with words.

* The Sicilian Defence is a chess opening.

Sicilian Defence, excerpted from
SYSTEM ERROR

Ali Cabbar. Masa Yayınları. October 2020,
English

160 pages, 100 TL. Available on selected
bookshops (Pandora, Patika and Robinson Crusoe) and online (Magnet.com
and Pandora.com)



Abolishing the Death Penalty in America

by Alex Albadree



Capital punishment not only fails to advance justice, it allows systemic racism and classism to be enacted through execution. This system is why Billie Allen has been facing his execution for 23 years for a wrongful conviction.

Proponents of the death penalty will say that it deters crime. However, crime and murder rates before and after abolishing capital punishment show no evidence to support this. What the evidence does show is that innocent people are consistently sentenced to death.

Since 1973, over 169 death row inmates in the US have been exonerated. Over 169 innocent people sitting in a cell for years, knowing they will be killed by the State for something they didn't do. And that's just the ones who have been exonerated. How many more innocent people have we murdered through our "justice" system?

Decades of research also shows that the poor and marginalized are more often sentenced to death. Almost everyone on death row was unable to afford to hire an attorney. When you have a criminal justice system that is based on capitalism, then you have a system where justice and rights are commodities for sale. Poor people can not purchase presumed innocence, the right to freedom or even the right to life.

And just BEING Black makes a death sentence 4x more likely than for a white defendant with the same charges. 13% of the population of the US is Black but 42% of death row inmates are Black. AND OVER 50% OF EXONERATED CASES ARE BLACK.

In Billie Allen's case, his attorney failed to disclose evidence and never called his alibi. Plus, proven false testimonies were provided against him. Due to this, 23 years have been stolen from Billie and his life still hangs in the balance. Devastatingly, his story is just one of too many.

WE ARE MAKING A MOCKERY OF JUSTICE WITH OUR SYSTEMIC KILLING OF INNOCENT BLACK PEOPLE IN AMERICA.

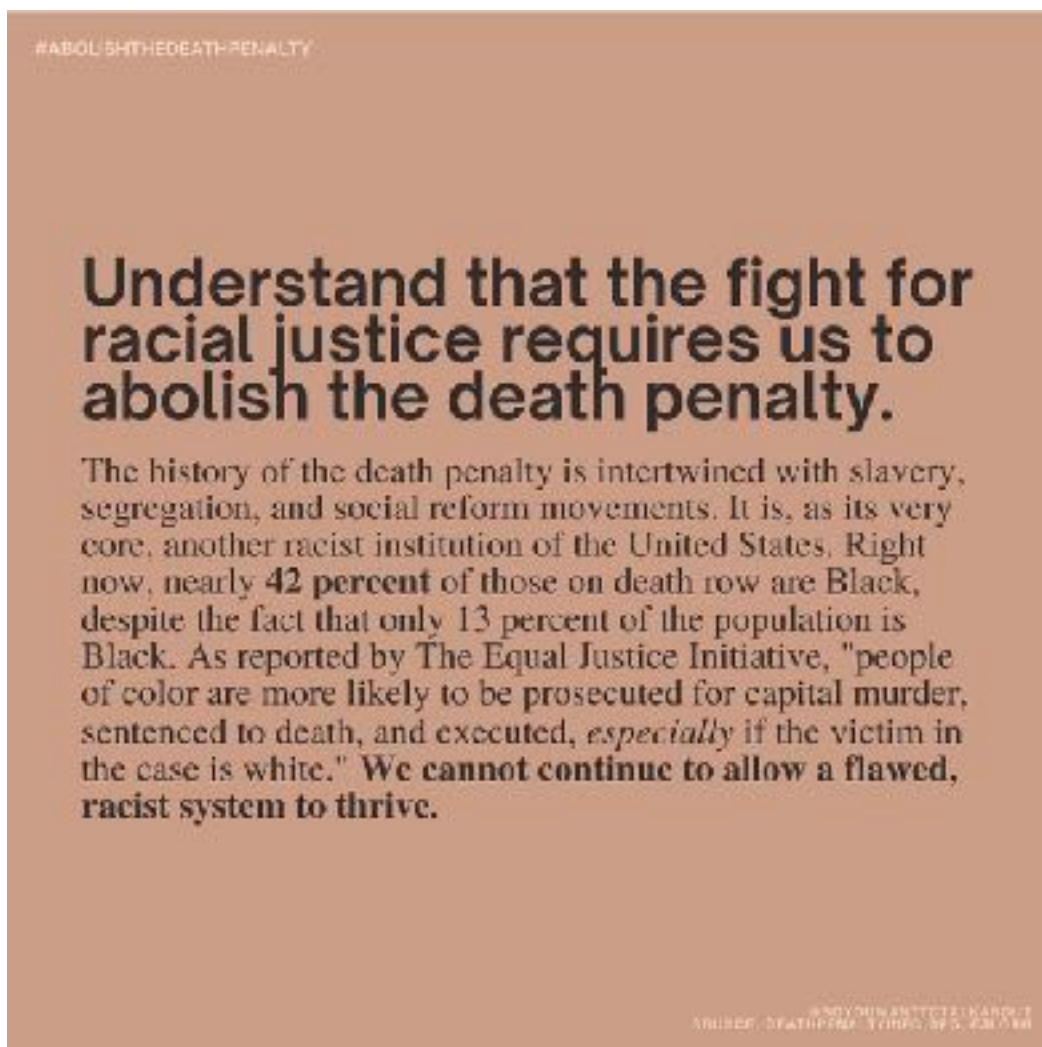


Capital punishment not only fails to advance justice, it allows systemic racism and classism to be enacted through execution. After everything that our government has done, continues to do in the face of our anger, action, and despair, what is the point in continuing to call, protest, petition, rally? Why does it matter if it achieves nothing?

Because injustice CANNOT be allowed to stand unopposed. Because Dustin Higgs should not have stood alone in his struggle for the last day of his life. Dustin, and every victim of injustice, deserves to have our voice added to theirs. They deserve to have us all stand with them. On Dustin's last day, we made damn sure he spent it knowing we were fighting for him with everything we had and that we will keep fighting to abolish this barbaric practice.

So send yet another email. Pick up the phone and spend another ten minutes of your life demanding for others. Donate what you have to spare. Show up to the rallies. Vote for those that will ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY.

SHOW UP even when you don't think it will change anything, because it's the FUCKING RIGHT THING TO DO.



ABOLISHTHEDEATHPENALTY

Demand your elected officials support the Federal Death Penalty Prohibition Act of 2021.

On January 11th, Senator Dick Durbin of Illinois, the incoming chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and Representative Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts revealed new legislation that *seeks to end the federal death penalty*.

Visit commoncause.org/find-your-representative to find contact information for your elected officials. Reach out to them and let them know that, as their constituent, you demand for them to publicly support the Federal Death Penalty Prohibition Act of 2021.

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FEDERAL DEATH PENALTY ACT

ABOLISHTHEDEATHPENALTY

The Trump administration has overseen more federal executions than any other president since WWII.

Both the federal government *and* 28 state-level governments currently implement the death penalty. Right now, more than 2,500 people languish on death row in the U.S.

This doesn't have to be our reality.

We must commit ourselves to fighting these barbaric punishments and working towards a future that has *some* semblance of justice. Here's how we can *start* to do that...

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FEDERAL DEATH PENALTY ACT

#ABOLISHTHEDATHPENALTY

Donate to those who are working to abolish the death penalty.

Equal Justice Initiative: eji.org

National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty: ncadp.org

Amnesty International: amnesty.org

American Civil Liberties Union: aclu.org

Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty: tcadp.org



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#ABOLISHTHEDATHPENALTY

Familiarize yourself with those on death row across the country.

"*The Next to Die*" by The Marshall Project tracks upcoming executions on both the state and federal levels. You can learn about each case & follow updates as they happen. Make a point of checking this website on a regular basis: themarshallproject.org/next-to-die

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DESIGNED BY THE MARSHALL PROJECT

#ABOLISHTHEDATH-PENALTY

More than 70% of the world's countries have abolished capital punishment in law or practice.

**It is time for the
U.S. to catch up.**

@FICTIVEQUARTERLY


#ABOLISHTHEDATH-PENALTY

**Put pressure
on Governors.**

The Governor of Virginia announced this month that he will be introducing a bill to abolish the death penalty. If successful, this would make Virginia the *first* Southern state to end capital punishment. **There is no reason as to why other states cannot do the same.**

FICTIVE QUARTERLY TOTAL: 4,400,000
ISSUES: 24,000,000,000






On December 10th, the federal government of the United States executed Brandon Bernard by lethal injection.

Brandon joins 1,527 other men and women who have been executed in the U.S. since the 1970s. The federal government has executed 11 people since 1976; 9 of which have occurred under the Trump administration.

 @BRYDUAANTT@TELKFB047



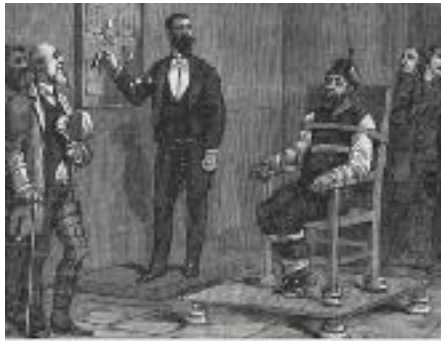
Amosson chair at Sing Sing Prison in 1953

The death penalty is a government-sanctioned practice whereby a person is put to death by the state as punishment for a crime.

The death penalty has existed in the U.S. since colonial times and, as is the case with many things in this country, the government seems to have no interest in catching up to the 21st century.

The history of the death penalty is intertwined with slavery, segregation, and social reform movements.

@BRYDUAANTT@TELKFB047
SOURCE: HOLLANDSTORL, 1953, 2 PM



"On August 6, 1890, New York executed William Kemmler. It was the first time ever a state used the electric chair to carry out an execution. Proponents of electrocution – including Thomas Edison – touted the new method as quick, effective, painless, and humane; the same arguments later used by legislators to support lethal injection and execution by nitrogen gas."

— deathpenaltyinfo.org

There is no humane method of execution.

Jay Chapman, a medical examiner in Oklahoma, developed the lethal injection method in 1977 as a more 'humane' one than the electric chair, hanging, firing squad or gas chamber.

The problem is: experts have compared the effects of lethal injection to being buried alive while feeling fire in one's veins.

©2019 JIMMYE TALKARDT
SOURCE: FOLLOWS THE WEBERGETT

Innocent people are too often sentenced to death.

Since 1973, over 156 people have been released from death rows in 26 states because of innocence. Nationally, at least one person is exonerated for every 10 that are executed.

According to The Equal Justice Initiative, a non-profit which provides legal assistance to people on death row, "our death penalty system treats you better if you're rich and guilty than if you're poor and innocent. As a result, a stunning number of innocent people have been sentenced to death."

The same factors drive wrongful convictions in non-capital cases and death penalty cases, including:

- erroneous eyewitness identifications
- false or misleading forensic evidence
- false and coerced confessions
- false accusations or perjury by witnesses who are promised lenient treatment or other incentives in exchange for their testimony
- inadequate legal defense

©2019 JIMMYE TALKARDT
SOURCE: FOLLOWS THE WEBERGETT

Capital punishment is not a deterrent to capital crimes.

Scientists agree, by an overwhelming majority, that the death penalty has **no** deterrent effect.

"A 2009 study by a Sociology professor and a graduate student at the University of Colorado-Boulder (Michael Radelet and Traci Lacock), analyzed opinions of leading criminology experts on the deterrence effects of the death penalty. The results reveal that **most experts do not believe that the death penalty or the carrying out of executions serve as deterrents to murder**, nor do they believe that existing empirical research supports the deterrence theory. In fact, the authors report that **88.2% of respondents do not think that the death penalty deters murder** - a level of consensus comparable to the agreement among scientists regarding global climate change."

SOURCE: LAW.NORTHWESTERN.EDU, AMNESTYUSL.ORG, JOURNAL OF CRIMINAL LAW & CRIMINOLOGY

It's time to abolish the death penalty.

More than 70% of the world's countries have abolished capital punishment in law or practice. It is time for the U.S. to catch up.

In November 2020, the U.S. faced harsh criticism from the world community for its continued use of capital punishment during a United Nations review of its human rights record.

Joe Biden is against the death penalty.

Per his website, "Because we cannot ensure we get death penalty cases right every time, Biden will work to pass legislation to eliminate the death penalty at the federal level, and incentivize states to follow the federal government's example."

What you can do: urge your local elected officials to speak out against the death penalty on both federal and state levels.

