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Turkic Student Association at Berkeley (TSAB)

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Do you have any comments, questions, or suggestions? Email us at tsab.group@gmail.com. We would love to hear anything you have to say!

For more information about TSAB, visit tsab.berkeley.edu

**The Birlik logo on the cover features the Yore Folk Dance Ensemble. The back cover features pictures from various TSAB events.*

Birlik is very new. We are still looking for writers and graphic design artists. If you are interested, email us at tsab.group@gmail.com and let us know your ideas. Also, if you have a business or would like to donate money to Birlik, we would appreciate all the help we can get.

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Turkic Student Association at Berkeley

Editor's Preface

A year ago this time we were working to get this club together, and today we are publishing Birlik. This job was only done through true UNITY which is what Birlik stands for. First and foremost, I would like to thank all of our writers for contributing to the very first issue of our magazine. I would also like to thank everyone who has helped us in each and every step of publishing this student-run journal.

The Turkic Student Association, dearly known as TSAB, began in the Spring of 2007. It was just a dream to bring together those with a passion for Turkic peoples, languages, and cultures. This dream came true with the help of some of my closest friends. We finally gained club status on a glorious day in March. This was truly a day to remember. Since that time, TSAB and its devoted members have tabled nearly everyday, weathering the blazing heat and the coldest winds just so people can stop by and see who they are. Meetings have been held, Turkish delights have been eaten, pictures have been recorded, all this has led up to our establishment as a well-known, and highly-talked about club that is here to stay. We have invited the Consulate of Turkey and of Azerbaijan and had the pleasure of having Thomas Goltz to share some of his remarks to our campus. With the help of a couple of Berkeley professors, we were able to hold an informational lecture about Kazkhastan.

Our next goal was to create a student-run journal through which we could reach more people on campus and bring those who are interested in writing and sharing their Turkic experiences together. Through Birlik, we hope to help our community and campus to become better aware of the various Turkic cultures across the world. We aim to celebrate the different Turkic cultures and discuss current events. To do so, we have articles written from different aspects and each have their own unique topics.Our group is not political and is not affiliated with any political or other groups on campus. The main purpose of our group is to have a fun and safe environment, to make friends and introduce the different nationalities which have Turkic backgrounds.

It has been my pleasure to have been part of this process from the very beginning and I have seen TSAB grow and become much more active on campus. I would like to give special thanks to Harbir Kaur for her never never never ending help and support and always believing in me, and to Saeid Heydarinezhad for all his time and help with the graphic design of this magazine. Birlik is our new project and hopefully with unity and the never-ending efforts of our wonderful members, we can have Birlik grow and flourish throughout the coming years. This very much reflects our club's universal goal of seeing peace and unity across the globe.

-Uldouz Berenjforoush



Kazakh Musical Epic: Notes on Psychology of Its Perception

Alma Kunanbaeva



The Kazakh epic was an encyclopedia of the long history of the nation, and it exists in the oral tradition until today. The epic tradition (*zhyraulyq* -- from *zhyr* 'epic', 'epic poetry') has been best preserved in the South West and West of the modern Republic of Kazakhstan, especially in the Aral region where I have been working for years[2]. In Kazakh culture, epic singers (the *zhyrau*) are keepers of a collective memory that connects oral traditions with shamanic spirituality and nomadic philosophy. The *zhyraulyq* is a professional tradition. Its professionalism is demonstrated not only by the economic aspect, that is making a livelihood from the performance, but also by the education and the level of mastery of the epic recital. The *zhyrau* must obtain a specific style of singing -- the vocal quality of the epic bard should be different from the voice of other singers. It should characterized by dramatically oratorical recitative which he delivers in a raspy, guttural voice, accompanying himself on a two-stringed *dombra* (a plucked lute). The accompaniment is interwoven with the text, and a singer of tales cannot narrate a tale without it. The raspy vocal style is reminiscent of the sound of the *qobyz*, a two-stringed bowed lute played by Kazakh shamans. The magical power of the *zhyrau* extends to his instrument. It is considered that the instrument has its own soul, and can bring good or bad fortune. After the death of the bard, the instrument has to find a new owner; otherwise it will play at night and scare the children. That is why, before his death, the singer of tales usually finds the new owner of his instrument. This corresponds to the transfer of shamanistic power in old cultures.

The performance of the epic took place during the social meeting in a *yurt*, a woolen tent of the Central Asian nomads. The perception of musical epic in traditional milieu arises from the formation of a system of coordinates, of which extramusical factors constitute the basis.

In the context of the structure of socio-artistic institutions of the Kazakhs, perception of the epic is bound with the social status of the epic singer, the *zhyrau*, as spokesman of the higher, philosophical dimension of traditional life. The entire corpus of songs of the *zhyrau*, which includes classical epic tales as well as short philosophical essays, is perceived by the traditional audience as a holistic verbal act, a unitary action with its complex dramaturgy and dynamics. Storytellers themselves understand their performance as the creation of a panorama of traditional life with which listeners can empathize, and this empathy becomes a way to measure the vitality of the human spirit.

The syncretism of perception encompasses also the non-isolatable nature of the act of epic music-making from its interactive context, where epic songs alternate with discussions (*mono*logue, *dia*logue, and "*poly*logue") on various themes. Indeed, the songs themselves call for these discussions. The mastery of the discussants and their knowledge of tradition lead the singer, as it were, by analogy or association, and direct the selection of themes in the composition.

The singers themselves put emphasis on their dependence on the audience. This is conclusively evidenced in the statements made by individual *zhyrau*. For instance: "The expectations of the listeners give birth to song"; "The understanding of the deep essence of the song multiplies the strength and energizes the memory of the singer"; "The good listener is wings and support to the songs," and so like.

The traditional listener does not remain passive even in the performer-audience equation, and is active in the utterance act. His role manifests itself in his participation in the discussions preceding and concluding song, as well as in the approbative exclamations shouted to the singer. Interestingly, these acclamations may not be spontaneous and chaotic, but have independent status in the framework of *musical* form. Knowledge of the canons of the tradition of perception of epic singing manifests itself at once on this parameter too, though it may seem fully personal. (Let us not forget that such exclamations and approbative shouts have also an opposite relationship: their influence on the progress of song and the inspiration they give to the song-utterer).

