Kalabalik!
Bulletin of the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul

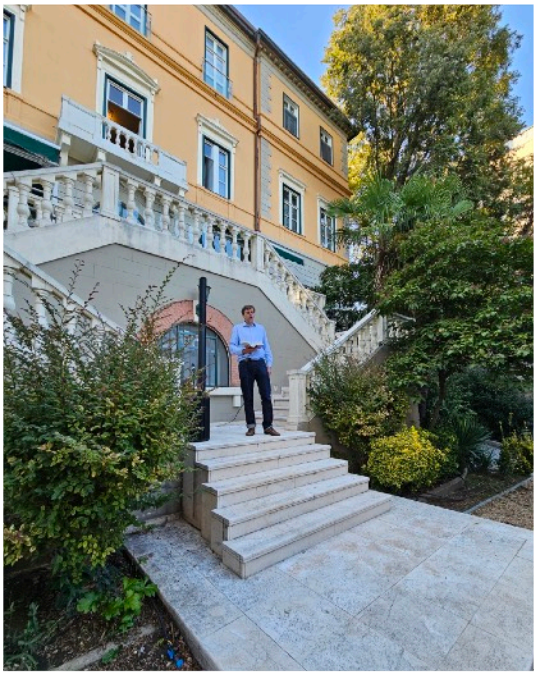
Capitals on the Run

In late August, the directors of the three Mediterranean institutes assembled in Rome to discuss prospects for the future. At a time when dramatically rising costs and a weaker Swedish currency bring constant challenges to our economies, we are proud and grateful for all the scholars and institutions whose unabated interest and support keep us running and buzzing with activities. In Istanbul, the semester had just begun with a PhD school, *Exploring Migration, Urban Evolution, and Historical Continuity in a Megalopolis*, and it would conclude in December with another one, *Lived Religion: Representation and Reality*. The first one was a collaboration with the Nordic Society for Middle Eastern Studies (NSMES) and the Finnish Institute in the Middle East (FIME), whereas the latter one, given at the universities of Stockholm, Uppsala, and Gothenburg, was developed with support from the USI network.

Students from the USI course *Lived Religion: Representation and Reality* in front of Galata Mevlevihanesi Müzesi.

In between them, we have been hosts and partners in seven conferences with various themes. *Women and Power*, part of a series of conferences devoted to the Norwegian king Harald Hardrada, focused on women rulers in the Byzantine, Islamic, and Nordic worlds in the 11th century. A collaboration between Edinburgh University, Snorrastofa in Reykholt, and the SRII, it included excursions to several Byzantine sites in Istanbul and a performance of *Heimskringla* in the garden of the Swedish Consulate. *Hellenistic Karia*, a collaboration with our friends at the French institute (IFEA) and Olivier Henri from the Labraunda excavations, brought together about thirty international archaeologists in our auditorium over discussions on ancient Asia Minor, whereas *Beyond Property*, a joint effort of the Beyond Restitution network and the Forum für Transregionale Studien in Berlin/EUME, took place at the IFEA with support from the SRII, offering both historical and contemporary perspectives on the preservation of cultural heritage in Turkey and beyond.

Looking for Byzantium was organized by Bilgi University and took place at their campus at Santral Istanbul with support from the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung; we contributed with guest rooms, but also with a special program in collaboration with the ANAMED research center, as we invited Barbara Crostini from Uppsala to present her and Christian Høgel's new book *Syrian Stylites: Rewritings and Recastings of Late Ancient Superheroes* (Transactions of the SRII no. 26).



Artist and scholar James Cave performing his own musical rendering of the *Heimskringla* from the garden staircase of the Swedish Palace.

Two workshops at the SRII in October dealt with Istanbul in different – and sometimes overlapping – forms of historical imagination. *Dreams of Tsargrad: Constantinople and the Black Sea in Imperial Russian Imagination*, which was made possible with the support from our friends at the IFEA and the American Institute in Turkey (ARIT) focused on how Imperial Russia from the early Modern period until the early Soviet era considered it a historical mission (as the "Third Rome") to one day conquer the Ottoman capital. *From Miklagård to Istanbul: Moving the Senses*, an initiative from the universities of Østfold, Utrecht and Bergen and arranged in collaboration with the Dutch institute in Istanbul (NIT) looked at how Istanbul has been perceived throughout the ages in narratives of displacement and migration. In connection with them both, the IFEA kindly borrowed us its own pop-up exhibition on the Russian diaspora in Istanbul in the 1920s, which was put up along the walls of our auditorium.

Participants in the conference *Dreams of Tsargrad* were fortunate to visit the former building of the Russian Archaeological Institute, which recently opened as a hotel

Last but not least, Oslo University arranged a conference on *Football and Religion in the Middle East and North Africa* at the SRII in late November, throwing light on a topic that often remains academically overlooked despite its enormous social, political and cultural implications.

Earlier this year, the institute lost one of its most loved, well-known and influential members, the Oslo Turkologist Bernt Brendemoen. In his memory, and with joint support from the Swedish and Danish consulates general in Istanbul and the Norwegian embassy in Ankara, we arranged a panel discussion in October devoted to the topic of Turkish literature in Scandinavia.

A panel in the memory of Bernt Brendemoen

In November and December, we further partnered up with two local organizations that we have had the pleasure of working with in the past: The Istanbul Gender Museum and the Özgen Berkol Doğan library. The former marked the Sixteen days of activism and its own third anniversary with an event at the SRII and the Consulate General. The latter arranged, as every year, a science fiction festival, where I myself had the honor of taking part in a panel discussion with Emir Alısık (ANAMED) about Frank Herbert's *Dune*.

The scholarship program of the Swedish Arts Grants Committee continues, and we received two grant holders in September and October: the graphic designers and artists Evelina Mohei and Johnny Chang. Another artist, Roberto Peyre, came here with a grant from our friends' association, following Elvira Hammar and Münise Incescu in the summer. We are also proud to announce a new form of fellowship in collaboration with the Stockholm University Institute for Turkish Studies (SUITS): starting in 2025, we will receive a joint SRII-SUITS fellow once per year, with the aim of encouraging project applications for post-doc scholars in international politics and Turkey-EU relations. With both SUITS and our association of friends, we have co-hosted public events in Sweden during the autumn.

For the Byzantinist (and, it might have been argued, to the Ottomanist) the autumn of 2024 marked an important centenary: on November 8, it was 1700 years since Constantine the Great decided to move the capital of the Roman Empire from the Tiber to the Bosphorus, transforming the Thracian city of Byzantion into a megalopolis that keeps carrying his legacy even if it no longer carries his name. Its conflicted but continuous history as a global crossroad sets it apart both from a first Rome which never again became what it imagined itself to have been in the past, and a third Rome which never became what it once dreamt of becoming in the future.