SOURCE: AMNESTY, DEATHPENALTYINFO.ORG, JOEBIDEN.COM

For the first time since Gallup began asking the question in 1985, a majority of Americans now say life imprisonment is a better approach for punishing murder than is the death penalty.



According to the 2019 Gallup death penalty poll, when Americans were asked to choose whether the death penalty or life without the possibility of parole "is the better penalty for murder":

60% chose the life-sentencing option
36% favored the death penalty

Among party affiliations, 79% of Democrats and 60% of Independents chose life without parole as a better approach than the death penalty. Conservatives narrowly preferred the death penalty, 51% to 46%.

©2020 GALLUP. TOTAL ADULT
SOURCE: GALLUP

Those who are executed are NOT the worst of the worst, despite the Supreme Court's 2005 ruling that capital punishment be limited to society's most guilty.

Death row is teeming with those suffering from serious mental illness, trauma, and other mental impairments. The Court has also established rules prohibiting the execution of certain groups, finding it cruel and unusual in violation of the 8th Amendment: the clinically insane, the intellectually disabled, and juveniles under 18. And yet, many of those on death row fall into one of those categories.



Take **Rocky Meyers**, for example. The 53-year-old, who has an intellectual disability, was given an incompetent lawyer, convicted on evidence from a key witness who has since **recanted** his testimony, and sentenced to death by a judge who imposed death sentence **against the jury's wishes**. Rocky has been on death row since 1993.

©2020 GALLUP. TOTAL ADULT
SOURCE: GALLUP AND THE APPALACHIAN
[TERRY A. MARSHALL (1993)], [JACOB A. VIGOR (2005)], [DAVID A. GIBSON (2005)]

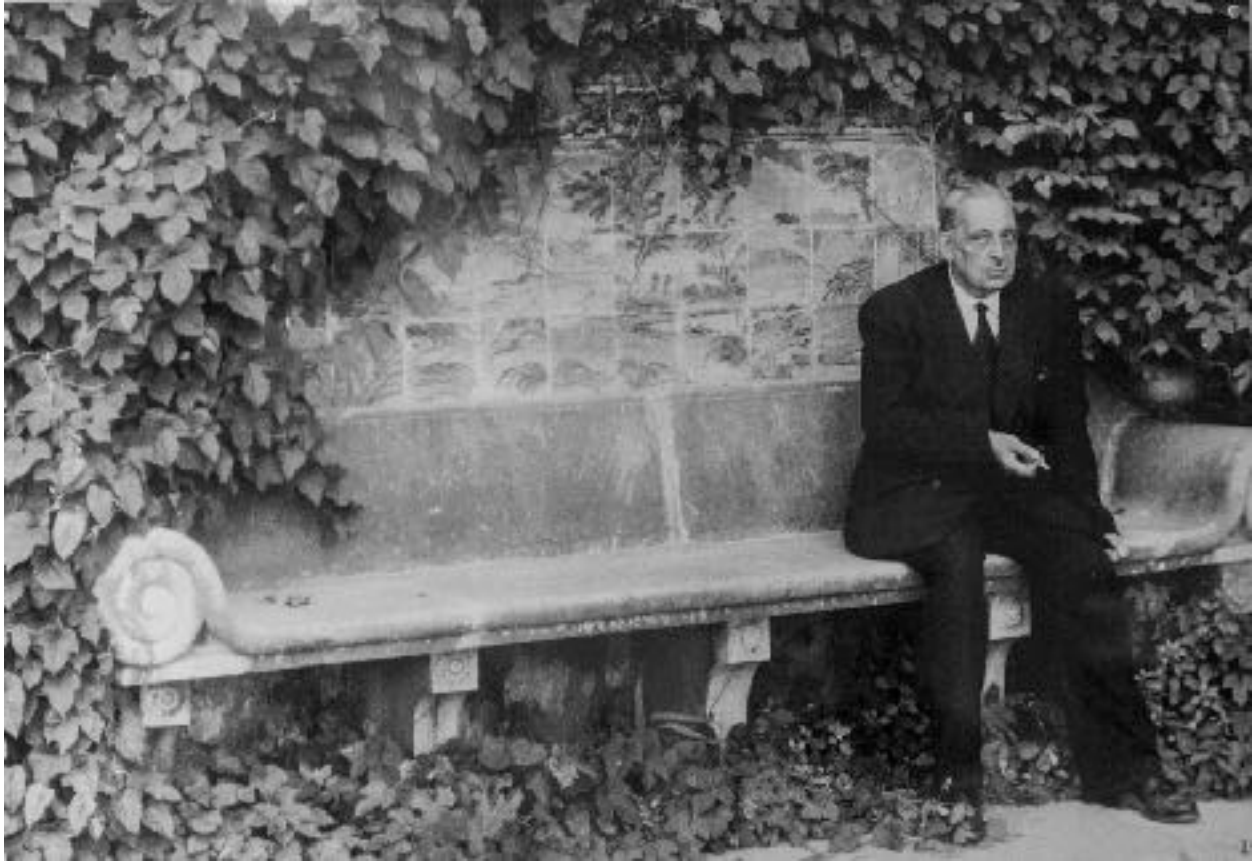
The injustice of the death penalty is so clear. It has no place in our society. And it has to end. We're all more than the worst thing we've ever done, because all human beings are capable of change. If our criminal justice system is to change, it should be designed not just to punish, but also to rehabilitate those who've committed crimes.

There should always be the opportunity for rehabilitation, redemption and grace. We have the capacity to hold people accountable and separate dangerous people from society without foreclosing that opportunity.

Texts by Emelie Yonally Phillips



The Leopard by Ufuk Gürbüzdal



The Leopard: An Aristocrat's Narrative of The Social Transformation during the Risorgimento

Book Review: Giuseppe Tomasi Di Lampedusa, *The Leopard* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1960), 319 pp.

Understanding, my love, what a great joy it is,
To understand what is gone and what is on the way. (1)

Nazım Hikmet, *Five Lines*

The great narrative of our century is essentially one marked by the dissolution of great narratives of human history. At stake, without doubt, has most fundamentally been the dialectical narrative and its scientific analyses regarding the working people of the world along with the grandiose pledge of a radical social change. Proponents of Marxism, as such, have necessarily found themselves once more advocating that scientific knowledge is key to construing the social realm comprised of objective and subjective contradictions at a given time. Historical materialists across the globe have therefore been unprecedentedly busy engaging in popular, if not also downright banal, discussions regarding whether scientific knowledge is possible or not. The dire gravity of the present situation is obvious. Putting aside myriad inconclusive debates about scientific knowledge, change, from a dialectical point of view, certainly remains an unchallenged physical law underlying all that is existent. (2) In fact, dialecticians have since the dawn of ancient times consistently asserted that change is the only constant. (3) Regardless, there are certain moments in history when social dynamics converge in such manner that they condense into a much radical form of this ever-present constant. Under such conditions, incessant and infinite change becomes explicitly transformative for it generates immense historic discontinuities.

The Risorgimento in Italy, which unified Italic states of the 19th century as one national state, was one such historic point of transmutation whereby society was made into something more if not entirely something else, and this change was rooted and prompt. (4) An analytical investigation of the Risorgimento stands out as an opportunity to negate the now-common suspicion surrounding scientific knowledge, doubled up with a legion of farcical postulations proposing that all knowledge is entirely based on human subjectivity. Against the backdrop of such ill-boding assertions which effectively prevent humanity from systematically working towards an egalitarian social order fortunately come to fore certain artistic works that allow us to re-examine objective laws governing historical processes. The

Leopard is one such work of art, an epoch novel, to be exact, that narrates the life of an aristocratic family undergoing the deeply ingrained effects of the radical social change of the Risorgimento in Italy. (5) Di Lampedusa, who is the writer of the novel and the last prince of Lampedusa in real life, meticulously articulates the alterations within the social and economic fabric of Italy from the point of view of another Prince, namely, Don Fabrizio.

A fictional Prince successfully penned down by Di Lampedusa, Don Fabrizio is the Prince of Salina, a royal house whose family insignia is a leopard. As Di Lampedusa depicts, Don Fabrizio belongs to “an unfortunate generation;” he swings “between the old world and the new”, and finds himself “ill at ease in both.” (6) In this sense, social characteristics of the historical period that Don Fabrizio passes through resemble Italian Marxist Gramsci’s definition of ‘interregnum’ during which “the old is dying and the new cannot be born” and “a great variety of morbid symptoms appear.” (7) Don Fabrizio represents the gripe of aristocracy during a social transition period and he is both intuitive and intelligent enough to grasp the inevitability of the societal change bound to take place. As an Italian noble, Don Fabrizio does not share the joy of communist poet Hikmet’s understanding of “what is gone and what is on the way” for he witnesses the abolition of the ruling social class of the time, namely aristocracy, of which he is a natural-born member. Don Fabrizio attempts to protect the economic interests and moral traditions of his own social class against new and rising agents of the bourgeoisie who owe their prosperity primarily to commerce. Tancredi, nephew of Don Fabrizio, is another protagonist character who is also aware of the inevitability of social change. However, young Tancredi, unlike his older uncle, looks for a privileged position for himself within the terrain of this newly ascending social order. The entirety of social and moral values by which Tancredi lives crystallizes in the following famous quote from the novel: “If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change”. (8) The story that begins with the discovery of the dead body of a young soldier in the undergrowth of Salinas’ mansion in May 1860 reaches to an end with the disposal of dog Bendico’s mummy; this

mummy signifies the last memory from the times of the incontestable aristocratic sovereignty and, thereby, that of the family of Salinas. If we consider the fact that the woman who decides to throw Bendico's mummy away is one of the spinsters of the Salina family, we can argue that things (i.e., prosperity, abundance, and power) stay as they were but they do not necessarily for the aristocracy; instead, they remain the same and unchanged at the disposal and discretion of the bourgeoisie, which rises over other subaltern echelons of society and gradually begins to rule them all with a new set of socio-economic norms and moral values.



It is important to remember that Italy had not remained unaffected from the social effects of the Revolutions of 1848 that shook Europe. In fact, the political impact of these upheavals was robustly felt in certain autonomous

regions of Italy such as Sicily. Within this context, the kings and aristocratic families of Italy, broadly speaking, felt obliged to support the Risorgimento and liberal Republican movements for which new agents of the bourgeoisie played a most primary constitutive role. On the other hand, according to Gramsci who examines the modernization of Italy from a historical-materialist point of view, the Risorgimento is a social phenomenon that should be questioned around the concept of passive revolution. As Thomas puts it, for Gramsci, the shift in political sovereignty during the Risorgimento was not a popular movement led by subaltern classes but it was a “revolution without revolution” during which the political transformation was “undertaken by elites, garbed in the rhetoric of previous revolutionary movements.” (9) The hegemonic development undertaken by this passive revolution necessitated an ‘intellectual’ bloc armed by the power of such rhetoric supportive of the interests of its ‘economic’ counterpart. (10) This is exemplified in the formalization of the Italian language under the influence of Florentine masterpieces by intellectuals later deemed to be inspirational Italian models such as Dante Alighieri, Petrarch, Giovanni Boccaccio, Niccolò Machiavelli and Francesco Guicciardini. (11) Herein, the adjective ‘passive’ that defines the ‘passive revolution’ connotes the externalization of popular classes during the modernization process of Italy. Later on, Gramsci extends this definition beyond social events in Italy to those in the rest of Europe.

Thereon, Gramsci particularly remarks on the example of the economic modernization process in Germany which lacks a Jacobin moment within the political sphere. (12) Herein, considering the unique historical conditions that led to the ultimate sovereignty of the bourgeoisie as a ruling social class may help us better comprehend Gramsci’s definition of passive revolution as well as the term’s substantial relevance to the story retold in *The Leopard*. In contrast with the revolutions led by the working class, in most historical cases, the political sovereignty of the bourgeoisie is conditioned by its prevalence within the economic sphere. As most historical examples solidly demonstrate, the bourgeoisie declares its political sovereignty under the guarantee of its

hegemony within the economic realm. Correspondingly, in *The Leopard*, the economic hegemony of the bourgeoisie crystallized within the personality of Don Calogero, the recently elected mayor, declares its political sovereignty via a pseudo-election; Don Calogero and his fellow bourgeois accomplices even celebrate this pretentious election despite their disbelief in the authenticity of the emerging social formation. Moreover, in the new social order, it is almost impossible to observe a complete break from the old one; instead, we can easily notice a continuity that bears some traces of novelty. Indeed, it is possible to observe the former law enforcers of the Bourbon royal house, who were previously called the traitors, on police duty in the victory day for liberals.