In the process of establishing contact with a new audience the *zhyrau* elicits the coming forth of a "group

of experts," as it were, or that of a specialist, and in the course of the entire performance takes cues from the latter's perception. This person becomes an interpreter ("mediator") between the singer and the rest of the audience, and assists the song-utterer in "entering" the act of music-making and "exiting" from it. It is he too, who kindles the discussions and determines the "subject" of music-making.

Following the customary sequence of epic genres, the *zhyrau* begins the singing with the *bastau*, i.e., "opening, introductory song." In *bastau*, a personal song of the *zhyrau*, created by himself, may be performed. Alternatively, a *bastau* of some famous singer of tales of the past may be sung. In it the singer calls for inspiration and establishes contact with the audience. The group of opening songs is important, but its basic function is to capture the audience's attention and to prepare for the epic song-utterance. Then, normally without significant interruption, come the "words of edification," the *terme* (lit. 'to string' -- 'to string something like pearls', 'threading'): a collection of aphorisms, which enunciate the ethic code of traditional society and its moral values.

"If restoration of traditional criteria and renaissance of the traditional perception are possible at all, they can only be achieved through active cultural self-cognizance and the return of culture to the "epic environment," to the distinctive epic milieu as an socio-artistic way of life."

The length of time that the *zhyrau* dwells on this level -- the *terme* level -- depends on the individuals who make up the audience: young/old, married/ celibates, the prevalence of men or women, and so on, as well as on the audience's readiness for transition to lengthy recitation. And only after the basic group of listeners had formed itself does the *zhyrau* pass on to the narration proper of the epic subject (such as *Korogly*, *Qoblandy*, *Alpamys*, and some more). These major tales can contain up to twenty thousand lines.

In the progress toward the central moment of performance -- to the narration -- contact with the listeners changes in form. From the direct dialogue with the audience, the *zhyrau*, traveling through time and space, as it were, gradually autonomies himself and "leads away" the listeners in his wake. This motion on the time scale is akin to the *shamanistic* act, and in many ways inherits its imperatives: widespread tales of some "wondrous happenings" at the moment of epic song-utterance (thunder, lightning, storm, and even rain in a region in which rainfall is extremely rare), taboos on interruption of the singing and other unwonted intrusions (it would be a violation of the process of birth of the song, that is like the birth of the human being), the dangers ensuing from the presence of ritually unclean persons (who had broken vows), belief in the incarnation of a protective spirit in the singer, and so on, and so forth.

Departure from the performance act (or "return") is likewise gradual and occurs at several levels: *tolgau* songs (musing on the foundation of being), and then *arnau*, dedications and well-wishes to listeners.

Considering the entire functional complex of traditional epic *zhyraulyq*, one can speak of the formation of an epic audience which could be defined as no less professional than the singer of tales. To the traditional listener, communion with the *zhyrau* is "journey," "ascension," "rebirth." The need for renewal of this communion owes itself not only to esthetic desiderata, but also to the recognition of the beneficent social function of the epic performer.

Change in the traditional life of the Kazakh in the context of well-known historical conditions, brought about the transformation of the basic criteria of being in our time. Thus, the esthetic approach to traditional art began to take root, a rupture of the holistic perception of the *zhyrau*'s creativity had occurred, and discreteness of perception gradually began to take force: summing rather than synthesizing. This reflected itself on the repertoire of the contemporary epic performers, the singers of tales.

The great epic form began to shape itself differently, not through spiritual union of the community, but in subordination to narrowly musical norms. Autonomous perception of tunes and their "absolutization" in performance had begun. The logics inherent in the unfolding of the epic gave way to brief songs of moralizing character. This reflected itself even in the terminological designation of the singer: *termeshi* (lit., performer of *terme*).

Young and urban listeners often experience mere informational interest in epic tales today. This interest is satisfied after one or two hearings. More "comfortable" forms of appreciation of epos begin to

prevail: a book, or the theatricalization of adapted versions. Furthermore, means of mass information with their bent toward many-voiced and variegated stage shows, consisting of two or three-minute "numbers," have contributed to the processes of this transformation. If restoration of traditional criteria and renaissance of the traditional perception are possible at all, they can only be achieved through active cultural self-cognizance and the return of culture to the "epic environment," to the distinctive epic milieu as an socio-artistic way of life.



Terme

Open my heart! Overflow!
Speak my tongue! Stretch and grow!
With mind and thought together joined
Plumb the depths and pluck the pearl!
For all the thirsty assembled here
Let your saddle-bag untied appear!
For us what's called the people's coat
From of old by others cut,
Because in custom I'm no expert,
Its ends loosened are and frayed.
Humbly let me speak my words
And may the folk my faults forgive.
Oh my heart! Rush not nor stumble
Midst clamoring throng be not bewildered.
I am the student of a master,
Whose arm has skill, whose work is solid.
He traveled through the maze of words
And without coal his silver forged.
You've told my horse to ride straight on,
And my heart you've raised on high.
My people, let me touch your hearts,
Sweet mare's milk may I let you drink.
The blunderer has found his way,
I've entered the ring and loosed my clothes.
In this assembled market grand,
The goods with all their prices marked,
Both cheap and dear are on display.
The listeners thirsty side by side,
Oh my red tongue, be not afraid!
This is your day to speak and stretch!

Natavan

Aziza Abduragimova

Khurshid-Banu Natavan was the daughter of the last khan, a kind of ruler, of the Karabagh khanate. She was born in the city of Shusha in 1830. Natavan lived a fairly difficult life, and much of her troubles are described in her poetry. “To My Son Abbas” expresses the pain she felt after the death of her son. “Beloved, How Could You Break the Oath to Me You Swore” is a poem about a woman betrayed by her lover and fated to live feeling lonely, anguished, and helpless. Yet despite her unhappy personal life, Natavan undertook philanthropic projects to improve Shusha. She financed the construction of a water main that delivered fresh water to the city and founded some of the first literary societies in Shusha. Natavan became one of the most famous poets in Azerbaijan, and her work was of such universal subjects and feelings that it still touches readers today.

Lilac
O flowering lilac, whose was the skilful hand that drew you?
O Radiant-Featured, was it a loving slave that drew you?
Chancing to penetrate into your palace, garden,
O poppy-cheeked, was it a skilful gardener drew you?
In this flowerbed world there were all too many plain faces;
Was that the reason why the almighty keeper drew you?
The flowers take their colours and fragrance from you,
As a flower the hand of the world's creator drew you.
What a wealth of gentleness shows in your beauty!
With her gift of fancy bestowed by God, perhaps it was Natavan that drew you?