Istanbul in January 2025
Olof Heilo, SRII director

DREAMS OF

TSARGRAD

CONSTANTINOPLE AND THE BLACK SEA IN RUSSIAN IMPERIAL IMAGINATION

ISTANBUL SVENSKA FORSKNINGSINSTITUTET

Institut Français d'Etudes Anatoliennes

AMERICAN RESEARCH INSTITUTE IN TURKEY

THE SWEDISH RESEARCH INSTITUTE IN ISTANBUL
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OCTOBER 21–22, 2024

"On truth in art and research"

Paul Levin, director of the Stockholm University institute of Turkish Studies

During my three-months long stay here at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, I have been taking weekend excursions in order to paint urban scenes, *en plein air* as it is called. The phrase is French for "outdoors" and refers to the practice of landscape painting on site, as popularized by the French impressionists. I have been painting all my life and begun painting more seriously some five years ago, but I have so far not succeeded in combining this passion with my work-related passion for the study of Turkey. That is, not until my stay at the Institute this year.

Painting is not the reason I am here, however. I have been here to work on a book about the Swedish and Turkish relationship to NATO thanks to a three-months research fellowship from the Institute. The puzzle I am trying to solve in the book is why Turkey—a longstanding loyal NATO member—has recently begun acting as if it would really prefer to leave the organization, while Sweden suddenly abandoned its long-standing policy of non-alignment and decided to join the Western alliance. I do this by using the Swedish NATO accession process and the Turkish 20-month long veto as a sort of looking glass through which to examine why states make major changes in their foreign and security policies.

As part of my research for the book, I have conducted interviews with experts, diplomats, and policy makers and have made use of the Institute's wonderful library, reading about Ottoman/Turkish-Swedish history. Most of the time, I have been sitting at one or other of the library's work spaces, with a cup of Turkish tea on the desk and a view of the consulate's peaceful garden outside the window. In fact, this is my view as I am writing this. A small garden fountain is making what looks like an upside-down glass bowl. It wobbles delicately and sometimes briefly breaks up and sprays in the wind.

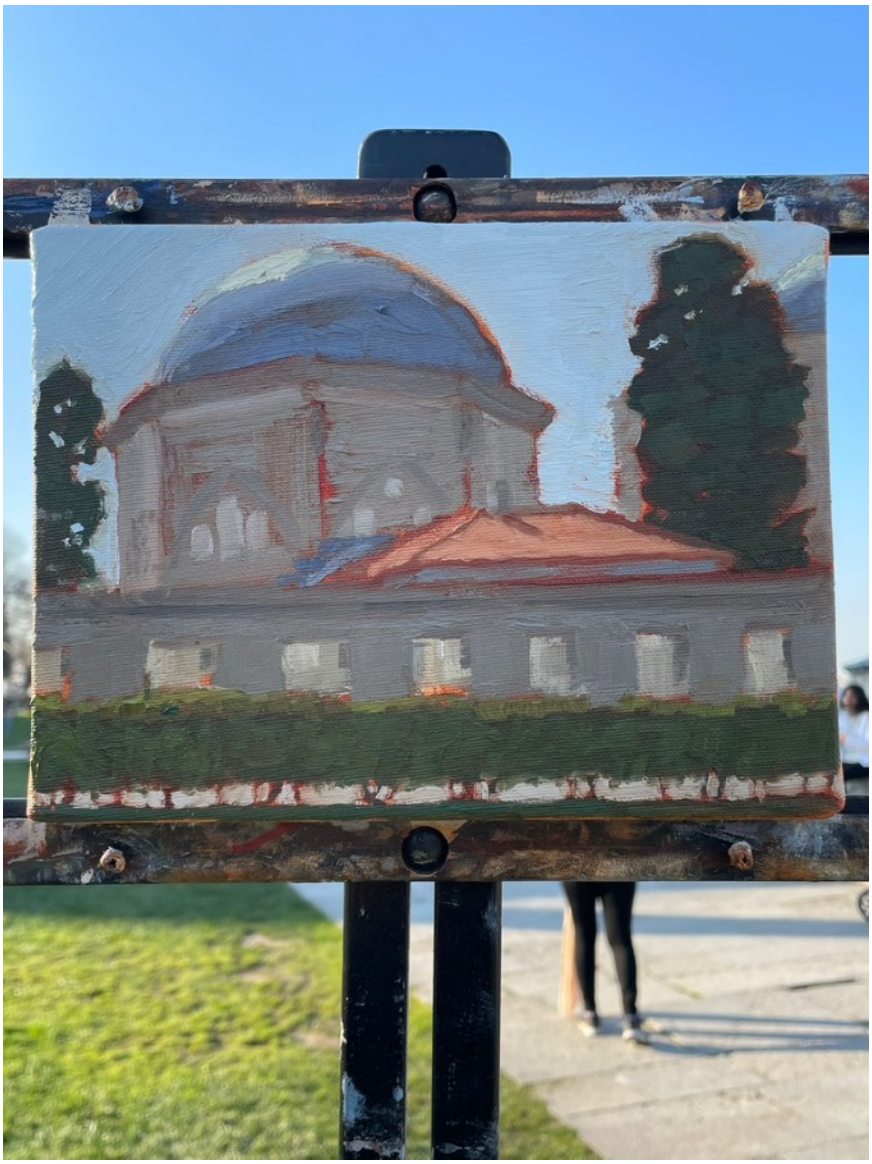
Switching between doing research during the weekdays and painting scenes from Istanbul during the weekends has gotten me thinking about how the two activities compare. For one thing, both research and painting require careful observation. As a representational landscape painter, I will set up my portable easel in front of a scene, a motif, that somehow speaks to me, and then I set out to recreate the three-dimensional scene on a two-dimensional surface: my canvas. That involves careful study of the subject matter. It involves seeing without prejudice and often trying to make yourself forget what you know (that a ball is round) in order to capture what you actually see (a flat circle with a bright and a dark side).

Research is similar in a way. People who follow the news have intuitive understandings of major events, and I would venture to guess that most readers heard about the Swedish-Turkish negotiations over Sweden's and Finland's NATO membership and have a set of views about the process. So do I. But when doing research on it, it is important to try to un-learn what I think I know and try to really see what in fact is in front of me. What do my interview subjects tell me? What does the evidence tell me?

I cannot include all the evidence, of course. I have to make a selection of those facts I believe are most relevant. When I present answers to my research questions, those explanations will necessarily include simplifications, and those involve choices on my part. Should I include what key actors involved in the negotiations ate for breakfast, for example? Probably not, but not all choices are that easy.

Simplification and making choices are arguably even more important in painting. In my experience, the more I simplify, the better my painting becomes, to put it, well, simply.