Sudden political reflexes of Tancredi regarding his ability to change political sides provide us with another example that illustrates the aforementioned continuity. Since he thinks that it fits into his political interests, Tancredi first assumes the officer's role in the Garibaldinian Army and then he recounts stories of his adventures from the war to his family members although neither he nor his friends had ever confronted a serious armed resistance. In fact, in the puissant film adaptation of the novel, the film's director Visconti handsomely uses his camera to mock Tancredi's pseudo-valor and shares with the audience a laudable scene where Tancredi bandages his supposedly

wounded eye. (13) As soon as the Garibaldinian Army disperses, we are shown that Tancredi and his friends are dressed in the military uniforms of the King's army. During this very sequence of the film, the audience is allowed to apprehend Tancredi's pragmatism and opportunism, two intertwined qualities that are immanent to the very character of the new prevailing social class.

Although Don Fabrizio, who personifies the utmost representative of the aristocracy, finds the moral values of the new prevailing social class inadequate and, even more so, decadent, he grasps the inevitability of the social change. In light of such consciousness, he is intent on eluding this social shift with the least socio-economic loss possible. Don Fabrizio is aware of the inert manner and extravagance of his ancestors who he also thinks were lazy; thus, the character continuously contains a self-criticism of his own class in his person. Owing to this self-criticism and historical awareness, he regards the rise of the bourgeoisie as a legitimate one. He is aware that the paintings surrounding the walls of Salinas' mansion, which are expressions of the Leopard's indisputable sovereignty, are now open to be replaced by new drawings of the bourgeoisie. For instance, Father Pirrone, a Jesuit priest dear to Salinas who is also discomfited by the ongoing social change and the associated upheaval, reproaches to Don Fabrizio for collaborating with the libertarians. Don Fabrizio retorts to this objection with the following words:

"We live in a changing reality to which we try to adapt ourselves like seaweed bending under the pressure of water. Holy Church has been granted an explicit promise of immortality; we, as a social class, have not." (14)

In the film by Visconti, too, Don Fabrizio responds to the complaints of Don Ciccio, who is a loyal vassal of the nobles, with a consenting providence to the rule of the new social class that that resonates with his outlook throughout the book. The only motivation for Don Fabrizio, then, appears to be arranging the marriage of Tancredi and Angelica, two individuals representing aristocracy and bourgeoisie respectively. In line with bourgeois values, the sides to this marriage are considered by their families merely as diplomatic means of

reconsolidating economic and political relations. For Don Calogero, Tancredi implies no further meaning than a young man who has an entrepreneurial soul with more than enough ability to take on social positions according to the necessities of the new social order. Don Calogero even sees it redundant that his daughter is in love with Tancredi. Indeed, to both Don Calogero and Tancredi, Angelica is an instrument of bribery put to use between the two social classes in the eve of changing class sovereignties. To the noble eyes of Don Fabrizio, Angelica, whose grandfather was a peasant, is ultimately of an ancestry that leads to and only ends in mmerda, meaning 'shit;' nevertheless, he has no other option but to ignore this fact and hope that the smell of mmerda will not sprawl.



Towards the end of the film, however, the audience is shown a feast scene where Don Fabrizio's noble nose fills with the smell of mmerda. In the feast's

atmosphere which he finds banal and vulgar, he acknowledges his own death along with that of his noble class once again in front of a painting. In the book, in a discussion with a bureaucrat, Don Fabrizio makes a reference to his family insignia and says of his noble class that they “[...] were the Leopards, the Lions” and those who will take their place “[...] will be little jackals, hyenas.” He concludes: “[...] and the whole lot of us, Leopards, jackals, and sheep, we’ll all go on thinking ourselves the salt of the earth.” (15)

Perhaps we have to pay more attention to such seminal works as *The Leopard* by Di Lampedusa. It is these pieces of literature as well as film, such as that of Visconti, which may bring us back to the times out of our reach and donate us hints about the incessantly changing dynamics of society that mark the very nature of any and all social organization, including the society itself. As a great man of struggle once said, “all that is solid melts into air” and “all that is holy is profaned.” (16) Through this constant state of change, we the working people have to act with an obstinate curiosity to better comprehend the dynamics of change that revolve around us and that ultimately determine the ways in which we live. We as the necessary participants of wage labor are achieved actors of change insofar as we contribute to constant social change in a strategical manner consistent with revolutionary imaginaries that strive for a more egalitarian world for all. As the stories yarned in the book –and its successful adaptation to film– testify, aristocracy once had its time and has long been replaced by the now-ruling bourgeoisie. Regardless, there will be a time for the latter to be overthrown too just as it once overthrew its noble counterpart. The time, it seems, will all depend on the social action by social agents who are participant, organized, planned and act with a goal. It must be therefore our intent as the working people to try and not remain ‘sheep’ by understanding the intricate social relations beneath the surface if it is our desire to liberate the world from predators who prey on us, whether they are called leopards, jackals or hyenas.

Notes:

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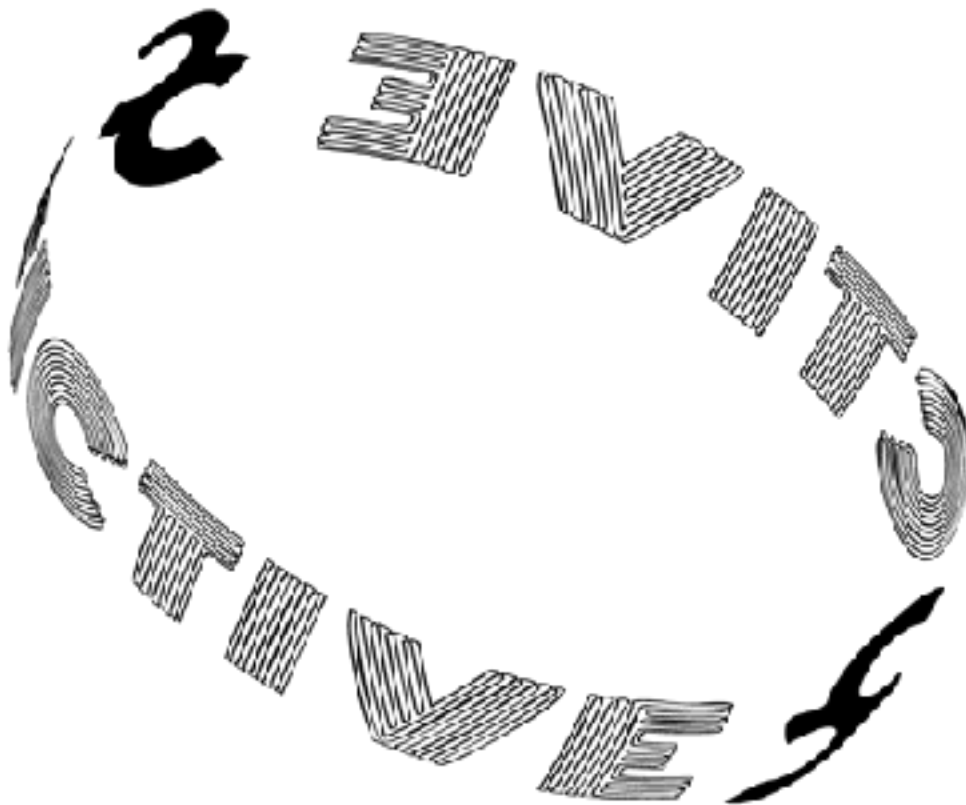
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A Letter to Jean Améry

by Özlem Atik



Jean Améry (1912–1978) was born Hans Meier in Vienna, Austria. He was a philosophy and literature student in Vienna and participated in the resistance against the Nazi occupation of Belgium. He was detained and imprisoned for several years in concentration camps, surviving Auschwitz and Buchenwald and finally Bergen-Belsen, until he was liberated in 1945. He settled in Belgium after the war and wrote several renowned works, including *At the Mind's Limits*:

Contemplations by a Survivor on Auschwitz and Its Realities (1966), *On Aging* (1968), and *On Suicide: A Discourse on Voluntary Death* (1976).

(New York Review Books <https://www.nyrb.com/collections/jean-amery>)

I wish I had the chance to meet you in person. This was the feeling I had when I first read your book *At the Mind's Limits: Contemplations by a Survivor on Auschwitz and Its Realities*. It may sound very strange, unusual or even awkward ... that forty years after your death, someone who lives far away from the geography that you were born in and were exiled from, the geography in which you were tortured, you suffered and eventually committed suicide... wants to talk to you, share memories and feelings. You may be thinking of how lonely I am, and you are right. I feel lonely but I know I am not alone. It would be more bearable to feel this way if it was just for myself, but I think there are others like me, which is even more depressing. You were one of the first ones to write about this kind of loneliness - 'collective loneliness' as it is called nowadays.

At the *Mind's Limits*, you wrote about the reactions of the later generations of your time in the German society towards the Holocaust. Some of them were so fed up with this "overwhelming part of the history" [1] and, they were not the only ones to want a clear road to walk on by leaving the unwanted pages out of history: "First the pariah Germany was accepted into the community of nations, after that it was courted, finally it had to be dispassionately reckoned with in the power game." (Améry, 1980, p.66) You were emphasizing how important it is to undertake the responsibility of knowing, acting, behaving with respect to what happened in our cultures regardless of the unpleasant feelings, such as shame. I think this was the point where I felt so close and connected to you.

I come from a background that has never been a welcoming part of the official history in Turkey. It can be searched for Dersim '38 [2], Dersim massacre [3],

Dersim Tertele [4] in the modern resources, although according to the official discourse it is called Dersim rebellion [5]. Because the culture in Dersim was based on the oral transfer of memory, the massacre narrations were told (at first only) among the members of the community.

So, even though brokenly and in pieces, we still had the knowledge of the past by virtue of oral history. On the other hand, It was a publicly muted massacre for almost seventy years until 2009, the speech of an MP in the CHP (the leading party in 1938; now 'opposition' party – but not when it comes to the Kurds), which was based on legitimizing the massacre violence [6]. So, his speech caused a lot of people to break their silence and raised their voice, claiming to know their lost relatives' graveyards like Serafettin Halis [7]. However, even when it was publicly recognised for the first time, it became part of a political accusation race between the today's murderer (AKP-the governing party) discussing responsibility with yesterday's killer (CHP). The recognition still gave us some relief.

Finally, we were more than just some crazy people who made up a disaster. For the majority of the population here in Turkey though, it was already enough to talk about this unpleasant event. It was not fair to relate this disaster to our daily presence and habits but most importantly to Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, even though the massacre of Dersim '38 was committed under his control and approval [8].

Several days of the year are dedicated to commemorating Ataturk such as his birthday, death day, the time he landed on Samsun (a city in the black sea region), the time he founded the republic, the time he opened the parliament, and of course the times he introduced his 'reforms and revolutions' for men, women and children. The problem is that all these 'reforms and revolutions' were designed towards building a Turkish identity, even for children.

One could have all the benefits of these if they embraced this Turkish identity. It reminds me of Judith Butler's emphasis on "sovereign interpellation" (i.e. ideology, rule) which never "succeeds to (fully) form the field of the human

according to itself. (because) No interpellation is without limits” (Sari Roman - Lagerspetz, 2009:276) [9]. It is obvious that the interpellation to Turkish identity had and has its own limits. Ziya Gökalp was one of the very well-known republicans of Kurdish descent who wrote *The Principle of Turkism* showed us those limits. Therefore, even generations after generations we are still and will be carrying with us the traces of our ancestors in different ways and nuances.

Returning to the celebration of those nationalist days on the behalf of a leader who wanted to assimilate us, feels the least uncomfortable. Some Kurds may be ignoring this conflict in order not to be left out of their comfort zones, not to get offended in public, or maybe it seems unimportant after all. The dynamics of assimilation works differently on each individual depending on the social and economic factors. Nevertheless, I think for most of us being part of this kind of public nationalist days still creates a sense of guilt of betraying our ancestors for all the things we learned from our parents, in fact for our own existence. Unfortunately, taking part in those celebrations was such a ‘normal’ routine we were exposed to throughout our education lives in Turkey. This partly explains where my resentment is coming from.

Turkish Republic’s assimilation policies were implemented not just on the Kurds/Kırmançs, but also on Armenians, Greeks, Syriacs, Ladinos, Alevi’s (Kurds/Turks) in fact even on Muslims to make sure they understand the republics’ way of Turkish/Muslim identity. However, although - as non-Turkish and Muslim groups – most of us have been and are being treated unjustly in the country that we are citizens of, it is quite necessary to point out that Kurdish language still has no legal status - like minority groups have - It is being used in a de facto way and the public perception towards Kurdish language keeps changing with the discourse of government. All in all, identity politics have never changed for all those years. When you read the speeches of Mustafa Kemal [10], the newspapers from the archives, or the literature of the early republic, you see how Turkish identity was built, leaving all other identities

outside basically or including them on such conditions as being stripped of their native language and cultural beliefs.