Translated by Dorian Rottenberg



Samad Behrangi

Aydin Fathalizadeh

Samad Behrangi was born into an impoverished Azerbaijani family in the southern division of Charandab, Tabriz, the commercial and administrative capital of Iran's Azerbaijan Province, in July 1939. Behrangi completed elementary school and three years of secondary school. At 16, he attended the local Teachers' Training College and two years later, upon completion of his studies in modern and American theories on education, Behrangi became a village school teacher. After eleven years of teaching in village and town schools throughout Azerbaijan, he obtained a B.A. degree in English from Tabriz University.



Behrangi grew critical early on in his career as a teacher of both the methodology and contents of the state-sponsored textbooks. He found the techniques to be outdated and the material to be irrelevant to his pupils, stating, for instance, that "[the] postal service, congratulatory notes, telephone conversation, and sitting at the table, although common place concepts in a western society, are alien to Iranian village children." As a result of his dissatisfaction with available teaching materials, he wrote numerous books intended for village children which reflected their own lives. The Iranian government, under the reign of Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi, prohibited their publication as a result of the government's ban on non-Persian texts.

Behrangi also collected Azerbaijani folklore and prepared a book of poems from them. As professor Iraj Bashiri notes, "Behrangi's native tongue was Azeri Turkish and he, personally, preferred writing in Azeri over Farsi. He was not, however, allowed to publish in Azeri; he, therefore, made his writings available by translating them into Persian." Behrangi would also translate works of such famous authors and poets as Ahmad Shamloo, Mehdi Akhvan-Sales, and Forough Farrokhzad from Persian into Azerbaijani, demonstrating his great linguistic capabilities in both languages. Unfortunately, these texts were prohibited from being published as well.

By the late 1950s, Behrangi began writing short stories and translating them from Turkish to Persian. His first story, Talkun, was published in the spring of 1964. A year later, he and good friend Behrooz Dehqani published the first volume of *Afsanaha-ye Azarbayjan* (Tales of Azerbaijan). The second volume of these Persian translations of Turkish tales appeared in the spring of 1968.

The appearance in the summer of 1965 of Behrangi's severe critique of educational methods and textbooks, entitled *Kand o kav dar masael-e tarbiati-e Iran* (An Investigation of Educational Problems in Iran), established the author as a social critic. He attributed many of Iran's educational problems to the government's ineffective educational policies, curricula, inappropriate textbooks, and the poor conditions of schools. In his own words,

If educators in Tehran have not had any personal contact with the people of the village of Mamaghan or familiarity with the culture and language of the Iranian rural areas, how can they, who are enjoying an extremely comfortable and luxurious life with all kinds of modern facilities, understand the poverty stricken life of Mamaghan's children who eat only once a day a meal which consists of bread and cheese, bread dipped in sweet tea, and bread and onion.

Behrangi proposed that in each province, the local school district should establish its own education policies and curricula according to the economic, educational, and cultural needs of the village, town and city. He detested the teaching materials of the time because they were "mostly translations of works written by Western educators, scientists, and philosophers." Regarding the subjects taught, for instance, Behrangi asserted,

Why does a child in the desert area have to learn

about the cinema, when the cinema is nonexistent in his/her province? . . . a child cannot conceive of a thing he has not seen. When a child learns those things that are useful to him, he will be able to make use of them, develop them, and benefit from them.

During Behrangi's professional life, it was the official policy of Iran for the entire country to use the same textbooks whether they spoke Persian, Turkish or any other local language. Behrangi was one of the first educators to express the fault with this methodology and thus detailed a proposal for teaching Persian to Azeri Turkish speakers that acknowledged the linguistic differences of the two languages and built on the students' knowledge of vocabulary that was common to both languages. He, however, believed strongly in keeping the regional ethnic cultures and literature alive and thus emphasized reading local stories and tales.

In 1966, Behrangi's *Ulduz va kalagha* (Ulduz and the Crows), his first published children's story, was discussed in a popular weekly journal, bringing the young author's name to the attention of readers of Persian fiction. During the next two years, numerous stories by Behrangi appeared as pamphlets, some of them distributed clandestinely as he developed a reputation as a dissident writer. His best known work appeared in the summer of 1968. *Mahi-e siah-e kuchulu* (The Little Black Fish) was a folktale which many readers have come to accept as an anti-establishment allegory. As Behrangi himself explained it, "We must teach our children to oppose whatever is inhumane and nonhumanitarian for they are the barriers to the historical accomplishment of society. This avenging attitude kind of thinking must come to children's literature." The piece would go on to win him several posthumous awards and international acclaim.

Although he may be better known for his children's stories and folktales, Behrangi also wrote numerous essays, very different in tone from his stories. His essays criticized the Iranian education system and dealt with Azerbaijani history, the Azeri Turkish language, children's literature, village life, grammar, and so on. He wrote about a variety of philosophical, moral and social issues, often discussing specific societal and educational problems and proposed strategies for dealing with them based on his own experiences.

Behrangi's close affiliation with the Tabriz branch of the Feda'iyan-i Khalq, one of the more prominent communist groups of the time, and in particular with his close friend, confidant, and coauthor, Behrooz Dehqani (who, as a leader of the Feda'iyan, was later tortured to death by the Shah's secret police in 1973), helped to strengthen the bond between the underground activists and the literati. At the time, the Shah's regime had stepped up its repression of writers through frequent interrogations and constant harassment of booksellers believed to be selling protest literature.

In early September of 1968, on one of his regular field trips to gather folklore and stories, this time to the Koda Afarin area near the Iran-USSR border, Behrangi, who could not swim, reportedly drowned in the Aras River. This bizarre death in a faraway region combined with his growing reputation as a social critic and the presumed concern on the part of governmental authorities with his writing convinced some that his death was not accidental. Many of his essays and stories would be published posthumously by the Association of Writers of Iran and his close friends. Behrangi's writings, with the exception of *Mahi-e siah-e kuchulu*, were officially banned in Iran in 1973.