In fact, this is where I see a major difference between good painting and good social scientific scholarship. A good plein air painting is a simplified representation of the motif, but not necessarily an accurate one. While you do have to learn to really see what is in front of you rather than what you expect, good painters "remove" trees or buildings, change the composition, or "push" (exaggerate) colors and values. They do so based on a sense of what will look good, on a design that they have in mind when they start painting, and/or on what they want to "say" with their painting. There is no lying in plein air painting. Design and interpretation are encouraged and all that matters is the end result. Not only can you come to the work with a preconceived notion of the desired end result, your work may improve if you let it guide you.



What about social science then? Much work in the philosophy and sociology of science and epistemology over the past half-century has been aimed at shooting down a naïve view of social science modeled on the natural sciences, as the practice of testing theories using incontrovertible facts, a view often called positivism. Instead, truths are contextual, relative, and subjective, critics have argued. And the choices we make when simplifying or interpreting facts are not neutral but often laden with value assumptions. Feminist, intersectional, and post-colonial studies have argued that scholarly institutions and settings are pervaded by systematically inequitable power relations that inform such choices. The field of Middle Eastern (and Turkish) Studies was famously shaken by Edward Said's critique of its orientalist origins.

I do not subscribe to positivism or to what the Hungarian philosopher and mathematician Imre Lakatos called "naïve falsificationism". This is the view that what distinguishes scientific theories is that they are testable or falsifiable, and that such theories are simply discarded when facts prove them wrong. That is too simple an account. But I do think that there is a hugely important qualitative difference between good social science and art here. For while subjective bias in art is good, it is not good in social science.

I may have preconceived notions and biases when it comes to my research subject, but I should at least try to leave those at the door. If all I do is tell the story that I already came in with, I have not only failed; my research was in vain. While I must interpret and make sense of the various facts I collect, I must also allow for the possibility that they show that my preconceived notions were wrong. I should even be ready for my research to lead me to conclusions that go against my most deeply held political beliefs. My aim must be to come up with the most likely explanations, the best interpretations, not the ones that will satisfy me personally or align with my politics.

Some critical scholars may balk at this. My own mentor, the inimitable Hayward R. Alker, stressed what he called the emancipatory research interest. However, even an emancipatory political project needs a solid understanding of how the world actually works if it is to hold out any hope of improving it. To paraphrase Karl Marx, the point may be to change the world, but you won't be able to do so unless you first understand it.

In my view, one of the main contributions of feminist and post-colonial writings about truth and power is that they have alerted us to systematic sources of bias that many scholars previously ignored while claiming to be "color blind" or objective. But some very different recent movements—led by figures like Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin—have also made important, albeit inadvertent, contributions to our understanding of the importance of truth. Trump's "alternative facts" and Putin's deliberate campaigns of disinformation have revealed the dangers of giving up on the notion of truth altogether, of believing that social science is all just politics "all the way down." In fact, we could not even speak of their lies unless we held on to some notion of truth.

I do not think that the radical critiques of positivism require us to say that social science scholarship is like painting in the sense that there are no rules, that you are entirely free to interpret using your own voice, and that all that matters is that you embrace the right (emancipatory) biases, and do so openly. To do so would be to throw out the baby with the bathwater. I believe in both careful observation and informed interpretation, and that following basic scientific methodology and being self-conscious about structural biases can help me discover and control them. The above-mentioned Hayward Alker laid out a set of principles for doing so in his essay on "Emancipatory Empiricism." It was aimed at the field of peace research but contains valuable advice for others as well. Hence, I not only check and double-check my facts and sources and deliberately look for alternative explanations and ways in which I may be wrong, but also try to make methodological decisions transparent and examine their normative basis.

Such research is a slow and painstaking process, and that leads me to my final point of comparison between scholarship and plein air painting. They both offer me shelter in a way: opportunities to step out of my high-paced, social-media-feed-driven life and focus on just one thing, and to do that thing slowly and carefully.

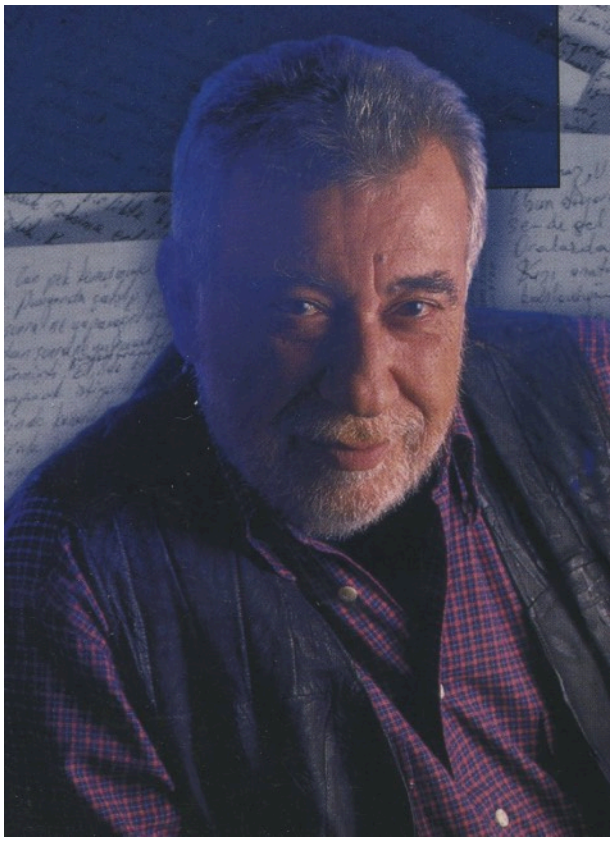
As I am looking out through my window at the garden of the institute, I realize that it, too, is a shelter. It is an oasis of sorts in the otherwise fast-paced bustling city that is Istanbul. And I am grateful for the opportunity to spend some time here, reading, observing, writing, and painting.

Paul T. Levin is the Director of the Stockholm University Institute for Turkish Studies and Managing Director of the Consortium for European Symposia on Turkey. He is a Research Fellow with the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul and Associate Researcher at the Swedish Institute for International Affairs. He is also a painter.

In the memory of Arif Keskiner and Gunnar Ekelöf

Ela Güngören, Istanbul Galata University

March 12 marks the anniversary of the death of film producer and director Arif Keskiner (1938, Adana – 2024, Istanbul). He, with Azmi Yılmaz, co-owned Sinema Sevenler Derneği Lokali, also known as Çiçek Bar on Sıraselviler Caddesi, Cihangir. Between 1984 and 2010, the bar served as a landmark for artists who had adopted a bohemian lifestyle. The importance of Çiçek Bar was that over time, in addition to being a frequent destination for the Turkish press and Yeşilçam actors, artists, literary figures, theater players, poets and the business world, it became the center of cinema and a meeting place for Turkish and foreign intellectuals.



Arif Keskiner. From the cover of his own book *Çiçek Gibi,* İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, February 2002.