He wanted to design every bit of this identity by himself, he was not tolerating anyone who got into a conflict with him. He was going to finish off the Kurds, the non-secular ones and the non-Muslims i.e. all the non-Turks according to his fantasy 'Turkish' identity. It did not work. It never worked anywhere in the world. There are too many redlines when you talk about the past in Turkey - you have to jump over them and pretend like they are not there. You literally grow up with an ability to learn not to learn the past. For how long can you go with the idea that the republic was marvelous when it was founded by Mustafa Kemal, but everything went crazy after he died. Most of the Kemalists live on this idea. However, the way we are now obviously has to do with this past. This history was not one of glory for all of us, and this fact cannot be ignored.

We will not let it be ignored, as we are so sick of watching it repeat in everyday lives and news. As it was seen a few months ago in the instance that two Kurdish men (farmers) were taken away in an army operation by the Turkish soldiers, tortured and thrown away from the helicopter. The brother of Servet Turgut (who is dead now) talked to the newsagent: "Erdoğan says we exterminate all of them', but we are human beings how can you exterminate all of us." I can't help thinking of such a fair question, but also very sad that we still have to ask it.

Neither I nor my history recognised each other

As I mentioned earlier, I am coming from a background with a massacre, and I am the fourth generation. In all my school life, even at the university during my bachelor years, I have never heard this massacre being talked about in public, in a class or in a friendly crowd. My history was just not out there, like something doesn't make sense in anything, doesn't appear in any form. I think

it was the alienation and assimilation. If you do not know your history, your history does not recognize you either and both sides just stay quiet.

Anyway, the first time I heard about our unwanted history being pronounced publicly, like came to an existence, I was in London, trying to survive and living on social media news from territory/Turkey like many other immigrants. When you are far from your roots, social media becomes more interesting, almost turns out to be an airport, where people arrive and leave continuously. So, I was in London at the remembrance day of Hrant Dink, a journalist of Armenian descent who was shot dead after a fascist attack. One of the invited speakers was Temel Demirer, who is a writer. We were just chatting randomly. I guess, I shared my homesick mood a lot so that he said, "I believe one's mind should be there with her feet." It might not sound a lot, but to me, it triggered my motivation on coming back to Turkey, and I did.

I remember when I wanted to study the after-effects of my history with the disaster, most people said "What is left to study?" Survivors and their children have been interviewed and I suppose, since the Dersim discussions converted to a part of a political race, it became popular in the media, and maybe started to sound a bit irritating for some. Anyway, I wanted to go on, even though I was not very sure about what to study specifically. There was something involved with the past, something lost, something melancholic, something destructive, something that keeps ruining the present unexpectedly and leaving us with tense, entangled emotions. I did not want to focus on the "what it was" part, instead I wanted to ask how we could interpret those feelings, turn them into illustrations or claims without victimizing ourselves. That is why your discourse on resentment was very inspiring to me.

I have always thought the past was an issue of injustice and freedom, which are true in many ways but they are still not sufficient to explain our relationship with past. Time is passing and unsolved losses and griefs keep piling up in our memories. I used to think there is no point in feeling resentment towards the "past issues", mainly because it is not possible to change them. After reading

and suffering for a while though, I realised that there is no need to go to the past. It is already invading our present- it keeps leaking into our conversations, our encounters with the others on a daily basis.

As you said, “no one can escape from the history of their people. [...] One should not and must not 'allow the past rest' because otherwise it could be resurrected and become a new present” [11]. Our present has been a militarized land since 1938. People in Dersim have been living under modern surveillance strategies with the establishment of Turkish republic; such as surveillance, armed control points, herons, drones and banned areas. It is almost impossible to track the banned areas updates but some have never been free since 1938 [12]. They keep extending the dates of the bans. The exception has become the rule (Carl Schmitt) for so long in the Dersim case. The city itself stays as an exception compared with other cities in Turkey. And having seen the military in everyday life is definitely making the past “present”. So, I want to “actualize” and “externalize” these facts with the courage I find in your writings. Those reasons/facts are sticking onto our present. It is impossible not to touch the past while being alive. I think you knew it more than anyone else. If we do not touch it, it touches us anyway.

My language is my invader

Writing this letter in English somehow felt so comfortable from the very beginning. I was not aware of the reasons at first but it made sense later on. After university, like many parents' children I just wanted to leave the country. I would realise years later that those parents were mostly the ones who don't count as the “real” citizens of their own countries (because they are not Turkish/Muslims), live in a consistent unsafe mode and not hopeful for their kids' future in Turkey. I wasn't aware that this leaving motivation was coming from my parents at that time.

Anyway, after spending almost seven years in English-speaking countries, I even started feeling a form of belonging to the English language. I think I made English a bit homey for myself, unlike Turkish which was taught to me to make me not learn my mother tongue, Zazaki/Kırmanciki. My mom learned Turkish when she was 7 years old, and so they could not make her forget it. She was also able to speak Kırmanciki/Zazaki with my grandmother, aunts and uncles for all those years. This helped her keep her mother tongue, but not everybody had this chance.

This is another story and makes everything very complicated: I feel resentment towards the Turkish language, but still express myself the best in Turkish. I blame its existence because had it not interrupted our culture and our society; I would have been able to speak with my grandmother fluently in Zazaki today. Instead, we just say a few words to each other now. I should have the right to express this resentment and expect others to understand it- as you say, if we want to be neighbours to each other, we should understand the reasons behind our feelings: resentment and loneliness.

Today's decisions recalling the past

Every time the ruler party (AKP) puts war to a vote in the parliament, all the parties including the biggest opposition party CHP approves it, except the only Kurdish party (HDP). They send the soldiers to kill the Kurds in Syria and Iraq (Iran already does it by itself). They do not want Kurds as neighbours and in the meanwhile, Kurds in Turkey live here with them. They may think the Kurds in Turkey do not feel attached to the Kurds in Iraq, Syria and Iran but it is not true.

I can feel the longing in Hesên Zîrek's lyrics [13], and find the traces of his exiled life in my family history. I understand how he has suffered from not being able to sing in Kurdish, how he could not have a place for himself in his home land, similar to Ahmet Kaya [14], who has been a very beloved and

successful singer in Turkey until he wanted to sing a song in Kurdish. After that he was claimed a traitor and forced to leave the country. I do not see a big difference between those lives, even though one was spent in Iran and the other one in Turkey.

It is not so difficult to see which people from which backgrounds on social media support the war. People who are not friendly to non-Turks/Muslims, with full of nationalistic pride, basically supported Azerbaijani in the Gharabagh issue (Artsah). It is not happening for the first time though. Supporting a war or standing against it is related to your past and identity. The Kemalists keep reciting peaceful quotes from Mustafa Kemal, but still support every war decision in the parliament, actually just like their leaders. Because saying one thing and doing something else is such a characteristic of nationalists.

I have voted three times since 2015. All mayors of the HDP party I voted for have been removed from their positions unjustly, almost all of them prisoned without any legal process [15]. Practically I go and use my vote, but in the end my decision gets deleted, it does not count. It seems Kurds in Turkey live in a different era; we may call it a medieval era which takes place in the Turkish republic.

I wonder why the Turkish Republic of the 1930s claimed so insistently that it would bring us “modernism” - us the wild people (Dersimis’ people). Yet here we are still with no right for self-determination. All my life I have heard that “things” happened in Dersim in 1938, which was “normal” at that time, nationalism was on the rise everywhere, a new country was being born, and so Mustafa Kemal did his best. Did he really? His best decisions were death and exile for my ancestors. According to the official population records, between the years in 1936 and 1940, the ratio of the population in the Dersim area dramatically decreased from 107,000 to 94,639. It is stated officially that 13 thousand 806 people were killed, 11 thousand 683 people were exiled [16].

Those who were exiled did not know a word of Turkish, and were sent by the black carriages to 32 different western cities in Turkey. They did not let any two families from Dersim stay in the same town. It was one of the strategies of assimilating Kırmanç/Zaza people to Turkish/Muslim identity. Surviving female children were given to Turkish soldiers as they were adopted. Many of them never managed to trace their family roots or hometowns for their whole lives. Others, especially women, grew up alone and without any relatives, like Emoş Güler [17]. Her kids suffered from their mom's loneliness, and could not understand why she had no sisters or brothers.

Some have been searched by their families for 70 years but could not be found, like the two cousins Sakine and Şemsi; some were adopted by eminent soldiers and when they found each other half a century later, they told one another the violence they were exposed to from those families, like Huriye and Fatma [18]. The assimilation policies in Dersim targeted female children particularly, this way they would not be able to teach their language/Kırmanç beliefs to their own kids.

There is a really interesting figure in the history of Dersim girls' assimilation - her name is Sıdıka Avar, who insistently made applications to become the minister in Elazığ Girl's Institute. After becoming the minister there (1939), she wanted to be in charge of collecting girls from their families instead of letting the soldiers do it. To her, this was less scary for the girls, and so they could willingly 'become Turkish' [19]. Local people called Dersim'38 "Tertele" in Kırmançiki/Zazaki which means "mass destruction of people without distinction, looting of their goods and property" (Yıldız, 2014, p.13) [20]. It was a massacre, which was planned to be carried out since 1926 [21]. This date corresponds to 3 years after the foundation of the republic.

My grandmother, Hüsniye Tunç was born in 1937. As later generations, we are all carrying the traumatic traces of this massacre in different ways. Joseph Triest states that collective trauma affects the whole way of thinking and experiencing, rather than targeting a singular thought or experience of the

subject (Triest, 2016, p.60) [22]. We cannot define traumatic damage with one specific behaviour of a person. It changes with every individual.

We can say, though, that most of us lost our mother tongue, lost one special world which opens to the past. Some of us never understood why and how this happened. Some did not realise there was something missing or it was the underlying reason for those surface problems. We were also blamed by the Kurds, for not being able to speak our own language, Kîrmanciki/Zazaki, as if it was our own fault.

I want to mention a public figure regarding the traces of this traumatic background. Yıldız Tilbe who is a famous pop singer of Kurdish descent. She celebrates the national days (like all the Mustafa Kemal days) and also the death anniversary of Seyit Rıza, who was a spiritual leader of the Zaza/Kîrmanc people in Dersim and was executed in 1937 with the command of Mustafa Kemal [23]. Neither Kurds nor Turks recognise her conflict - her statements do not match with their fixed and proud identities. In one tweet, she states “I am not Kurdish because I do not know the language. I am the daughter of a Kurdish mother, I am Turkish.”

The way she expresses herself may sound Gokalpian [24], but still is very consistent with her past, with what she and her family have gone through. However, it is not consistent with some people's expectations, those who unnecessarily think that after a disaster one should become an individual whose world is complete and language is not broken. It is hard not to recall Marc Nichanian's “writers of the disaster”. To him, the traumatic past breaks one's language, and takes the ability of telling one's own story (Nichanian, 2011, p.30) [25]. I think Tilbe is not betraying her traumatic past, she is fighting with the outside world and trying to find a space to protect her subjectivity. Instead of staying quiet or vulnerable, she is showing her inconsistency politically and taking the risk in public. I saw journalists and activists reacting disrespectfully to her tweets. I am finding it very unfair and hypocritical.

In the end, my point is that we have never had the same citizenship rights as the Turks have, although we live in the same country since it was founded. I am the fourth generation of this republic and I am not talking about thousands of years ago, I am talking about a fact that is as real as something on my screen, and when I am looking at it, I cannot see anything to celebrate neither in the past nor at the present.

I want peace too, but I also want to express that I really feel the resentment of having to live with people who support every war opportunity against us, who hate us even without knowing any of us, who want to decide our presence in the parliament with grace. They show their hatred at every opportunity, so I want to hold on to my rightful resentment and tell them - such a shame that although we live together, you still marginalize our language and culture.

Such a shame that we have been living in this small land for four/five generations, your parents used to believe we did not exist, you finally agreed we have our own language but are still not convinced it is worth teaching at schools. Such a shame that the freedom of our language never became a concern of yours, as if it is something that needs to be negotiated. Such a shame that you still do not know how to read the past/history other than the ones told at school. This shame list can get longer but let's start with those above. These are some of the main reasons behind my resentment.