During the 1970s, Behrangi became a hero and viewed as a martyr for anti-Pahlavi groups and thus received considerable attention during the 1979 revolution in Iran. A dedicated and indefatigable advocate of radical reforms, Behrangi courageously confronted the government power structure through his writings and teachings. His educational theories and experiences could be considered as the basis of a new educational paradigm for emerging educational systems not only in Iran, but in any developing country which is in the midst of a struggle having adopted Western educational ideas in their countries where tradition, culture and religion have deep roots. Samad Behrangi did not sell his efforts or knowledge to any agency or individual for political or economic gain, but dedicated and sacrificed his life for the well-being of the misunderstood, often ignored, and left behind Iranian villagers and poor.

The Epic of Manas



Harbir Kaur

Kyrgyzstan's *Epic of Manas* is a traditional poem that has been orally transmitted for centuries. Manas is a very well-known figure in Kyrgyz literature because he united forty clans in Kyrgyz against their enemy to create a Kyrgyz nation. The epic describes his birth, youth, adventures, and death, as well as the adventures of his son, Semetei, and grandson, Seitek. He is rumored to be buried in the Ala Too Mountains in northwestern Kyrgyzstan. A mausoleum claimed to house his remains is a popular tourist destination. Because the people of Kyrgyz were a nomadic people, it was not until 1885 that the rich story was put into writing. It's length is about twenty times that of Homer's *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* combined. People who recite the *Manas* are called Manaschis. Recitals are common in Kyrgyz cultural festivities and they can last for weeks. The Manaschis must be able to not only memorize parts of the long epic, they also need to be animated story-tellers.

1995 was designated "the year of the celebration of the millennium of the Kyrgyz national epic, Manas" by the United Nations, and is also the 1000th anniversary of Manas's birth. Though not meant to be a primarily historical story, *Manas* provides an insight into the customs and histories of the Kyrgyz as well as their sedentary neighbors. It is also seen as a moral handbook for the people of Kyrgyzstan today. After the fall of the Soviet Union, there was a revitalization of the education and memorization of the poem. A prominent statue of Manas stands in the capital, Bishkek.

The Art of Rug Making



Uldouz Berenjforoush

Rug-making is one of the oldest handicrafts dating back thousands of years, but unfortunately due to the natural products that are used in weaving a rug, not that many ancient rugs have been preserved. One of the oldest rugs that was found is a Pazyryk rug (5 B.C.E.) which was discovered in a Scythian burial mound in Mongolia. This was able to survive so many years because it was frozen for almost 2500 years. The newly-discovered rugs showed beautiful consistent patterns which suggests that rug-making as an art has been around for a long time.

The varieties of patterns are due to different knotting techniques. The use of various colors also gives beautiful designs to the carpet. One of the very famous rugs is an Azerbaijani rug which are handmade with lots of silk threads in the carpet. Azerbaijani rugs stand out because of their ornamental compositions. Most rugs are given names based on the city they are from, such as Tabriz rugs, Khoy, Heriz, Mehrvan, and Ardabil rugs which, adds particular value to the rug.

Tabriz is one of the oldest cities to produce various types of rugs. For example, there are many rugs ranging from 75 knots per square inch on top to very fine 344 knots. Also, Tabriz rugs have very diverse designs made from medallion, such as Herati/Mahi. They range from figural, pictorial, and even 3-D shaped rugs, and they mostly use symmetric (Turk) knots. Tabriz's designs are the most diverse ones in Iran. Rather than copying, they use their own interpretations for designs. Colors can be very vivid or pastel depending on the market demand. A distinguishing characteristic of a Tabriz rug is the numerous colors used in one rug.

Tabriz has been one of the foremost Iranian rug-producing towns since the 16th century and the center of the world weaving community since the 1800's. You can also find many Tabriz rugs in muse-

ums and palaces which were given to the kings/ queens as gifts representing Iran's culture.Tabriz rug weavers are among the most skilled producers of quality rugs. The Tabriz rugs usually have a floral design, while exhibiting a terrific precision of design. The majority are formal and characterized by a large central medallion. Each region or city is known for a specific type of rug design that has been handed down for centuries. For instance, Tabriz is known for its amazing rugs that feature a border with a curvilinear pattern in the central field and a medallion in the middle of the rug. Because this region is so well-known for this style of Iranian rug and because it sells so well, rug makers from other regions adapt the design principles of Tabriz rugs and apply them to other hand-tufted or machine-made rugs. A rug named Tabriz can either be an authentic rug made in Tabriz, or it is a rug made somewhere else but inspired by the Tabriz design.

Rugs can be used as luxury decorative items as well as a common item that gives beauty to the house . Rug weavers spend so much of their time weaving that some lose their eyesight. Such artists are not always praised for their excellence and talent. For this very reason it has been told that you cannot just put a rug on the floor of your house and walk on it. Many have lost their health in order to create such a magnificent piece of art so nowadays you can see rugs framed and hung from walls.