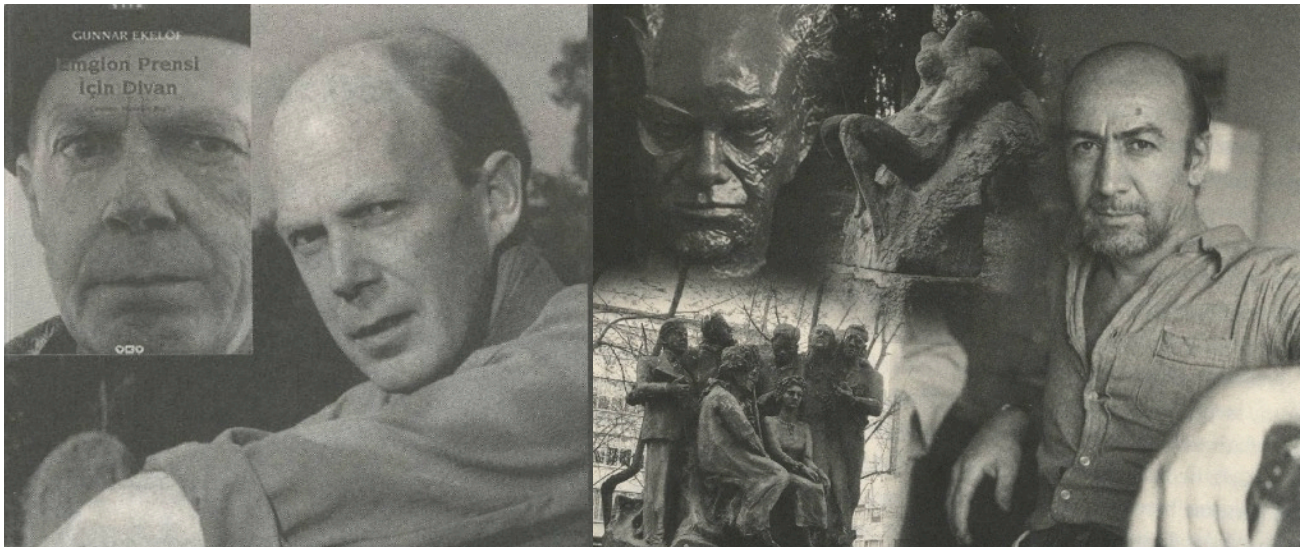
Çiçek Bar, which was repurposed in the 1980s, was not solely a memory space where almost every field of art was discussed in the 90s and 2000s, but additionally encapsulated social and political memory in Turkey.

The importance of the bar as the heart of Turkey's cultural exchange has been highlighted following Arif Keskiner's death last year. Among its regulars were Kemal Sunal, Tarık Akan, Tuncel Kurtiz, Fethi Naci, Demirtaş Ceyhun, Genco Erkal and Yaşar Kemal, who we can count among the notable names of the intelligentsia in Turkey. In addition to these names Joan Baez and Elia Kazan had also visited the bar.

After Yeşilçam, individual films appeared and the birth of private channels brought along new directors. When Çiçek Bar first opened to the public, Beyoğlu had only three bars in total. That number amounted to 1500 in the 2020's.

Keskiner produced "Kapıcılar Kralı", "Köşeyi Dönen Adam", "Piano Piano Bacaksız", "Selvi Boylum Al Yazmalım", "Sensiz Yaşayamam" and "Namus Borcu" among other films. He also published books, most notably *Anılar* (2018) with Yaşar Kemal and *Çiçek Gibi* (2018).

Another important feature of Çiçek Bar was that it did not solely serve as an entertainment venue where friends used to gather there, but it hosted painting, photography, jewelry, movie poster and caricature exhibitions over the years. It was here that the idea originated to make a sculpture of the Swedish poet Gunnar Ekelöf.

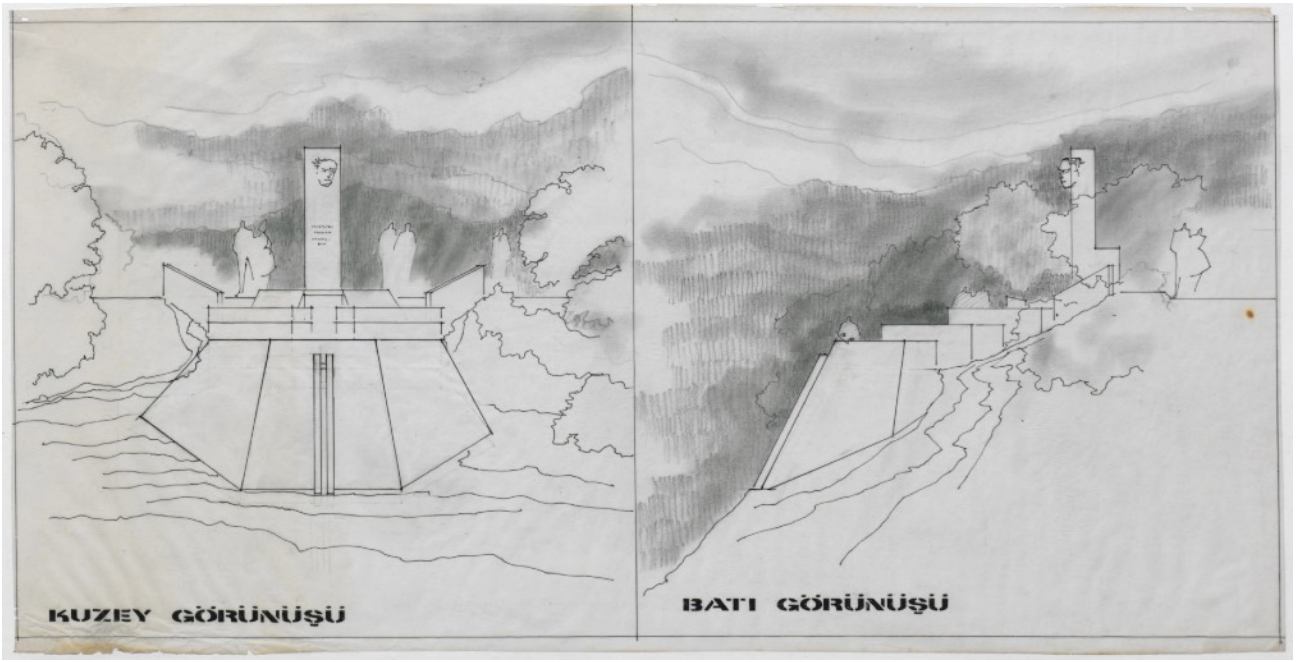


Left: Gunnar Ekelöf (1907–1968) and the Turkish edition of *Emgion Prensi İçin Divan.* Right: Gürdal Duyar (1935–2004) and some of his works, including the bronze sculpture of Ekelöf. From Arif Keskiner's book, *Akşam Çiçekleri, Sohbet Tadında Çiçek Bar Hikâyesi.* İstanbul: Literatür Yayınları 904, December 2023.