My last word is for Améry. The world would be even lonelier without your resentment, Améry...It is bearable now in virtue of your reasoning it...

References:

[1] "In a German weekly I read the letter of an obviously young man from Kassel, who, eloquently expresses the displeasure of the new German generations at the haters and the resentful, who-since they are in every respect out- of-date-are also bad. He writes: '... we are finally sick and tired of hear- ing

again and again that our fathers killed six million Jews.” Jean Améry, *At the Mind's Limits*, p.75

[2] Belleklerdeki Dersim '38 is an oral history project based on the narrations of witnesses and later generations written by Bulent Bilmez, Gülay Kayacan, Sukru Aslan published by History Foundation. <https://tarihvakfi.org.tr/kitap/belleklerdeki-dersim-38/51>. In this book, Dersim '38 refers to “extermination, massacre, slaughter, genocide” (p.48)

[3] The term Dersim massacre has been mentioned in many works especially for the last few years. However, it was claimed by Ismail Besikci for the first time in his book “Tunceli Kanunu (1935) ve Dersim Jenosidi” which was written in 1977 and published in 1990 due to the publication ban. The massacre in 1938 is related to the Tunceli Law in 1935, and one of the very first articles of this law was to change the name and the boundaries of the city Dersim to Tunceli, which is still the official name of the area today. The name “Dersim” is mainly used for showing the political context, which refers to the massacred past, like I do in this letter.

[4] Local people called Dersim'38 “Tertele” in Kırmanciki/Zazaki which means “mass destruction of people without distinction, looting of their goods and property” Mehmet Yıldız, *Dersim'in Kültürel Etno-Kimliği*, 2014, İstanbul Chiviyazıları, p. 13.

[5] Hasan Hakan Ulutin, “Dersim in Republic time”, Marmara University, İstanbul, 2016.

[6] An article about Onur Öymen's speech by Ismail Besikci <https://m.bianet.org/bianet/siyaset/118203-besikci-oymen-in-amcasi-tunceli-kanununu-alkislayanlardandi>

[7] The press release Serafettin Halis made in the parliament of Turkish Republic (TBMM), 12 December 2009. https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/haber_portal.aciklama?PI=95306

[8] There is a part in this article which says “decision-makers, organisers and actors” shows Mustafa Kemal’s part in the Dersim 38 massacre. <https://www.sciencespo.fr/mass-violence-war-massacre-resistance/en/document/dersim-massacre-1937-1938.html> A popular news portal Haberturk is also giving some perspectives of the politicians, academics and directors. <https://www.haberturk.com/polemik/haber/689932-dersim-katliamindan-ataturkun-haberi-var-miydi>

[9] Sari Roman- Lagerspetz, “Striving for the Impossible The Hegelian Background of Judith Butler”, 2009, Helsinki University Print.

[10] In this speech Mustafa Kemal talks about the history of Adana, he feels he needs to emphasize several times that Armenians didn’t live in this city, and never became part of this land. It was his motivation speech for Turks to make them feel they belong to Adana. It won’t be an exaggeration to think of the rest of his speeches coherent with the same goal. Date of online access: 09.12.2020 <https://www.atam.gov.tr/ataturkun-soylev-ve-demecleri/adana-esnaflariyla-konusma>

[11] Wollheim Memorial’s website, date of online access: 08. 12..2020 http://www.wollheim-memorial.de/en/der_essayband_jenseits_von_schuld_und_suehne_von_jean_amry_1966

[12] Rudaw newsagent, date of online access: 10.12.2020 <https://www.rudaw.net/turkish/kurdistan/16072019>

[13] Hesên Zîrek has been recognised as a Kurdish dengbej (poetic singer) in Turkey around 2015 mainly through the discovery of his plagiarised song “Ey Nîştîman” which tells about the longing and struggle for Kurdistan in the original form. The Turkish version is called “Ankara’nın Taşına Bak” which speaks to Mustafa Kemal and asks for his help. It is also mentioned in one article that Ey Nîştîman used to sing in Armenian in churches before the Armenian genocide. <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/303095/bir-ermeni->

ilahisinden-kahramanlik-marsina Hesên Zîrek's some other songs were also plagiarized into Turkish; such as "yallah Şöför" sung by İbrahim Tatlıses.

Within the light of limited resources, it is known that his life was spent in exile, that he had to escape from the police in Iran and Iraq because of singing in Kurdish. <https://oggito.com/icerikler/ruhuyla-direnen-kurt-muzisyen-hesen-zirek/29881>

[14] Kaya didn't know Kurdish properly but wanted to sing in his mother tongue. He explained his wish when he was awarded in an event, people who were congratulating, started to attack him as soon as they heard his explanation. He was exposed to a hatred company and sued for committing a crime against to Turkish government, declared as the enemy of his country. He suffered from loneliness too. <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-38005502>

[15] It happened to all Kurdish parties in the past and it is happening to HDP party today. The very proud Turkish Republic was founded with the beginning of one-party period on October 29, 1923. It is the traditional and historic politics of Turkish Republic not to give the right of free speech to others. <https://www.reuters.com/article/turkey-politics-kurds-int/turkish-state-prosecutor-files-case-to-close-pro-kurdish-hdp-anadolu-idUSKBN2B9IN7>

Human Rights Watch Organisation, date of online access: 10.12.2020

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/02/07/turkey-kurdish-mayors-removal-violates-voters-rights>

[16] Bedriye Poyraz., "Dare to Remember: The Tertele (Massacre) of Dersim 38", SBF Dergisi, 68 (3), 2013, 63-93, p.76.

[17] Emoş Güler told her story in a documentary directed by Nezahat Güngoğan, 2014. Here is the link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zI2PNHwjgKY&ab_channel=KazimGundogan

[18] We have learnt the story of those women who were separated from their families and hometowns through the documentary called; Two locks of hair: the missing girls of Dersim, directed by Nezahat Gündoğan, 2010. Here is the link, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ta8Qvzo4i_o&ab_channel=NaderHelmy

[19] Zeynep Türkyılmaz's article, Maternal Colonialism and Turkish Women's Burden in Dersim - Educating the 'Mountain Flowers' of Dersim (2016) is a great source to learn more about Sıdıka Avar. Ayşe Hür is also another historian who wrote about this figure. <https://m.bianet.org/biamag/bianet/117442-avar-ne-olur-kizimi-goturme>

[20] Mehmet Yıldız, Dersim'in Kültürel Etno-Kimliği, 2014, İstanbul Chiviyazıları, p. 13.

[21] In the same article about Sıdıka Avar, Ayşe Hür also mentions the contract of the Crime of Genocide approved by the European Union and check the articles of the contract over the Dersim massacre. <https://m.bianet.org/kadin/siyaset/117442-avar-ne-olur-kizimi-goturme>

[22] Joseph Triest, "Travmanın bireysel ve kolektif boyutları: bilinçdışı kabus gerçeğe dönüştüğünde", çev: Pitey Gonca Özbay, Psikanaliz Yazıları, bireysel ve toplumsal travmalar I, 2017, p. 53.

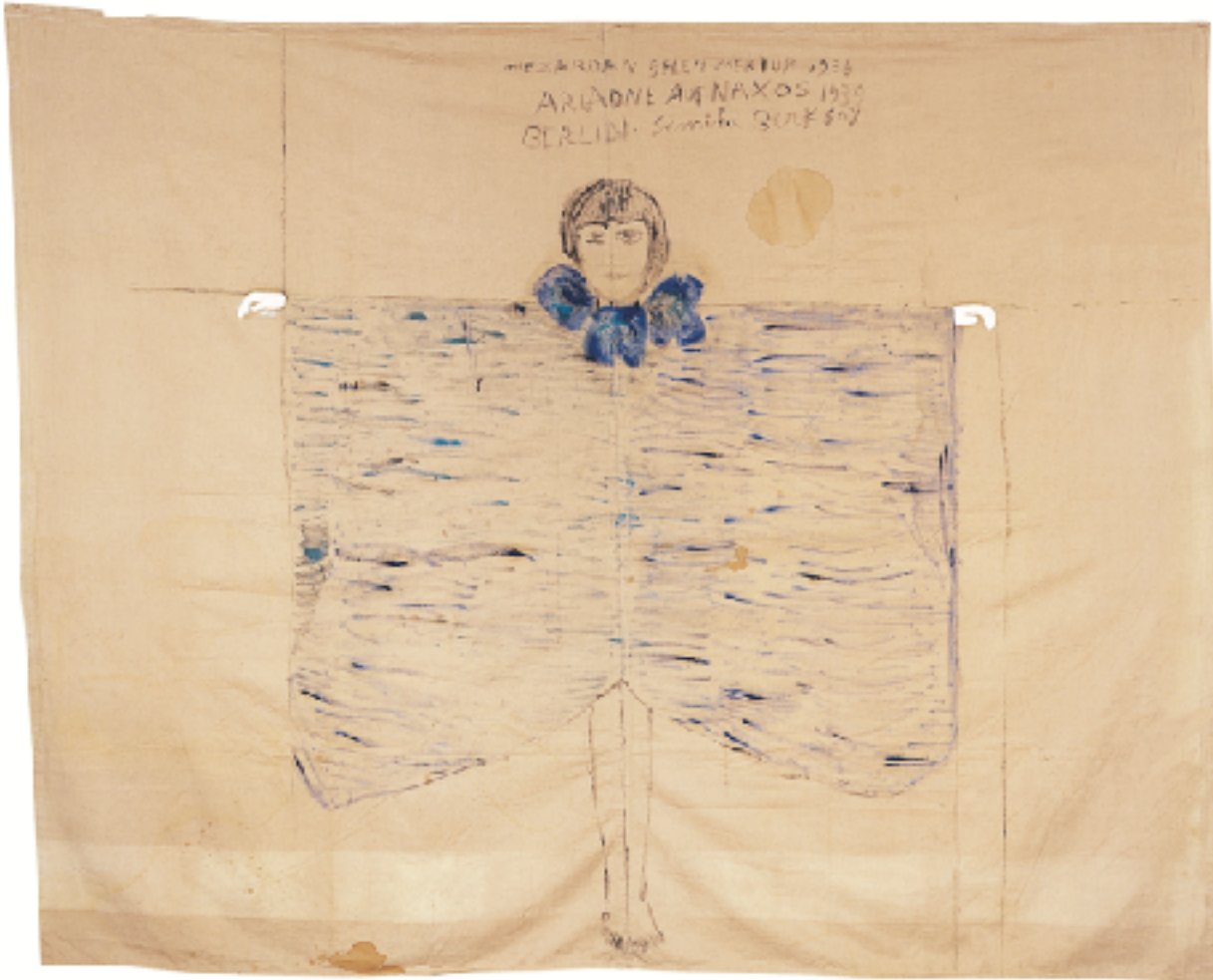
[23] Bedriye Poyraz, "Dare to Remember: The Tertele (Massacre) of Dersim 38", SBF Dergisi, 68 (3), 2013, 63-93, p.77-78.

[24] It was mentioned in the text that Ziya Gökalp was one of the republicans of Kurdish descent.

[25] Marc Nichanian, Edebiyat ve Felaket, 2011, Çev. Aysegül Sönmez, İstanbul: İletisim.



Daughter of Semiha the Diva: Interview with Zeliha Berksoy



During the exhibition, "Portraits", displaying the paintings of Semiha Berksoy, at Galerist in March, 2019, Zeliha Berksoy, the daughter of the late high dramatic soprano, actress, poet and painter remembered growing up with her mother. Even at home, she exuded her signature qualities as Turkey's beloved bon-vivant of the visual and performing arts, an iconic woman whose legacy continues to mesmerize and fascinate art lovers across the world with her vibrant, colorful soul. Zeliha Berksoy is also an actress and opera singer with a bountiful career. She carries the family's artistic traditions that

began in Çengelköy, where Semiha Berksoy was born into their aristocratic Turkish family of artists in 1910. What follows are reflections and anecdotes by Zeliha Berksoy, the daughter of a woman whose light has only brightened in posterity, as her art has continued to inspire the world since her death in 2004, including for Manifesta II (1998), Venice Biennial (2005), Istanbul Biennial (1997), Sharjah Biennial (2019) and Kunstverein Hamburg (2021).

Fictive

Please share a story that is defining for you in terms of how your mother assumed her different roles in the family and society, as mother, and as artist. During what times, for example, was it very clear that she was an artist, and when she was a mother? Or did her way of living between family and artwork evade such distinctions?

Zeliha Berksoy

She always treated me as an adult. She took children equal to others and treated that way. She was never mean, but was not spoiling. This was because she lived many unfortunate events, was restrained and misbehaved towards. She wanted me grow a strong and successful person. When I decided to become an actress, she did not taught me about it, she did get me lectured but rather than providing me with her experience, she wanted me to learn for myself which in the end made me stronger.