Uzbekistan

Bibi Khanum Mosque of Ancient Samarkand

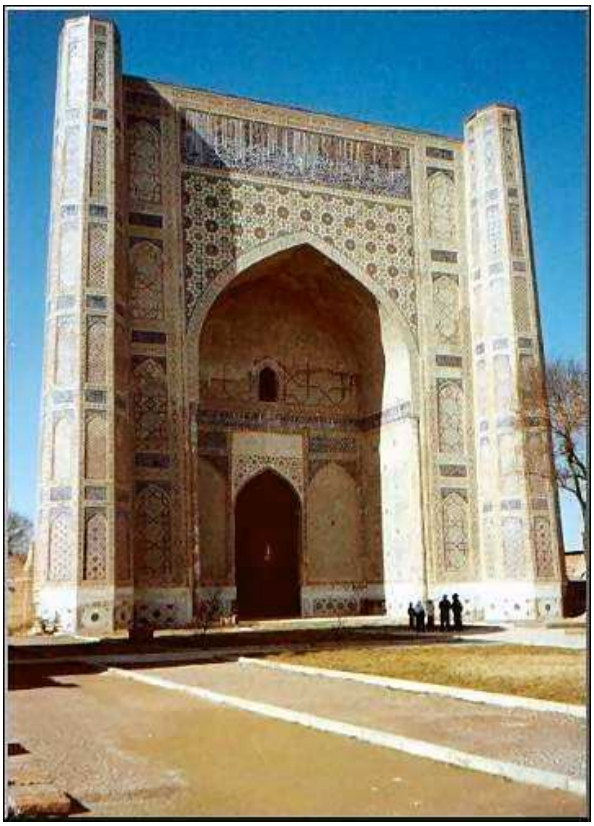
Aziza Abduragimova

Samarkand is one of the world's oldest inhabited cities. Its name means rock fort or town in Old Farsi. It has gone through many conquests, including one by Alexander the Great, who conquered it in the 4th century BC. Arabs, who brought Islam to the region, Turks, and Persians conquered it during the 6th through the 13th centuries. Mongols sacked the city under Genghis Khan and later under Khan Baraq. Then, in the 14th century, Tamerlane chose Samarkand to be the capital of his vast empire extending from India to Turkey. It wasn't until the late 15th century that Uzbeks took control of the city, but this too was not to last. The Persian Nadir Shah attacked and then abandoned the city in the 18th century. Later in the same century, emirs of Bukhara, another Uzbek city today, controlled Samarkand until Alexander Abramov of the Russian army took the city in 1868. After more violence, in 1925 Samarkand became the capital of



the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic for five years, until it was replaced by Tashkent, which remains the capital of Uzbekistan today. A city along the Silk Road with such a rich history, one that has lasted almost 3000 years, was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2001.

Despite its violent and unstable past, Samarkand is full of amazing historical sites, including the Bibi Khanum Mosque. This particular mosque has an interesting and unusual history. Tamerlane ordered its construction in the late 14th century. The mosque is



named after one of Tamerlane's wives, the Mongolian princess Sarai Mulk Bibi Khanum. ("Khanum" means Madame.) Since Tamerlane was getting old and weak, he wanted the construction of the mosque to be finished quickly, or so the story goes. It measured almost 170 by 110 meters (about 180 by 120 yards). The dome in its main room was 40 meters high. Tamerlane ordered the use of plundered precious stones from his conquests in India to be used in building the mosque. Its hasty construction caused it to begin collapsing very soon after completion in 1404. It lay in ruin until 1974, when it was rebuilt during Soviet times, though slightly reduced in size. Although the mosque that stands today is a new building, it is said that the bazaar near the mosque has not changed very much in the past five centuries. Tourists visiting Samarkand can see the rebuilt mosque and imagine what it once was in the time of Tamerlane on the way to the bazaar to experience some history!

Azeri Language

Cullen Reddy

Azeri is the official language of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Azərbaycan *Respublikası*. It is also known by other names, which include Azerbaijani, Azari, or Azeri/Azerbaijani Turkish. Iranians of Azeri decent may also refer to their dialect as "Türki." Not only spoken in Azerbaijan and Iran, the language finds it self in communities in the neighboring nations of Georgia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Russia, Syria, Turkey, and Ukraine. Azeris do not have a standard script in which to write their language. Depending on the geographic location and the influences from boarding countries, Azeri is written in a number of alphabets. For example, Iranians of Azeri origin write with a modified Arabic script while Azeris in the north of Azerbaijan, where Russians invaded in the 19th century, the Cyrillic alphabet is commonplace. However, most who live in Azerbaijan have been using the Latin alphabet since the country's independence. Approximately 6.5 million speakers live in Azerbaijan; estimates for those who live in Iran are significantly higher, but vary too much to be reliable. Additionally, Azeri is one of Iraq's four official languages due to the sizable Turkmen population.

"Depending on the geographic location and the influences from boarding countries, Azeri is written in a number of alphabets ."

Azeri is a Turkic language in the Altaic family. Of all Turkic languages, Turkish is the most reputable. Other languages that belong to the Turkic branch include Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Tatar, Turkmen, and Uzbek. The Turkic language branch is in general characterized by agglutination, the use of suffices, and often by vowel harmony, a phenomenon that creates a patterning of vowels within words, although Azeri itself for the most part shows now sign of vowel harmony.

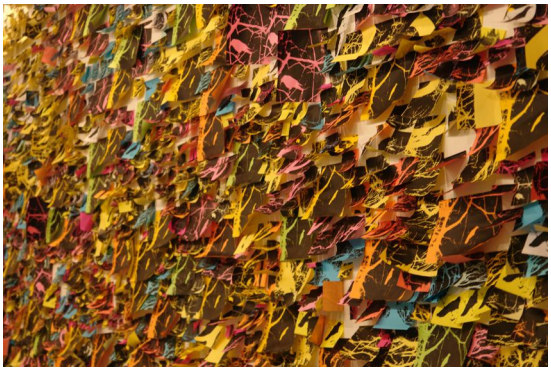
Play Revisited

Haroldo Higa / Ardan Özmenoğlu

Kuratiert von/Curated by Katerina Valdivia Bruch

Eröffnung/Opening: April 4, 18.00 h

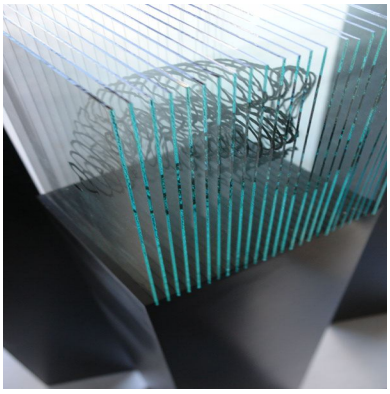
The exhibition "Play Revisited" focuses on a re-interpretation of play. Play as encounter, action, activity, competition, but also winners and losers, childhood and dreams. Each play has a beginning and an end, it could be seen as a collective or non-collective action, mostly arbitrary. Considering play as a game means that there are rules, different levels, and repetition of some acts within a certain time-space frame. But, why "Play revisited"? It means to redefine and adapt the role of play to one's creative activity and purposes.



Haroldo Higa (Lima, 1969) uses tin toys as a means to express his thoughts as an adult man. They are reflections on fragile reality mixed with some taste of humour and irony. The series of prints entitled "Tin Toys" are influenced by the book "1000 Tin Toys" by Teruhisa Kitahara (Taschen Ed.), in which old tin toys from mid twentieth century are portrayed. Collection's toys with brilliant colours and metallic surfaces, usually registered as childhood memories, are presented in black and white xylographies which re-interpret the origi-

nal context. With the group of sculptures "Souvenirs Cremosos", the artist re-sizes the original small souvenirs in large scale sculptures, which give the small gifts an importance and strengthens its meaning. These sculptures are based on indigenous and Spanish based religion still visible in Andean Peruvian culture. Originally, they used to be ritual objects that have become typical souvenirs and have lost their original purpose through mass production.