Gunnar Ekelöf (1907, Stockholm–1968, Sigtuna) was one of the leading modern poets in the Swedish language. His last collection of poems, the *Diwan* trilogy, was inspired by a visit to the Blachernae ayazma in Ayvansaray in 1964. As stated in his will, his ashes were scattered from Paktolos, Manisa Sart River. As a gesture, regulars to the Çiçek bar assembled money for his sculpture to be produced by sculptor Gürdal Duyar (1935, Istanbul–2004, Istanbul), who also sculpted works such as "Güzel İstanbul" and "Şairler". The clay used for its mold was procured from the Sart river. The bronze sculpture, measuring 130x160 centimeters, was hung to the wall of Çiçek Bar's garden in 1993, with the Swedish Consulate being invited to the opening cocktail. The piece of art hung from that spot for several years.

The initial idea had been to place the sculpture near the Sart river where Ekelöf's ashes had been strewn. The architect Erkal Güngören (1934, Istanbul–2002, Istanbul), who had designed the interior of the Çiçek Bar, made the drawings for an amphitheater on the hillsides of Salihli in 1993, on the lower slope of the river plain, where the sculpture could be mounted. The idea was that the amphitheater should also serve as a venue for poetry days. However, for political reasons, the arrangement never made it beyond the project stage. At the initiative of Hüseyin Baş (1929, Samsun–2012, Istanbul) who had translated Ekelöf's *Diwan on the Prince of Emgion* to Turkish (*Emgion Prensi İçin Divan*) and was also an external comments writer for Cumhuriyet Gazetesi, and with the support of Güngören, it was mounted on the garden wall of the Swedish Consulate in Beyoğlu.

The book *Akşam Çiçekleri*, which Arif Keskiner wrote about the sculpture, mentions that the Swedish Minister of Culture came from Sweden for the opening ceremony at the Consulate General, among many others such as Yaşar Kemal, Demirtaş Ceyhun and Onat Kutlar. In his book, Keskiner also mentions a Swedish opera singer who was present at the ceremony. According to the author, the singer was about to start reading Ekelöf's poems but was suddenly interrupted by a chirping bird and was forced to remain silent for a moment. The bird then finished its routine and flew away, captivating the crowd during the whole time it was there. After this interesting incident, the singer told the audience: "I was about to read Ekelöf's poems but he acted first. He became a bird, sang them to us, and then flew away".

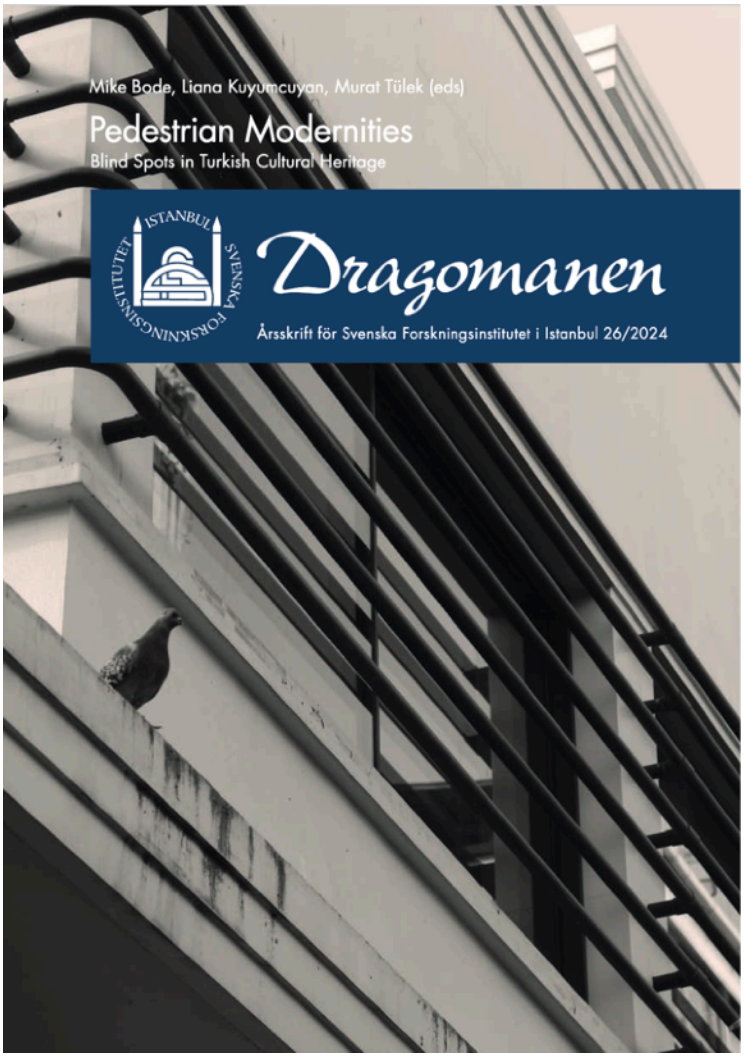


Above: Erkal Güngören's 1993 design for the amphitheater at Sardis/Salihli, with Gürdal Duyar's sculpture of Gunnar Ekelöf mounted in the middle, northern and western façades, respectively (courtesy of Ela Güngören).

Below: the sculpture as mounted in the garden of the Swedish Consulate General from 1995 to 2010, again after Erkal Güngören's design (photo by Kari Çağatay, reproduced from Ulla Ehrensvärd, *"Dragomanhuset" och Svenska forskningsinstitutet i Istanbul*, Skrifter utgivna av Svenska forskningsinstitutet i Istanbul 4, 1999.)

On this occasion, may the souls of Gunnar Ekelöf and Arif Keskiner rest in peace.

Downloadable for free at
www.srii.org/pages/dragomanen



Blind Spot was the name given to an interdisciplinary cultural heritage project that brought together academics, architects, historians, artists, urban planners, researchers and cultural initiatives from Sweden and Türkiye with the idea of exploring buildings and places typical of Türkiye's early Republican (and preceding) modernism which are often overlooked or neglected. The project began in 2023 with a number of online meetings hosted by the cultural initiatives Postane in Istanbul, Bayetav in Izmir and Kültürhane in Mersin, all initiatives that are engaged in questions of urbanity and the preservation of cultural heritage in Türkiye. From these initial meetings, a series of seminars were developed in the form of walking tours in the three partner cities. These discursive walks were supplemented with presentations, lectures, visits to exhibitions and side events and were held together by a continuous flow of enthusiastic discussions. Some of the reflections that emerged from the walks are presented here in this issue of *Dragomanen*.

Game of Tones

The Usage of Music as a Tool in Armed Conflict

Leonard Bektas, Uppsala University

Music in the context of armed conflict caught my eye when studying the Yugoslav Wars. I stumbled upon a playlist on Spotify that contained nationalist Balkan music from the 1990s, and I started speculating about the purpose of such music. I discovered that this field was fairly understudied and after conversing with a professor I started researching potential conflicts to study this phenomenon in. As most of my previous research has regarded Turkey, I realized that it was a fitting context to explore conflict-related music in.