Fictive

How do you see the portraiture of your mother in relation to her other artworks? Is it characteristic of her highest aesthetic, conceptual accomplishments, or more of a side venture? Did you ever watch her craft one? How did she value them creatively?

ZB

On an incident, we were in a museum in Berlin, and there were works of Bernard Buffet, both small and large scale paintings. She pointed at the small work telling me that it was an incredible work of art, lacking nothing in value in comparison to the bigger works. The fact that it was a Buffet made it equally valuable.

Fictive

Where did visual artwork stand for your mother in relation to her performing arts, and also to her poetry and writing? Did she tend to take her singing more seriously, for example? How did she see herself? As a singer, actor, an artist?

ZB

Semiha's life was formed as what we may call gesamtkunstwerk. Her career in opera, theatre/drama, and her artistic creations all accompanied one another. They were equally important mediums for her artistic outlet. When art was the subject, to medium or form was secondary to her. She was all three of them.

Fictive

The family culture in which your mother was raised, in Çengelköy among artists and intellectuals, seems to have been integral to her formative years. Do you know the origins of the family's artistic roots, culturally speaking?

ZB

Semiha was born in Çengelköy in the Moralı Mehmet Bey mansion to an intellectual Istanbul family. Her mother Fatma Saime was an elegant woman known for her embroidery, haute-couture tailoring, and her painting. Her mother's creative character has influenced Semiha from a very early age. Fatma Saime is also the person who first taught Semiha to sing. When she was singing

her first Mozart pieces at home, her mother shows her dance/stage moves to accompany her singing.



Fictive

Did your mother talk about her experience performing onstage as a Turkish woman in Nazi-era Berlin? What did that experience mean for her? How is the "Ariadne auf Naxos" curtain painting unique to her other pieces of that type? As a stage performer yourself, what is the significance of the curtain, and its rendering into a medium for visual art?

ZB

She saw herself as Ariadne of Ariadne auf Naxos. That painting on cloth shows her in the age she played Ariadne in Berlin. Of course she would mention her experience of Germany of the period: Turkey was rather powerful in 1938-39 and at the Turkish Embassy they hold an event where Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop is also invited.

Fictive

Please recount the most memorable anecdote that you know of between your mother and Nazım Hikmet.

ZB

Semiha visits Hikmet while he's in the Çankırı Prison, and mentions him that there will be an opera play by Carl Ebert in Ankara. Hikmet straightaway suggests they should play Tosca. Semiha agrees on the condition that Hikmet translates the libretto, as Hikmet, in prison, is in need of an income of money. After her return to Ankara from this visit, she announces to the administration that she wants to play Tosca. But they strictly oppose her wish for Hikmet to translate because during the İnönü regime, the rule is quite anti-left and Hikmet is in prison for his political beliefs. Hasan Ali Yücel, the minister of National Education then does not allow, which leads Semiha to go up to Hikmet's uncle Ali Fuat Cebesoy who serves as the Minister of Transport at Kuvâ-yi Milliye, alongside Atatürk. Cebesoy allows the play (Tosca, 1941 which is very famous in the Turkish history of opera due to its political set in comparison the Turkish political atmosphere of the period) – which later has a big cost on Semiha's career...

Fictive

Do you remember any instances in particular where your mother acted out in protest against the animal slaughter ritual of kurban bayram?

ZB

Those bayrams always made her feel desperate. Semiha was a great lover of animals; we would feed the birds, cats and the dogs on time every day. With birds, the sparrows would come first, then the seagulls, and lastly the crows. Semiha admired the crows; she thought they were really fancy with their feathers of reflective black. There were roughly forty stray cats that we fed. On Kurban Bayramı, she would be in deep sorrow and never turn the TV or the radio on. She would see these sacrifices as murder.

Fictive

I understand that your mother dressed very elaborately, and generally had a distinctly grand presence in person. Was this ever an issue as the years went by? How did you feel in her presence in social settings when she took on her larger-than-life persona?

ZB

She always dressed magnificently, all through her life as if she were on the stage. She would only dress from Cemal Bürün, a haute-couture tailor at Nişantaşı, even her stage costumes were Bürün. Later in the 1990's she'd told me that she regarded her look as a piece of art as well, her face as a canvas, the signature make-up as painting. She regarded her crimson cheeks as a way to defy death, an act of courage that can also be found in some of her paintings like the *Woman Trapped in a Mangle (Self-portrait)*, 1972. The people loved Semiha. She stopped putting on that make-up on our return from Vienne. One day we were at a café in Tünel, some women called to me to ask if Semiha was unwell and why didn't she had her crimson cheeks on. Semiha took her lipstick out and painted her cheeks again.

Her dressing and make up gave courage to other women. Seeing her as an example, they understood it was okay to dress as they wanted and put on makeup as they wanted.



Fictive

Your grandmother passed away at an early age. Your mother's portrait of her is evocative. Did your mother speak of your grandmother? What do you know about how her portrait might speak to who she was in life?

ZB

For the family, Semiha's mother Fatma Saime, was the energy source, the magnetic centre, after her passing due to Spanish flu, the family drifted apart. Saime Hanım has always been an icon, a source of inspiration and creative obsession for Semiha. Her spirit always fueled the artistic fire in Semiha who believed in the spirituality of arts.

Fictive

Did your mother talk about meeting Atatürk? If so, what did she recount?

ZB

Atatürk wanted to legitimize the arts in Turkey, establishing the national theatre and national opera and bale, inviting and hosting internationally successful artists (Ebert and Paul Hindemith), forming a creative milieu. He then offers Ahmet Adnan Saygun to compose an opera (Özsoy Opera) at the age of 24 after his return from Paris, Semiha is 24 as well at that time. The opera is first staged in June 19, 1934 in honour of the Iranian sheik's visit. Atatürk calls it a turning point in the music history of Turkey.

One evening, Atatürk invites the artists over to the mansion where he kindly asks Semiha to sing from Aşım, her role in Özsoy. Semiha being quite witty, had her notes to Madame Butterfly with her, believing it would prove her vocal talent further. Atatürk approves, and Semiha sings Madame Butterfly. Semiha would recite that he got really excited and shouted: "Ok ay!", meaning the arrow hitting the moon – orders Semiha to be sent to Europe to study opera. Unfortunately, not all men around Atatürk are as visionary, so Semiha goes back to Istanbul. Followingly, they put an exam to send the talented musicians to Europe to study, and surely Semiha wins, and goes to Berlin in 1936. And in the 75th birthday anniversary of Richard Strauss, she plays Ariadne of Ariadne auf Naxos at the Berlin Academy.

Fictive

Describe the subjects of the portraits. I would like to know more about them from your perspective. Please explain the special importance of these figures for your mother, and for yourself.

ZB

- Behice Siyavuşoğlu: my grandmother. Semiha really respected her mother-in-law.

- Leman Arseven: wife of Celal Esat Arseven. She was really beautiful, she spoke perfect French, played the piano, and she would paint in an impressionist manner. She painted a portrait of me in her studio in Kadıköy.

- Daime Koray: Semiha's aunt.

- Ekrem Reşit Rey: Brother of the composer Cemal Reşit Rey. There was a joke going that because they were such intellectuals, even their cat spoke French.

- Cahide Sonku: Semiha's beloved friend, actress at the city theatre. Her, Semiha and Melek Kobra, with two more names, were five really close friends.

- Elizabeth Schwarzkopf: a famous opera artist that studied in the same class at the academy with Semiha. She also sang for the vinyl recording of *Ariadne auf Naxos*.

- Muhsin Ertuğrul: a quite important figure in the history of Turkish theatre, also a tutor and mentor to Semiha.

- Turgut Zaim: studied art together with Semiha, and again a close friend as well. When Zaim was the stage decorator at the Ankara Theatre, Semiha takes these portraits over to show him. Zaim really likes them and advises my mother that she should work on larger scales with oil. So he has a great influence on Semiha's art.

- Gülrü: Granddaughter of Güner, Semiha's sister.

- Melek Kobra: Semiha's close friend as mentioned in relation to Sonku. Her father was an important composer Muhlis Sabahattin Bey, the writer of operetta *Ayşe*. She acted in the city theatre as well, she was really talented but unfortunately passed at a very young age because of tuberculosis.

- Vahdet Nuri Esmen: studied opera in Vienne, and was a really close friend of Semiha in Ankara. He would organise biweekly gatherings for these artists to sing at, Semiha loved these gatherings where she was freer than at the opera.

- Süleyman Nazif: a journalist/writer. Close friend of the Arsevens. He would attend the gatherings as well along with the Arsevens,

Most of these portraits are done at those gatherings, Semiha took her drew the guests, there's one of a girl who was a maid at the house, too. The house was a social group of artists, writers, philosophers, art historians.



Fictive

How do you feel about the way your mother portrayed you in her artwork?

ZB

She loved having me as subject and I would always tell her not to portray me funny like others but to portray me properly in a classical manner. The key about her portraits are that she brings forth the personality of her subject, if you were to know that person in real life, you could definitely see it in the works, Like Muhsin Ertuğrul, Cahide Sonku and Melek Kobra at the current exhibition.

Fictive

What do your mother's auto-portraits represent for you? The ultimate piece as curated for the current show at Galerist, is very dark. Do you remember seeing her reach such states of grim, emotional intensity?

ZB

She was not a grim person, the dark quality of her auto-portraits are the reflection of the difficulties in her life, mistreatments. She used to say Nazım was imprisoned in the jail and herself in the Ankara theatre. She was mostly blocked from performing her best, and from where she wanted. Being a high-dramatic soprano in a country where opera is merely starting to spring, and on top of that being consumed by the fascism of anti-communist regime, at 1949, one day we sold everything we owned; the furniture, the clothes, her fur, and we took a ship to Naples and through there to Vienne – I was three years old then. There she presents herself to the lecturers of the opera to sing there, and is offered a role just within 20 days. Upon this, she is called back to Ankara for her tenure. All these and more were (such as the following hunger strike of Nazım) the source of her pain.

Other self-portraits, too, such emotional intensity, such standing – like the Standing (Self-portrait), 1968, which itself is a rebellion, a persistence. Or the Climber (Self-portrait), 1968; these are paintings that express her life and identity. Chain Breaker (Self-portrait), 1968 is a great depiction of her struggle and the chains of the Ankara Opera holding her.

Fictive

Please share your thoughts on your mother's ongoing, posthumous contributions to the international art world through Galerist, appearing in some of the most important biennials and fairs around the world. Why is her artwork and legacy as a person so important to Turkey, and the world?

ZB

I am very much happy. For years we were against the selling of her art, including myself because we wanted to open a museum. The museum project still exists, as there are so many things left of her, many memorabilia, paintings, drawings, personal belongings that are documentative of the early republic period, it's music and theatre history. I am really happy that now she is being exhibited internationally. When she was exhibited at the Venice Biennale in 2005, curated by Rosa Martinez, another curator conveyed there were two prominent B's being shown; Semiha Berksoy and Louis Bourgeois.

Ecem Ümitli contributed research



A Painter Abroad:

Interview with Çağla Ulusoy



Çağla Ulusoy is a young painter and graduate of the Royal College of Art. In November, 2018, she showed a series of works in Turkey for the first time in Istanbul for a group exhibition at Versus Art Project titled, “Layover”. As a student in London, she was inspired by four fellow artists from the College who hail from a variety of backgrounds.

Her abstract, expressionist canvases are charged with bold colors lathered with thick strokes that exude a textural quality, and an intense color signature. She spoke about her technical methods while addressing the dismissal of empowered female artists, and how she has drawn formative, creative energy and her enduring focus from her closest associates.

Please share a story about how you came to befriend your fellow female painters of the Layover show from the Royal College of Art. I understand you all painted together in a warehouse-like, common studio in London. Where in London? What was it like working there? Were you inspired by each other's processes? If so, how, and where might that show in the pieces on display at Versus for Layover?

At the Royal College of Art, selected artists from all around the world are given studios where they paint and have critics, tutorials, seminars for two years. The five of us met there. We worked at the Battersea Sackler Painting building in London.

Our studios were next to each other and we got along very well from the start. We automatically became part of each others routines. I became attached to the context of the school and to the people in it very quickly. For the first time, I felt in my element surrounded by artists living for the same purpose: to make art and discuss it.



Untitled, Acrylic on canvas, 240 x 160 cm / 94 x 62 in, 2019.



www.angelafox.com

By spending so much time together we must have unconsciously affected and inspired each other. However, we always had different statements that we held on to and different subjects we focused on.