In Haroldo´s works, these objects lose their original value due to the material in which they have been created: expanded polystyrene, for industrial and domestic use, synthetic, artificial, light and fragile. Haroldo says: "In this material I found the soft, the fragile, the volatile, the insignificant, the human". The material used for mass production becomes unique through individual sculptures.



Turkish artist Ardan Özmenoğlu (Ankara, 1979) creates her own original work by referring to mass production. Post-it screen prints with famous faces are displayed on a wall as a huge coloured pattern. The artist plays with the role of women in history of art: a portrait of Warhol´s *Marilyn*, Frida Kahlo, or da Vinci´s *Gioconda*. Furthermore, Ardan puts herself in the same spot of a huge number of small post-it notes. Through serialisation technique faces become blurry, insignificant, anonymous. Repetition intensifies the faces and with this they are, at the same time, visible and invisible.

Her sculptures are also based on the same technique, in this case through several layers and prints glass prints. There is a relationship from two dimensional (printed surface) to three dimensional (glass surface). The surface is the visible support, but also part of the image. It is also a fragmented surface of transparency and semi transparency through many layers, which act as a whole in the serialisation. Ardan´s installations play with the space and the interstices of architecture. The unique image is not important, the collective grouping makes them visible as a whole image. In Ardan´s paper installation, the wall is the canvas, post-its are not just notes, they reveal the face of the whole image.

Exhibition dates: April 5th – May 10th, 2008





Sufism in Turkey

Krystell Jimenez

The history of Sufism in Anatolia dates back many centuries. There is one order in particular that has gained great notoriety, and that is the Mevlevi Order. The Mevlevi's are an order that follow the teachings of Mawlana Jalal al-Din Muhammad Rumi, a 13th century Muslim poet, jurist and theologian. Though originally from Balkh, present-day Afghanistan, Rumi lived and died in Konya, in present-day Turkey. It is in Konya where the Mevlevi Sufi Order formed and spread to other parts of the region.

In Konya, Rumi became a teacher after he took on the position as the head of a madrassah upon the death of his father. In addition to teaching, Rumi composed numerous poems, books, and various other writings. It is due in large part to the unique style and depth of his poetry that many in the world remember him. Given his many other accomplishments and contributions to the fields of Islamic law and theology, it is no wonder that he impressed his contemporaries and amassed such a great following. However, it is important to note that it was not likely that Rumi had a large cadre of disciples under his care during his lifetime. Furthermore, it was not until after his death, in December of 1273, that the Mevlevi Order was officially established and the rites formally organized.

After the death of Rumi, his followers and, most importantly, his descendants saw fit to formally organize the principles of Mevlevi into an official order. Upon the establishment of the Mevlevi Order, the order began to codify it practices and principles. Of all the Mevlevi practices and principles, none is as famous as the act of sema, which is according to the Mevlevi's an act of dhikr or remembrance of God. Sema refers to the well-known ritual in which the participants, wearing long robes and a specific hat, twirl with arms raised. Though it may seem to be only a mystical and trance-like dance with no particular form, the Mevlevi sema is actually a carefully choreographed and highly symbolic ritual. The participants twirl in a circle around the presiding Sheikh like planets around the sun. The white robes are symbols of death, since the ultimate goal for the Mevlevi Order, like all other Sufi orders, is the annihilation of self and union with the divine.

The Mevlevi Order became an important part of Ottoman society. When Mehmet I Çelebi, a descendent of Rumi through the marriage of Devlet Hatun, descendent of Sultan Veled son of Rumi, and Bayezid I, became Sultan of the Empire in 1413, the ties between the Ottoman rulers and the Mevlevi Order were strengthened further. The Mevlevi's also continued to play a great role in Ottoman politics. In particular, the Mevlevi lodge in Galata in Istanbul, which one can still visit today, is known to have had ties to various



political figures. However, two years after the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 923, all Sufi orders were officially disbanded. Nonetheless, Rumi's shrine in Konya was allowed to open as a museum shortly thereafter and the mayor of Konya was prevailed upon to allow the performance of the sema, albeit as a folkloric expression rather than a spiritual one.

Despite the initial repression of the Mevlevi Order for political reasons, it has undergone something of the revival in recent decades. The Mevlevi sema is still performed in Konya, as well as in cities throughout Turkey. Some people have criticized such performances for being simply a show put on for tourists, but, despite these debates, the Mevlevi Order continues to be a symbol of the lasting influence that Sufism has had on Turkish culture as well as the special niche that it occupies within Turkish society. The graceful circles of the sema seem to speak to the eternal sway and fascination this rite has had over generations.

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Peaceful Solutions to Minority Problems in Bulgaria

Gokce Ozaydin

Since the end of World War I, minority rights have been a big problem among countries. After the collapse of multi-national empires, nation-states occurred due to the nationalist movements of French Revolution and so that minorities in nation-state became controversial. Although, democratizations and human rights have substantially improved the minority rights, in the near past and even today the minority rights have been the key issue affecting the bilateral relations between countries. For example, after the WWII, Bulgarian-Turkey relations paralleled to the situation of Turks in Bulgaria. Both countries have a common history and culture from Ottoman Empire Time, however, self interests of countries forced them to separate instead of protecting this cultural link.

The world polarized in the Cold War years, and Bulgaria and Turkey were in different blocks. There had been times when Bulgaria recognized existence of minorities and guaranteed their rights due to the Stalinist theory of respecting ethnic identities within the socialist system. At the time, Bulgaria was seen as the crucial strategic point for the future socialist revolution in Turkey and the Turkish minority would have to be trained to become the future mean of the revolution (Marushıakova &Popov,nd, p.10). However, Bulgaria's tolerance and respect to the rights of Turkish community left its place to discrimination and assimilation policies since 1960s to the end of the 1980s. In the Zhivkov government period, these assimilation policies reached its peak with a campaign known as Revival Process. A formal procedure was implemented to force all minorities to change their names to Bulgarian names. Turkish language in public was forbidden. Nobody was allowed to visit institutions like hospitals and banks without identity card on which the name of the citizen had to be a Bulgarian name. The traditional and religious rituals (circumcision, fasting during the month of Ramazan, sacrificing in Eid'ul Adha (Kurban) Festival,) traditional dresses, and even Turkish folk music were banned (Petkova, 2002). The mosques were closed and destroyed. This policy went as far as destroying Muslim graveyards and changing the names of dead people in the municipal registries (Zhelyazkova, 1997, p.4).