Music is one of our society's most consumed forms of culture. It often regards themes such as love, broken hearts, or intimacy and is primarily associated with the entertainment industry. Music tends to invoke strong emotions within the listener, such as love, hate, and sadness. However, music can also be associated with different nations and ethnic groups, perhaps best exemplified by the existence of national anthems. The phenomenon of wartime music is therefore particularly interesting. Armed actors, rebel groups as well as state militaries, often receive support in the form of music and sometimes produce it themselves. In this article, I will briefly juxtapose Turkish and non-Turkish examples, hoping that they can act as guidance for future studies seeking to study the phenomenon in depth.

Usage of music in armed conflict

The production of culture in wartime has become progressively more prevalent over time with technological development. From American war films and Soviet propaganda music during the Cold War to modern-day songs praising the Azerbaijani war effort in Nagorno-Karabakh, popular culture during wartime often seeks to boost morale and military recruitment. With globalization and the internet, these expressions of culture have reached far beyond their initial target audience. Songs such as “God, Syria, and Bashar” by Rami Kazour reached far beyond the Syrian population and have become somewhat of a meme in Western Europe.

According to Pieslak (2009), music is used for different purposes in conflict. During the Iraq war, music both served to boost recruiting and to inspire American soldiers before combat. Similarly, IS videos during the war often featured nasheeds to increase regional group support and boost recruitment. The Americans also used music as a psychological tool, playing hard rock, metal and rap to irritate insurgent forces, as well as using it during interrogations.

However, music can also be used beyond combat and recruitment inspiration. An American soldier who was tasked with gathering information from local Iraqis listened to local artists rather than the metal and rap that was commonly associated with combat. He argued that this was due to his specific tasks and that it helped him get into the rhythm of the language. Although he did not know Arabic, knowing regional artists made many locals perceive him as different from the other Americans which made his job easier (ibid.).

Catherine Baker (2013), argues that music was used as an ethnoreligious weapon of war during the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Before the outbreak of the war, secessionist music was criminalized by the Yugoslav state. The imprisonment of Croatian singers therefore made it easy for the Croatian nationalists to frame nationalist music as an expression of freedom against the Serb-led establishment.

The newly established Croatian state also made an effort to silence the more aggressive songs. By doing this, the state shifted the aggression entirely to the outgroup, in this case, the Serbs (ibid.). For instance, the Croatian singer Marko Petrović Thompson was not celebrated widely by Croats until after the Croatian state was internationally recognized, which meant that the music caused less damage to the state's legitimacy (ibid.).

Another popular use of music during the war was to use musical artists to lift the morale of the troops. Artists affiliated with the ethnic factions represented by the warring factions repeatedly performed in military uniform for front-line units. Hence, these artists were militarized and used as a tool of war (ibid.). Similarly to the Americans' way of using music during interrogation, forces in the Yugoslav wars used music to humiliate inmates in prison camps. In addition to this, music was used to boost group morale and provoke fear in tandem with ethnic cleansing campaigns. In all of these cases, one could argue that music was used as a tool of war.

Examples from Turkey

In Turkey, music has long been used for military purposes, the "Janissary music" being a famous feature of Ottoman warfare. Music played by military bands can serve a motivational purpose, not only when heading into battle but also in concerts for a civilian audience (Demirel, 2022). Song texts can perform the same function. During the war 1974 Cyprus War, the Turkish state made an active effort to boost the morale through music, along with other forms of culture (Çalışkan & Doğan, 2020). In the song "Kıbrıs'a Cıktık" (We went to Cyprus), parallels were drawn between the Turkish Army's victory against the Greeks on Cyprus and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's army's victory against the Greeks during the Turkish War of Independence (ibid.). Stressing the inhumane nature of the enemy, the Turkish soldiers are likened to those who fought in Sakarya during the Turkish War of Independence (ibid.). This parallel is of special importance since it was at the battle of Sakarya that the tide of the War of Independence turned in favor of the Turks. Hence, the soldiers who went to Cyprus are likened to the most important ones in the history of the Turkish Republic

Music, along with other arts and culture, have also been used by the PKK in conveying its ideology and propaganda, and to bolster recruitment, not least in the diaspora. Starting in the early 1980s, *Koma Berxwedan* performed songs glorifying the the group's attacks and insurgencies against the Turkish state and inspired others (Gunes, 2012). Many of the songs were created using older Kurdish folk music and were used in dancing, which added a performative aspect (ibid.). Whereas many of the artists were based in the diaspora and reached out to Kurdish communities there, cassettes were also smuggled into Turkey, duplicated by vendors, and circulated in large numbers (Kuruoğlu & Hamelink, 2017). In such ways, the PKK sought to use music to shape Kurdish identity and political agenda according to its vision (ibid.).

Although there are minor differences between the cases, the overall trend appears similar. Music in itself can boost fighters and demoralize enemies. Song texts can be used to glorify the in-group and demonize the outgroup. Both music and texts can be used together with other media such as posters and movies for recruitment purposes. Future studies should seek to study the phenomenon of wartime music in different contexts, and not least its actual effects. A potential avenue for future research could build on the previous example of the American information gatherer in Iraq. His usage of music seems to differ from the cases covered in this study and therefore warrants closer examination.

Leonard Bektas holds a Bachelor's degree in peace and conflict studies and is currently a Master's student in peace and conflict studies at Uppsala University. Leonard previously worked as a junior analyst with the Uppsala Conflict Data Program and collected fatality-related data for Israel, Palestine, and Turkey. His research is primarily focused on armed conflict, civilian targeting, and nationalism. In addition, Leonard also writes opinion columns for Vestmanlands Läns Tidning in Sweden. In addition to this Leonard was the SRII intern during the Fall of 2024.

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A Matrix of Culture

Interview with Patrick Hällzon, affiliated researcher at the SRII

Leonard Bektas

Can you tell me about your first time in Istanbul?

I visited Turkey several times in the 1990s and the early 2000s. During that time, I also came to Istanbul for brief visits and of course saw what most tourists tend to see such as Aya Sophia, the Blue Mosque etc. My first longer period in Istanbul was as an intern at SRII in 2012. The director of the institute at that time was Prof. Birgit Schlyter who previously also had been my teacher in Central Asian studies at Stockholm University. This was also when the Gunnar Jarring Central Eurasia Collection arrived to the institute's premises. Under the supervision of Birgit Schlyter and Birgitta Kürültay, the institute's librarian, I went through the collection. My tasks primarily consisted in unpacking the many books, organizing them according to category, writing new entries in a local database, as well as placing the various publications on the bookshelves. Later on, I participated in a digitization project involving rare books in the collection. These publications are now available online. See, https://www.jarringlibrary.lingfil.uu.se/

You have been a recurring visiting researcher at the institute for several years now. What keeps you coming back?