I believe that we all met on the same ground in our respect for the medium and in our awareness of it. We think and talk about our body in relationship to the work, knowing that each brushstroke each decision is a statement.

This allowed us to know more about each other, to understand why the decisions in the work were made and what they signified for each person. I can see that this comes through in our show at Versus. Our paintings live together due to a mutual respect. Their strength lies in the patience and effort we have dedicated to their becoming.

How do you feel about the importance of the Layover show in your young careers? How do the pieces shown at Versus identify certain points of creative development, a sense of progress, etc., in your practices?

The Layover show has become quite symbolic to me. Mainly because it is for the first time that I am showing in Turkey, my home country. Also, because It is for the first time since we graduated that we got back together in a show.

The work we showed in Layover is a combination of what we made in the past 2 years, a sort of research and mediation on the self, trying to explore and define a unique and new language while we were at school.

I find it interesting in that way, since all these work were made under the same roof and communicated with each other through different periods. They are an archive and a result of what happened while the intensive 2 years of self-reflection.

Describe the overall concept of Layover? How does it speak to your practices and perhaps your backgrounds, having approached the life of a professional painter from various geographies and cultures?

I accumulate layers of moments and spaces in my paintings. Interesting moments appear on the surface of my paintings when these layers start creating ambiguities through their differences and sometimes their contrasting background.

It is the same way in life. I grew up in different cultures accumulating layers of unconventional material in order to be able to belong to a universal culture. Layover is showing a group of artists that have linked through a universal language despite their different backgrounds and cultures. The awareness and acceptance of the other is hidden in their process, connecting them somewhere beyond appearances and aesthetics.



What was it like to be women painters at the Royal College of Art, and as you graduated and found work in the professional sector? Was this something that you discussed? Historically, this has been a key point of art history criticism, as in The New Yorker piece, "How New York's Postwar Female Painters Battled For Recognition".

I started my painting career assisting and working for a very influential American women artist named Pat Lipsky. She was a second generation painter back in the time, succeeding the postwar women artists mentioned in the article, also, a part of the Color field movement along with her peer Helen Frankenthaler.

While working with Pat, I listened to stories about how she dealt and successfully survived the discouraging male dominated art market. Not once did I think of her as being inferior or less successful than any other artist because of her gender. Quite the contrary, her determination and persistency in continuing despite every obstacle inspired me and gave me even more faith to hold on.



The women artists of the mid 20th century have definitely set a solid ground for us. Meanwhile, I am quite optimistic and I believe that we are, as the new generation, fully acknowledging the past and continue fighting by putting

ourselves out there. I experienced this especially at the RCA, where I was surrounded by fearless talented powerful women, with strong and unique characters, embracing everything about their femininity and always advocating their rights.



Red, acrylic on canvas, 170 x 130 cm / 67 x 51 in, 2017.

www.ayindany.com

Have you found certain discrepancies, creatively and personally in dialogue with each other with respect to West / East differences (for lack of better terms), for example, were there any specially relatable experiences that you felt, Çağla Ulusoy and Sarah Alagroobi as women from Turkey and the UAE, in contrast to Rosa Allison, Emma Fineman, Vanya Horwath from New Zealand and the US?

Me and Sarah share a similar background, we both grew up living between Eastern and Western dominated cultures. Sarah even lived in Turkey for a couple of years when she was younger, at the same age I was living in the USA.

It is not surprising that subjects concentrating on Identity, dualities, contrasts are present in our work.

Everyone's work is quite distinct, which is exciting, though there are apparent similarities in technique, style and materials. How have you learned from one another, and where do you awe in wonder, and/or perhaps critique each other?

As I had mentioned before, we are all very aware of the material we use and it's signification. This allows us to have dialogues around the work in an objective way, which is why it is very important that we critique each others work with full honesty.

Perhaps we may sometimes use, unintentionally, in a similar way the notions we had discussed about certain decisions taken in the process. However when that happens, those notions gain universality and become more accessible.



Black, white and orange red, acrylic and mixed media on canvas, 120 x 160 cm, 2016.

www.angulaxy.com

I have and I keep learning a lot from them in terms of technique, material, different perspectives etc, but especially from walking on the same path in becoming an artist. We support and enrich each other as much as we can on this journey.

Was Layover the first group show you prepared together? What are your opinions about the dichotomy between the group show and the solo show in the world of art exhibitions, and why is this show particularly effective in its intention to show all five of your works together?

This wasn't the first show we did together. It is the first since our final degree show that we all came together again. A good curation to me is the most important and the most exciting part of any show, observing how different objects link to each other and understanding the curators choices.

For this show, we first decided on the concept and on the significant similarities we share. The work that was going to go in was decided at the end, once the concept was consolidated. Just as in a good curation, ambiguities and excitement occurs as differences co-exist. Seeing 5 different cultures come together and dialogue through the painting object in such a compatible way has been a thrilling experience so far.



Twinkling Bud of Spring

by Vi An Diep

*It flickers, twitches, claws it's way in,
biting*

Until our tears become ice and clay

We are its play thing...

*Behold, just then, the great Mother of
Mothers*

Swoops in

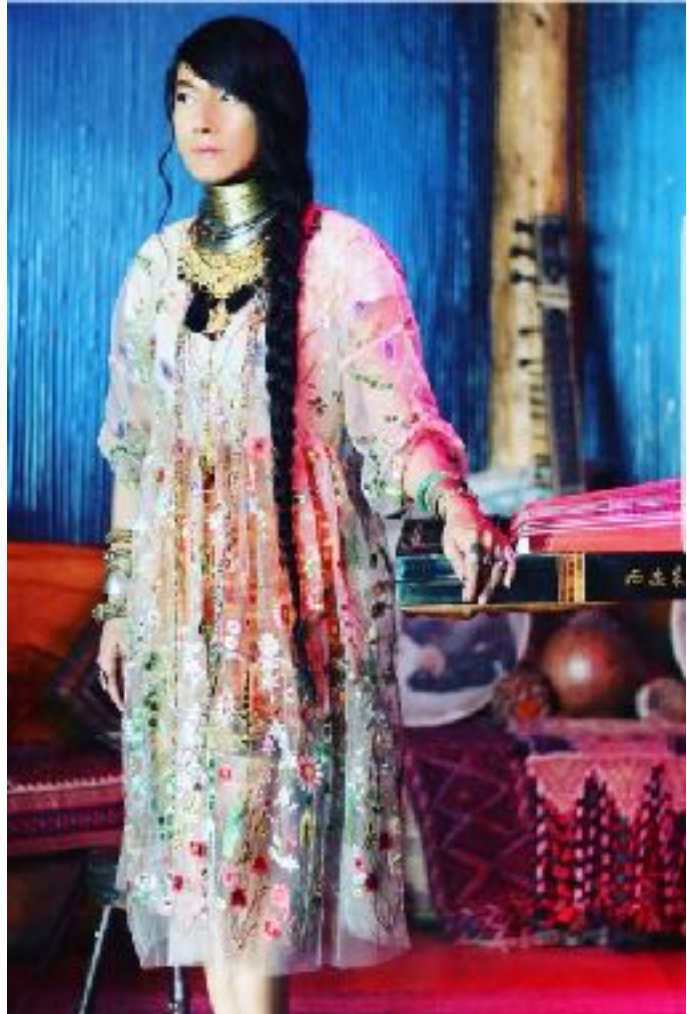
*Disarms the creature with her lullaby
glance*

*Tearing off each of it's ten thousand
claws and fangs*

Fillet it's foul flesh from inside out

Turning it into glue

*For her to seal love letters from the
other side!"*



A constant reminder to my audiences, of the systemic problems from within our current world, which have harbored and lead us to where we all are now within this Global Pandemic.

I am a marginalized music artist, I won't kid myself, I have no privileges, I have to beg for many things, I have to bow and say thank you every time someone thinks I need support of some kind. Support in the form of welfare comes with astonishing limitations. I prefer a Universal Basic Income for all humans on planet Earth, but they would prefer I shut up and follow the rules.

"First world problems!" I've heard people shout. The Pandemic hasn't changed my world views, the disease is deeply burrowed into our collective DNA since the dawn of the toxic and greed driven, Industrial Revolution. Now, I call for the new dawn of the Enlightenment Evolution. Even if only I awaken from within my self, I shall remain content as long as I may continue to create music and art for everyone to find their own inner luminance.

The latest work entitled "Twinkling Bud of Spring" is a spontaneous and intuitive original composition on the spot, using the 30 stringed zheng (Chinese long plucked zither), and mixed in electronic beats, with found sounds sampled weaving throughout.

(Listen at FictiveMag.com)

With the recent passing of my Ma Ma, I come to accept that I will be trauma stricken till I die. Without her life force animated before me, without her embrace and loving food. I will slowly die. My musical instruments are now the only true comfort in life and their visceral sounds, my only outlet to keep my life meaningful until then.



New Medieval Poetry

by Alex Butler



The sestina is a form of poetry dating back to the 12th century, and uses a bit of a complex structure. The thirty six line poem uses six words and repeats them throughout the poem, at the end of every line - in this case, the poet uses them for the title of the poem. The order of the words cycle in a rounded fashion, like 123456, 615243, 364125 and so forth.

Today we live, the crowds roar
a sestina

Guided by voices, she steps out today
and feels the wind whisper to her neck with every step. *We
are behind you and we are in front.* The corner where she lives
is dug up and smoky, the road scarred by the
gravel of the earth beneath. On the news there were crowds
throwing gravel, but not here. The roars
of the crowds she heard were lowered by remote, mums
muted by a thumb. So she steps away to school. Today
she has the happening walk. The one where she imagines crowds
and crowds of people admiring, agape, thinking *We
have a goddess among us, the most elegant and wise.* The
extremely happening walk. She has it. Breathes and gives life
with a hee. Kick. Still, the TV news haunts her. Images and live
coverage. Breaking news of shattered glass and chanted roars
of trouble, she thought, always, always one side and the
other. Her presentation on chameleons is today,
it is finally her turn. *Our turn,* voices tell her, *and we
must know our words well. Class or crowd,
we will stand out if we know our words well. We will find the crowd
as our canvas in splash paint and before it's over lines
will change,* voices say, *when you speak. We
are the steps that brought you here.* Soon the roars
but today well, today the chameleon. Yes, today
she will present on the scaly skin and darting eyes, the
right eye in Boston and the left in North Korea. But the
chameleon makes sense of it all, something, she thinks, crowds
are incapable of. The road scars heal as morning shifts to day
and the pavement evens out. That the chameleon can live
and evolve against the odds, that without roars
or teeth or poison can claim eons of victories, and why, we
can learn from this. Yes, *we can,* voices echo, *we
can.* The wind whispers to her neck again as the
bus turns the corner, teetering and floppy and roars
to her stop. Hands on her backpack as the crowd
piles in. Chameleonism, she wonders. Why not. Live
with both eyes open. *Weave right to day.*

The immured sonnet is another curious puzzle and uses an equally strange form. The bolded font poem is a structured sonnet built within a wall of text. The sonnet can be read on its own, or along with the surrounding lines. Thirdly, the non-bolded prose can be read completely on its own. The three methods of reading the poem are meant to highlight the complexities of our language, and illustrate the dynamic potential of the written word.

Author's note: This text was selected from B. Catling's "The Vohhr" by the poet.

Immured forest
By Alex Butler

a 10-syllable immured sonnet
featuring b. Catling's "The Vohhr"

The banded foliage and vast trees that breathed its rich air offered so much to humans but also could devour a thousand of their little lives in a microsecond of their uninterrupted, unfathomable time. So vast was its acreage, it also made demands of time, splitting the tolling sun into zones outside of normal **Comprehension**. His mind needed to feel collaboration; a theoretical traveler, just passing through its **Substance**, as vague as it was an idea, entire breadth on foot would have to stop at its centre and wait. The forest was unconquered and untamed, at least a week for his soul to catch up. So dense was its unrelenting in his thoughts. He focused breathing, it dented the surrounding climate. Swirling clouds his energies and vowed to traverse and interacted with its shadow. Its massive transpiration sucked at explore the wild dense tangles which fraught the nearby city that fed on it, sipping from the lungs of the dreams. His voyage would be made alone, inhabitants and filling the skies with oxygen. It brought seclusion coupled only with his thoughts in storms and unparalleled shifts of weather. Sometimes it determined to solve the puzzle of the mimicked Europe, smuggling a fake winter for a week or two, the forest, the tumultuous webbed center dropping temperatures and making the city look and feel like its beckoning. He would be pioneer and progenitor. Then it spun winds and heat to make the masonry break any doubt of his mettle. The air cracked after the tightness of the impossible frost. No planes whisked overhead. I will be the one to dare fly over it. Its unpredictable climate, dizzying abnormalities see it, feel it, breathe it, and become it of compass, and impossibilities of landing made it a pilot's and navigator's nightmare. All its pathways turned into overgrowth, jungle, and ambush. The tribes that were rumored to live there were barely human – some said the anthropodragi still roamed. Creatures beyond hope. Horrors.