Bulgaria enforced these assimilation policies because the population of the Turks was escalating and they perceived this as a threat. By these policies Bulgarian government tried to force them to migrate. If they enforce them to immigrate, the Bulgarian government handled their properties. The reason of Bulgaria's ethnic humiliations was the anxiety of loosing autonomy in Bulgaria. Bulgaria was afraid that if the Turks in Bulgaria wanted autonomy, Turkey would help these Turks to separate. In addition, Bulgaria had economic, political and social problems, so the Communist party called the citizens' attention to the Turks in Bulgaria (Demirtas-Coskun, 2001, p. 37-39).

"Bulgaria recommended that the Turks be given the rights to choose their own names, practice Islam and use their language in public and this led to a decrease in ethnic tensions considerably."

However, Turkey and the rest of the world couldn't recognize the brutal situations of the Turks in Bulgaria. Because of the hard winter and Bulgaria's prevention of the floating information to the outside of the country Turkey had good relations with Bulgaria this term and couldn't believe the claims. On the other hand, Turkey also had similar problems with Greece, Iraq, Iran and Syria and didn't want to deal with a new problem (Demirtas-Coskun, 2001, p.30-31). Moreover, it was obviously clear that the world had not showed effective response to the discrimination in Bulgaria. NATO's inability to solve the problem could demonstrate that geo-political alliances were not always effective in disputes between small powers (Dimitrov, 2000, p.12).

On May 6, 1989, more than 300 Turks in Bulgaria started hunger strike and demonstrations on the streets. As a result of increase in the media attention, Turkey believed the claims about the assimilation campaign. On February 22, 1985, Turkey sent a note that suggested a new emigration agreement to the Bulgarian government but the proposal was rejected. Turkey answered by confining bilateral relation in trade. Turkey stopped the electricity import from

Bulgaria and many cultural interactions were halted as well.. Furthermore, Turkey had tried every opportunity to hold Bulgarian responsible and brought the issue in the international area (Ekici, 2005, p.9). Turkey had given 10 notes to Bulgaria on May 1989. The Bulgarian Head of State Todor Zhivkov asked Turkey to open its borders (Dimitrova, 1998) However, this immigration was not based on people's willingness. The Bulgarian government forced the people to immigrate even if it meant the separation of families and confiscating their properties. As Dimitrova stated (1998, p.2), from June 3 to August 21, 1989, 311,862 ethnic Turks left Bulgaria. These shameful immigration policies of Bulgaria caused big reactions in international area. Almost 50 country reproached Bulgaria (Dogan, 1990, p.62).

Since the fall of the Communist regime in November 1989, Bulgaria felt alone and tried to regain the trust of her neighbors and the powerful countries. The assimilation policies portrayed Bulgaria as a brutal country. Bulgaria tried to improve her image in the international area. In addition, Bulgaria felt in a security vacuum after the Cold War and tried to be a member of NATO and the European Union. Bulgaria had also realized that having good relations with West depends on the bilateral relations with Turkey (Demirtas-Coskun, 2001, p.30). Turkey is the mother-country state of the Turks in Bulgaria, so it has a significant role in Bulgarian policies (Dimitrov, 2000, p.80). Bulgaria changed his policy; she gave up communist policies and turned to western modernization and democratization therefore the treatment of the Turkish minority has improved substantially. Bulgaria recommended that the Turks be given the rights to choose their own names, practice Islam and use their language in public and this led to a decrease in ethnic tensions considerably (Koinova, 1999, p.13). In May, 1992 friendship, good neighborliness and security agreements were signed between the two countries. Bulgarian President Stoyanov visited Turkey in 1997, he apologized for the assimilation campaigns and two countries signed a military cooperation agreement deal with defense, security and technology. The bilateral relations developed through the Balkan crisis. The governments of the two countries acted together as a peacekeeper in the region. They joined South-Eastern Europe Multi-national Force (SEEMNF) on January 12 (Demirtas-Coskun, 1999). Both Turkey and Bulgaria also signed a co-operation program in science, culture and education for the period of 2004 and 2006.

To sum up, the development of bilateral relations between Bulgaria and Turkey in the past decades had indicated that minority issues are not insoluble obstacles to good relations and they can be solved without using military forces.

Headscarf Issue in Turkey

Mike Spanton

As an American in Turkey, a place I later found to be perfectly secular while still holding a strong Muslim identity, I arrived with more than a few preconceived notions of what I would be facing so far away from home. I grew up in a quiet suburb in the central valley, where I could probably count the Muslims I had met in my life before college on one hand. The hysteria after 9/11 suddenly put a formerly invisible group to me into the absolute forefront of the American psyche. Studying abroad in a primarily Muslim country seemed an appropriate step in learning about a group I knew virtually nothing about.

Now I understand that Turkey can hardly represent the amazing diversity of Muslims around the world, yet I feel the headscarf issue represents a certain dynamism that many do not realize exists within the Muslim world.

According to longstanding government secular code, the headscarf is not to be worn within public buildings and universities. The Turkish government enforces this as a necessary precaution to protect the secular and democratic nature of the state. Yet the banning of the headscarf as a means of protecting democracy has ignited a debate on free speech most likely unfamiliar to Western observers. An interesting facet to Turkish politics is the fact that, if anything, allowing the wearing of the headscarf is the more democratic move for Turkish society. An overwhelming majority of Turkish citizens claim

some degree of a Muslim identity. For virtually every individual I met during my stay in Turkey, their Muslim faith represented a significant part of their private and social identities. A building movement has been advocating allowing one's religion identity to be comfortably expressible in all factors of life, outside the traditional confines of the home. Yet Turkey still enforces laws which limit free speech, specifically those actions which would undermine the secular nation of the state. However, rapid changes are occurring, and social pressure could lift the ban on the headscarf in a matter of years. Although the staunch defender of secularism, the immensely powerful Turkish military, still holds a significant sway in society, the voters are quickly changing this fact. Religious parties are quickly coming to dominate Turkish politics, even though they continue to advocate secular ideals. Notable developments include the wives of both the president and the prime minister wearing the headscarf, and the lifting in February of the ban on wearing scarves in universities.