There are several reasons. In this city there is always something new to see, learn or experience. I have gotten to know people here over the years which makes the Swedish Research Institute and Istanbul feel like home. In this context, I would like to especially mention the wonderful local staff who make this place special. Without them, SRII wouldn't be the same.

Concerning research, the Gunnar Jarring Central Eurasia Collection is one of the main reasons I keep returning. In the library, there is lot of material related to Central Asia and Turkic languages, especially matters concerning the Uyghurs, their language and culture. Sadly, this culture and language is highly threatened today. As we know from various reports, the Uyghurs and other 'minorities' in China have experienced an unprecedented repression during the past years, especially since 2017, which includes a general systematic destruction of Uyghur culture. In this context, cultural resources outside the Uyghur homeland such as archives, museums as well as the book collection at SRII is important for the safekeeping of Uyghur cultural heritage

Can you tell us a little about what you are working on now?

At the moment I am working with my post-doc project funded by the Swedish Research Council. It is entitled "Oasis Life in Eastern Turkestan: The Matrix of Culture, Language and Landscape in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries".

For my study I use several categories of sources such as Eastern Turki manuscripts, travelogues and texts written by Swedish missionaries who stayed in Eastern Turkestan (Xinjiang province in northwestern China). By a close reading of such sources, I want to gain a deeper understanding of the inhabitant's relationship to and perception of the biota in the surrounding landscape. This includes local knowledge and use of plants, animals and other organisms but also cognitive and linguistic aspects such as how they were named and classified in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

What is the most challenging aspect of your research and research field?

There are several things. Regarding the Eastern Turki texts that I investigate, they are written by hand in the Arabic script. At times it can be challenging to decipher unclear handwriting. Another challenging aspect is related to vocabulary. Some of the words that appear in the manuscript sources can at times be difficult to find in Eastern Turki word collections and in materials dealing with modern Uyghur. For some topics such as Eastern Turki medicine for instance, there are a lot of specific terms, often of Persian and Arabic origin. So, although I work with Turkic languages, I need to consult other sources as well. For example, when I work on my Eastern Turki translations I often use a wide combination of sources including different types of dictionaries and glossaries. Researching manuscripts is often time-consuming but I find this type of work very rewarding. It provides me an opportunity to better understand the language, life, and ideas of the Eastern Turki people a century ago.

The first issue of *Ang* newspaper, published on January 27, 1947 from
The Gunnar Jarring Central Eurasia Collection at the SRII.

How has Istanbul changed from the first time you came here?

Istanbul has changed in many ways. It has grown immensely since the early 1990s up to now. Regarding the cityscape, one can see that it has gone through plenty of urban transformation. Many of the high-rise buildings that today form the city's silhouette were not there on my first visits. Regarding the institute's immediate neighborhood, one can see that it appears to have gone through a gentrification process which increasingly appears to cater to tourists. However, Istanbul is a huge city and such aspects are of course not visible everywhere.

Regarding the research institute there are some aspects that are different compared to my first visits. One is of course the visibility of the Swedish palace. Earlier it was possible to see large parts of the building and the garden from the Istiklal-street, but now, for security reasons, the panels and barbed wire block the view. Another less visible aspect is that some academic activities such as open seminars that earlier took place most every week have been abandoned in recent years. I am here referring to the reoccurring Tuesday seminars which earlier attracted people from all over town to visit the institute. I hope that such activities will eventually be reinstated. It was a wonderful way to learn new things but also involved the possibility to meet new people and exchange ideas and experiences.

From 2023 to 2026, Patrick Hällzon (Uppsala University) is an affiliated research at the SRII with the project "Oasis Life in Eastern Turkestan: The Matrix of Culture, Language and Landscape in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries" financed by the Swedish Research Council. Read more about Patricks project here:

https://www.uu.se/en/research/research-projects/project?query=2023-00501_VR.

Barış Manço och Anatolisk Rock: Ett Kulturarv i Istanbul

Elvira Hammar & Münise Incesu

På en smal bakgata till Istiklal Caddesi, en av Istanbuls mest berömda och livliga gator, upptäcker vi av en slump en bar. Det är en varm torsdagseftermiddag och baren är tom, men utanför hänger en liten skylt som meddelar: Hergün canlı müzik 18.00–03.00 (Live-musik varje dag). Under skylten syns en bild på artisterna Barış Manço, Cem Karaca, Erkin Koray och Haluk Levent. Vi slår oss ner vid baren. Kontrasten är slående: Här sitter vi, så nära stadens mest turistiga område, samtidigt som vi kan höra klassisk anatolisk rock eka genom gränden.

Förutom att vara en lättsam del av många människors vardag är musik även en universell konstform med en förmåga att spegla och forma kulturella identiteter och samhällen över hela världen. Musik är en integrerad del av kulturer och spelar en viktig roll i att forma och bevara kulturella identiteter och traditioner, detta gäller i synnerhet för Istanbul. I samband med den nya republiken Turkiet började nya musikgenrer växa fram som en del av det demokratiska och utvecklade Turkiet. Anatolisk rock går tillbaka till 1960-talet när rock'n' roll började sprida sig runt om i världen. Musikgenren vann popularitet bland ungdomar i Istanbul, vilket gav upphov till flera framstående artister, däribland Barış Manço, som ofta kallas ”fadern av Anatolisk rock”. Istanbul blev centrum för den anatoliska rocken och dess arv lever kvar idag. Vi har haft möjligheten att tillbringa elva dagar i Istanbul för att studera anatolisk rock och Barış Manços avtryck på staden. Under denna period undersökte vi den kulturella betydelsen av anatolisk rock och Barış Manço samt hur dessa uppfattas av lokalbefolkningen.

Vid strandpromenaden i Kadıköy Moda sitter en äldre ensam man på en campingstol, djupt försjunken i en bok. Vi slår oss ned på klippan bredvid honom och börjar samtala om hans syn på Barış Manço. Mannen, som heter Doğan, berättar en anekdot om när han en gång träffade Manço, när Manço för första gången besökte Kapalı Çarşı. Doğan beskrev hur Manço, så fort han steg in i basaren, genast utmärkte sig. Mitt i basarens traditionella myller av färger och ljud framstod han som något annorlunda. Doğan menade att Barış utstrålade en modernitet och en samhällsmedvetenhet som låg långt före sin tid. Det var omöjligt att inte lägga märke till honom – inte bara för hans yttre utan även för den respekt och betydelse han bar med sig. Barış Manço var en man med ett syfte, någon som var större än det samhälle han levde i, som om han var menad för något större än det som omgav honom.