Soul Application

by Double Diamond Sun Body



This is you 2 hours before you were born. This is you 10 days before you were born. this is you 20 days before you were born. this is you with Peter, Doug, Sally and Dindu. Your Father, your Mother and the bad bad man who took your space for life on this this trip. I want another try to laugh inside. Living with cows, being really loud. Let my hair be a mess. I want another try to feel inside. Living with flesh, the air is fresh, my hair is a mess. Ha Ha Ha Ha. Do you wish you could of lived on earth one last time? What do you mean? Can you ask me that again? I get confused. Was I good before this life? I'm pretty sure I was. Can I go now? Now? How about now? Do you feel that the power of God see's? Do I feel that the power of God see's. Turkeys, lemons, pigs and peas. I choose to live off my knees. Now Now Now Now How about Now?

Now Now Now Now How about Now? YES YES YES NOW! YES YES YES NOW! YES YES YES NOW! Peter, Doug, Sally, and Dindu. Peter, Doug, Sally, and Dindu. I need what I know and we know what we need. A man has sex, follow the seed. Jump in a lake. Swim in the sea. Name your kid Charlie. You know what we mean? Do you feel that the power of God see's? Do I feel that the power of God see's. Turkeys, lemons, pigs and peas. I choose to live off my knees. Now Now Now Now How about Now? Now Now Now Now How about Now? Peter, Doug, Sally, and Dindu. Peter, Doug, Sally, and Dindu. Dapper, Flipper, Skipper, and Jan. Scott, Trick, Horns when Born.

"Soul Application" at FictiveMag.com



Contributors



Çağla Ulusoy (b. 1989, Istanbul) completed her diploma in Visual Communications and Multimedia in Paris at Creapole Academy. She passed her high school and university years as an artist in Paris, and later in New York, where she pursued an education in Painting at The Art Students League, before finally receiving her Master's degree in Painting from the Royal College of Art in London. Ulusoy has participated in many group exhibitions and artist workshops, and explains the technical approach to her works according to the application of layers of color on the surface of her canvases. The places that multiply and retain their complexity and abstraction in her compositions become objects and fragment again. Ulusoy reinterprets aspects of ambiguity that have affected her consciousness based on the different places where she has lived, and in turn, creates real images.

Alex Albadree divides his time between DC and Istanbul where he creates art for social justice. The pieces Alex creates aim to engage with current and historical events to raise critical consciousness and call individuals to take action for social transformation. Alex applies an intersectional approach to the issues he amplifies, highlighting the ways that oppressive systems rooted in white supremacy and capitalism degrade our empathy,



dignity and environment. Through beautifully crafted digital illustrations, Alex invites us to take a hard, honest look at our world and at ourselves. And then to imagine a better world. And, most importantly, to fight for it.



İrem Günaydın (b. 1989, Istanbul) explores the relationship between text and image, and the ways in which words and images circulate between discursive and pictorial realms, investigating the objecthood of language and the grammar of images. Her practice is often generated through

writing and unfolds as installations gathering moving images, print, and sculptural elements while writing functions as a fulcrum. She draws inspiration from art history, literature, film and music, deconstructing the canon with minor narratives and contemporary popular media. İrem holds a Foundation diploma from Chelsea College of Art and Design (2011), and her BA in Fine Art from Central Saint Martins, London (2014). She lives and works in Istanbul.

Self-taught since age 6, **Vi An** is a multi-disciplinary artist and a proponent of Asian long-plucked zither instruments, from: Vietnam, the 17 to 26 stringed đàn tranh; Japanese 13 – 25 stringed koto (琴) and Chinese 23 – 30 stringed zheng (箏). Vi An's unique form of music-arts invite the audience into an active journey of inner and outer discoveries. The music is spontaneously created in the moment, engaging the listeners, remind them they are not



passive, but active participants, even co-creators! As the music invents itself and evolves, so too does the world around us. Vi An MUSIC speaks for itself.



Ufuk Gürbüzdal is an independent filmmaker and a Research Assistant at the Faculty of Communication of Hasan Kalyoncu University. His research interests include Marxism, ideology and cinema, avant-garde filmmaking, the political economy of new media environments, and political communication.

Alex Butler is a nurse in the operating rooms at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, specializing in the trauma and oncology unit. He is an avid reader and writer, living in Somerville, where he enjoys cooking with his wife, Allison.

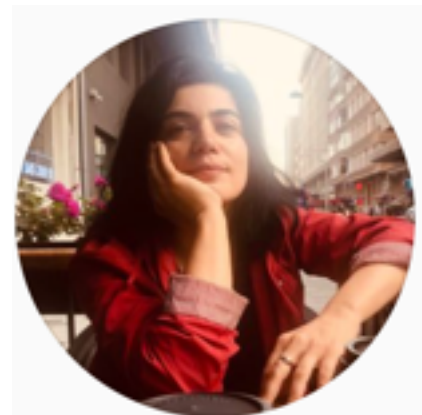




***Ali Cabbar** was born in Istanbul and graduated from Marmara University's Faculty of Fine Arts. He moved to Melbourne, Australia, in 1988, and later to Brussels, where he took part in engraving and lithography workshops with the RHoK Academy for three years. He worked as graphic designer, illustrator and art director for The Wall Street Journal, The International Herald Tribune and The Herald Sun while pursuing his art. Since his first exhibitions in Istanbul (1987) and in Melbourne (1989), Ali Cabbar has been using his body as a subject in most of his works. His 2010 show, "Disquiet Shadow," at Yapı Kredi in Istanbul expresses his personal reckoning with Turkey's past politics. "Ugly," exhibited in 2016 at Depo Istanbul,*

offers a "graphical" look at Turkey's political history through election posters and party logos. "ELDORADO: A Wor{ld} Game" project, shown at Split Fine Art Museum in Croatia in 2019, takes its inspiration from an Istanbul neighborhood, and questions the role of the artist in urban gentrification. "MONSTER [ge.net.i.cal.ly.mod.i.fied]," a 20-year-long project that was shown the same year at Adas for the first time, approaches GMO food as contemporary "still life."

***Özlem Atik** is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Sociology Department of Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University in Istanbul, Turkey. Her doctoral research investigates collective trauma representations in films regarding the case of the Dersim 38 massacre. She focuses on trauma, loss and racial melancholia in the perspective of postcolonial theories and*



psychoanalysis, and is also interested in affect theories in sociology. She obtained her BA in philosophy at Ankara University.

*Under the moniker of **Double Diamond Sun Body**, Robbie C. Williamson produces large scale art exhibitions. He's been a part of numerous storied groups, including Portland's industrial Hitting Birth, the Lady Gaga-endorsed electro pop We Are The World and synth pop critical darlings Dreamers, also frequently collaborating with acclaimed LA choreographer Ryan Heffington (Arcade Fire, FKA Twigs, Sia), not to mention all of his Hollywood scoring work.*



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Photo Credits

Motorcycle Maintenance

1. *Kemal Tufan, with chainsaw (photo courtesy of the artist)*
2. *Palace of Snails, Romania by Kemal Tufan (photo courtesy of the artist)*
3. *Kemal Tufan, U-Boat, lead. Turkey (photo courtesy of the artist)*
4. *Kemal Tufan. Underwater Sculpture Project, working (photo courtesy of the artist)*
5. *Kemal Tufan, Rolling Stones, Istanbul (photo courtesy of the artist)*
6. *Kemal Tufan. Fish Square (photo courtesy of the artist)*
7. *Kemal Tufan. U-Boat, stone. Switzerland (photo courtesy of the artist)*
8. *Kemal Tufan. Armored egg, wood & copper (photo courtesy of the artist)*
9. *Kemal Tufan. Pen, Büyükçekmece. Turkey (photo courtesy of the artist)*

A Painter Abroad

1. *Çağla Ulusoy, at her Zonamaco exhibition in Mexico City, photo by Marlene Lang*
2. *Untitled, by Çağla Ulusoy, acrylic and sand on canvas (2018)*
3. *Çağla Ulusoy in studio*
4. *Gelatina, a painting by Çağla Ulusoy*
5. *Red by Çağla Ulusoy, acrylic on canvas (2017)*
6. *Bleach white and orange rust by Çağla Ulusoy, acrylic, mixed media, canvas (2018)*

Abolishing the Death Penalty in America

1. *Execute Justice, Not People, a portrait of Billie Allen (2020) by Alex Albadree*
2. *Dustin Higgs (2021) by Alex Albadree*
3. *Brandon Bernard (2020) by Alex Albadree*

Flaschenpost

1. *İrem Günaydın, portrait, courtesy of the artist*
2. *İrem Günaydın. The Integrals I (2020). Stencil on pasteboard, 2 colors silkscreen print, acetate. 100 x 80 cm. Photo by Kayhan Kaygusuz, courtesy of the artist and The Pill*
3. *İrem Günaydın. The Integrals II (2020). Stencil on pasteboard, 2 colors silkscreen print, acetate (100 x 80 cm). Photo by Kayhan Kaygusuz, courtesy of the artist and The Pill*
4. *İrem Günaydın. The Integrals III (2020). Stencil on pasteboard, 2 colors silkscreen print, acetate. 100 x 80 cm. Photo by Kayhan Kaygusuz, courtesy of the artist and The Pill*
5. *İrem Günaydın. The Integrals IV (2020). Stencil on pasteboard, 2 colors silkscreen print, acetate. 100 x 80 cm. Photo by Kayhan Kaygusuz, courtesy of the artist and The Pill*
6. *İrem Günaydın. The Integrals V (2020). Stencil on pasteboard, 2 colors silkscreen print, acetate. 100 x 80 cm. Photo by Kayhan Kaygusuz, courtesy of the artist and The Pill*
7. *İrem Günaydın. Fabric vestibule (2020). Emboss print on fabric_400 x 74 cm. Diptych. Photo by Kayhan Kaygusuz, courtesy of the artist and The Pill*

8. *İrem Günaydın. The Integrals VI (2020). Stencil on pasteboard, 2 colors silkscreen print, acetate. 100 x 80 cm. Photo by Kayhan Kaygusuz, courtesy of the artist and The Pill*
9. *İrem Günaydın. The Integrals VII (2020). Stencil on pasteboard, 2 colors silkscreen print, acetate. 100 x 80 cm. Photo by Kayhan Kaygusuz, courtesy of the artist and The Pill*
10. *İrem Günaydın. The Integrals VIII (2020) Stencil on pasteboard, 2 colors silkscreen print, acetate. 100 x 80 cm. Photo by Kayhan Kaygusuz, courtesy of the artist and The Pill*

Daughter of Semiha the Diva

1. *Semiha Berksoy. Ariadne auf Naxos (Self-Portrait), 1998*
2. *Semiha Berksoy. Daime Koray, 1959*
3. *Semiha Berksoy. "Portraits" at Galerist, 2019*
4. *Semiha Berksoy. Crying (Self-Portrait). 1996*

Twinkling Bud of Spring

1. *Vi An Diep, courtesy of the artist*

The Leopard

1. *Tomasi di Lampedusa, photo by Davide Mauro*
2. *Un graffito ritraente Antonio Gramsci nel quartiere Ostiense (Da Wikimedia/ Nicholas Gemini)*
3. *"The Leopard". Luchino Visconti (1963)*

4. *The Volunteers Bid Farewell. Gerolamo Induno (c.1878)*

New Medieval Poetry

1. *Alex Butler, portrait of the author as a poet*

*Sicilian Defence**

1. *Anatomy for the Artist (1982) by Ali Cabbar, Pencil on A4 paper. A series of portrait sketches of artist's cell mates during his imprisonment between 1981 and 1984*
2. *Sicilian Defence (1981) by Ali Cabbar, Chess pieces made of chewed bread and olives*
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6. *Anatomy for the Artist (1982) by Ali Cabbar, Pencil on A4 paper. A series of portrait sketches of artist's cell mates during his imprisonment between 1981 and 1984*

A Letter to Jean Améry

1. *Jean Améry by painter Félix De Boeck (1898-1995)*

Soul Application

1. *Double Diamond Sun Body. Mama Gallery, photo © SeanDeckert*