Barış Manço art work in the Istanbul neighborhood Balat

Många andra vi talade med under vårt besök i Istanbul delade Doğans positiva syn på Barış Manço. De äldre minns honom som en del av sin egen barndom och spelar fortfarande hans musik för sina egna barn. Flera ungdomar berättade att Manço hade spelat en stor roll i deras liv. Från de livliga och glada låtarna som präglade deras tidiga år, som låten Arkadaşım eşşek till de mer känslofyllda och eftertänksamma sångerna som talade till dem när de blev äldre. De menar att Bariş Manço har låtar som tilltalar alla åldrar, men som också speglar olika kapitel av en människas liv.

Slagverkaren Okay Temiz i en musikstudio
i närheten av Galatatornet.

I en musikstudio i närheten av Galatatornet bland egengjorda instrument, cigarrök, pryttlar och pinaler möter vi Okay Temiz, en slagverkare som specialiserar sig på att spela inom genren fusion jazz. Med många års erfarenhet inom musikskapande har Temiz starka åsikter och är kritisk till dagens anatoliska rock som musikkategori. Den anatoliska rocken har, enligt Temiz, inte längre en tillräcklig koppling till klassisk rock, utan lutar mer åt techno och elektronisk musik. Enligt Temiz finns det väldigt få artister som fortfarande skapar klassisk anatolisk rock. En annan musiker vi talade med berättar att han upplever att det inte produceras ny anatolisk rock. De som gillar den genren får lyssna på äldre låtar.

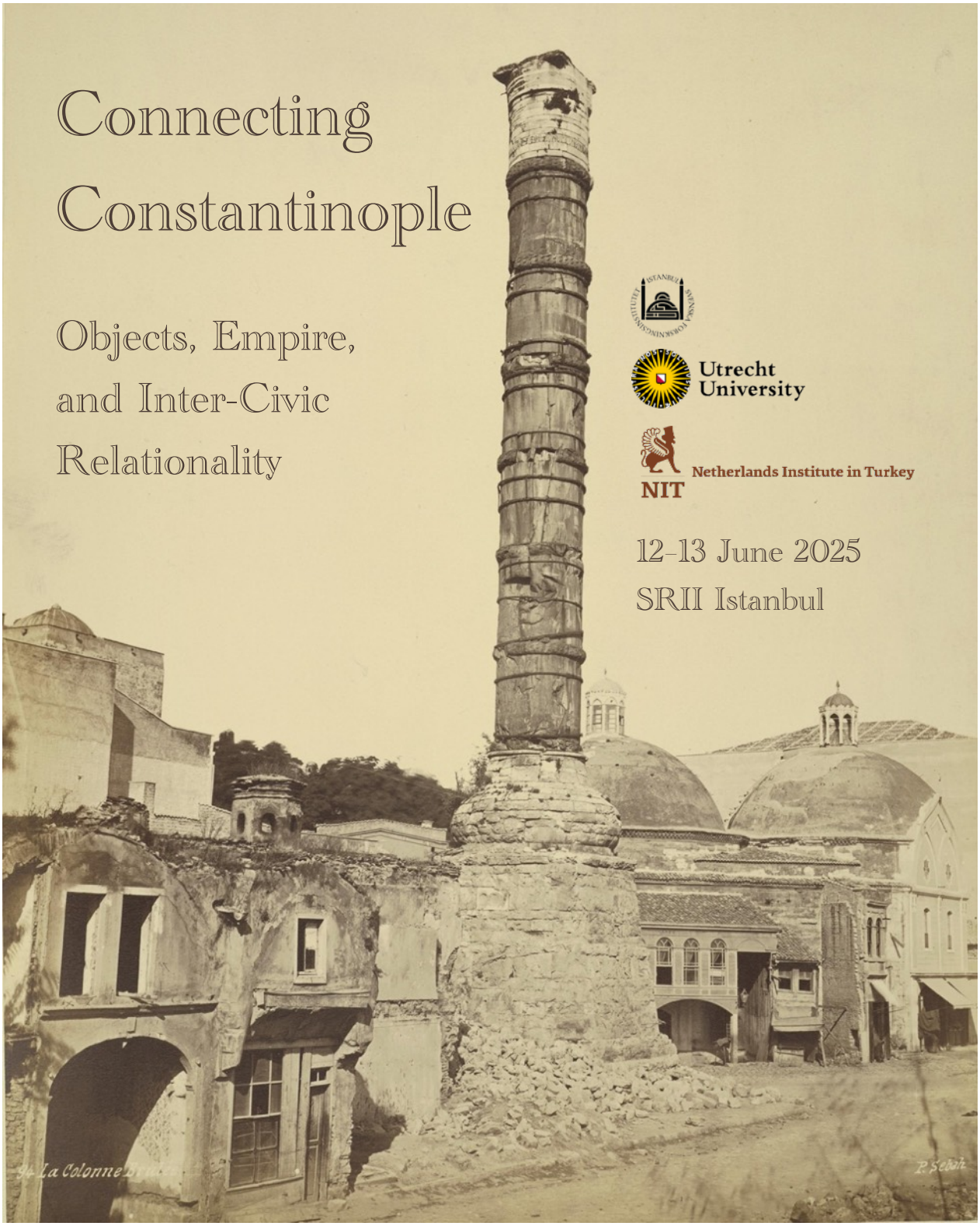
Vi besöker Barış Manços tidigare bostad, som nu har omvandlats till ett museum där olika artefakter och spår från hans liv finns bevarade. Museet tycks vara en uppskattad turistattraktion, med både ungdomar och barnfamiljer som besökare. Det stora museet upplevs plötsligt litet när lokalerna fylls av ivriga gäster, trots att museet snart stänger för dagen. Vi möter olika personer, både från Istanbul och från andra delar av Turkiet. Här blir Manços nationella storhet särskilt tydlig.

Barış Manços tidigare bostad i Moda, som nu har omvandlats till ett museum.

Barış Manços närvaro är fortfarande starkt kännbar i Istanbul. Vinylbutiker pryder sina skyltfönster med hans skivor, hans ansikte syns på väggarna på kaféerna i Balat. På en vägg ombord på båten mellan Karaköy och Kadıköy hittar vi ett porträtt av Manço, tillsammans med en text som berättar om hans liv. För den som är uppmärksam kommer spåren av Manço visa sig tydligt, men för en person som inte är bekant med honom kan dessa spår vara mer subtila och undangömda.

Barış Manço framstår som en betydande figur inom den anatoliska rocken och har haft en varaktig inverkan på både den turkiska musiken och kulturen i stort. Hans inflytande är särskilt uppenbart i Istanbul, där hans musik och personlighet fortsätter att påverka både äldre och yngre generationer. Barış Manço och anatolisk rock fortsätter att vara en viktig del av Istanbuls kulturella liv, samtidigt ser vi en pågående förändring inom musikscenen och hur kulturarv bevaras och uppfattas.

Elvira Hammar & Münise Incesu, Stipendiater från Föreningen Svenska Istanbulinstitutets Vänner (FSIV) 2024.



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