To many, myself included, allowing women to choose to wear the headscarf as they please is a simple step in allowing the free speech, identification, and expression of a basic aspect of a culture. Yet on April 1st the highest prosecutor in Turkey issued charges accusing the religious ruling party of violating the secular nature of the constitution, a move which could easily throw out the president and prime minister. Indeed, this would not be an unprecedented move, as the Turkish military has moved to throw out supposedly unsecular institutions in the past, to the point of hanging one former prime minister.

So how does an issue so simple as the wearing of a piece of cloth grow to point of possibly bringing down a popular government? To understand the issue, one must take into account a good deal of history that has gotten Turkey to this point. The current Turkish state grew from the ruins of the fallen Ottoman Empire following World War I. Fearful of falling victim to the disunity and outside pressure which brought down the Ottomans, the Turks sought to form a non-religious government founded upon a Western value system. Under the direction of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the father of the current Turkish state, a series of reform packages were put into place to overcome the standards of the former Ottoman Empire. Latin script replaced the Arabic script in the Turkish language, the head scarf and the fez were banned in public, and religious figures were separated from government. Yet an intense fear of the old ways remained, culminating in military coups on four separate occasions when the constitution or ruling government was not deemed secular enough.

It would appear that Turkey now faces another one of these moments with a historically (if not immediately vocal) religious executive government and a public movement towards a stronger public incorporation of religious values. In trend with Turkish history, and indeed even in the past few years, a coup by the secular military would appear imminent. What is notable this time, however, is how the current situation differs from the past. First, the religiously aligned parties hold considerably more social influence now than in previous administrations. Surprisingly, they have been considerably more successful in approaching Western Europe in gaining European Union membership than their predecessors, and enjoy considerable popular support among Turkish citizens. The current administration has gained broad support through poverty alleviation programs and by increasing overall living standards within Turkey.

The secular establishment argues against a possible "tyranny of the majority" that could serve to undermine the history and foundation of the Turkish state. To make drastic changes now would be to oppose fundamental aspects of Turkish society. While many consider this unsettling, the power of social forces may be too strong to be held back.

The head scarf issues symbolizes a movement allowing an individuals religious identity to be expressed while continuing to participate in government. Again, a surprising factor to many is the that a broader expression of religious self-identity in government may be the more democratic choice. The women I met who wore the headscarf in Turkey did so as an expression of and adherence to their Muslim identity, not as a form of repression. The legal battle over the next few months will most likely be very complicated, and will rock the government and its leaders. There still exists a possibility that, if sufficient charges are levied, the executive branch will be removed from power and arrested. While I am hopeful that no major changes are needed in the Turkish political system, it is clear that the headscarf represents much more than a simple piece of cloth.

Turkey, the AKP, and the EU: A Brief Overview

Ayse Gurdal-Friend

The national narrative of Turkey's emergence into the international state system following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire during WWI has a been a tumultuous struggle over the structures of democracy as a result of the ever increasing tensions regarding the Turkish brand of secularism. Now that the Turkish government has begun its membership negotiations for the EU starting in 2005 the country is faced with finding solutions to fundamental questions of democratic governance. At a time when prejudice against Islam is abound, a political party is accused of concealing political Islamist tendencies won both seats in the heads of government and the majority of parliament seats in a country that is 99% Muslim.



Ataturk, a young military officer from Salonika (now Thessaloniki, Greece,) in 1923, formally established the republic of Turkey after the war of independence, which ejected the French, British, and Greek armies from the remaining Anatolian core of the Ottoman Empire. As the new Turkish government consolidated its ideological definitions for Turkish identity and citizenship it implemented a series of cultural and social reforms. The aim of the cultural and social reforms was to modernize Turkey and catch up with the West, not only through cultural change but also technological advancement. For example, Ataturk's language reform consisted of a sharp and sudden break from Arabic script to Latin letters. Additionally, western dress was mandatory in the new republic; the veil was abolished and men were required to wear bowler hats in place of the fez. Ataturk instituted a constitution that proclaimed secularism, however the oppression of religion expression resulted as part of its secular push. Instead of separating religion and politics the government laid a heavy hand in interfering with religion in the public and private sectors.

Since 1970 various Islamic based parties have emerged but have been disbanded and outlawed by the government with the support of the Turkish military. Presently, the ruling *Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi* (Justice and Development Party/AKP), which is informally an Islamic based political party, has come under fire and faces being shut down. The AKP, in a sweeping victory, won the majority of parliament seats and AKP members Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Abdullah Gul won both the Prime Minister and President positions in the summer elections of 2007.

As AKP was confirmed in its popularity after the most recent elections, it has shown no clear signs of religious fundamentalism and has in fact worked vigorously to institute reforms in order to meet the criteria of joining the European Union. A new bill to legalize the donning of the headscarf by women in universities that was brought to parliament has brought new energy to AKP's oppositional momentum. Rumors that AKP has plans to establish *sharia* law in place of the constitution continue to run abound in the press, parliamentary debates, and dinner table discussions.

Now that at least 70 AKP members face court charges of seeking to undermine the strength and integrity of the Turkish state, the debate of the limits of religion in politics has returned to the forefront of debate and turmoil. A country that straddles both Europe and Asia continues to try to define itself amidst contradiction and disagreement over its identity. What will come out of this debate will not only affect Turkey internally, but will play a significant role in its future regarding its acceptance in the EU.



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Kandovan

Uldouz Berenjforoush

Azerbaijan province in Iran. In December 2007, Kandovan was featured in *National Geographic*. Tourists from all around the world come to see the specially carved houses inside the rocks which date back to the pre-Islamic era . It is located in the northern slopes of a valley at the foothills of Mount Sahand. Kandovan's exceptional beauty lies in its fabulous 3000-year old rocky settlements, which are carved into the mountain and are reminders of Sahand's volcanic eruptions from the early tertiary period to the early quaternary period. These beautiful houses usually have many floors, and the windows are decorated with colorful glass. The architecture of these carved houses was designed with much intelligence. An example of this is is that houses face southward so their inhabitants can enjoy sunlight during the day. They are cool in the summer and warm in the winter. A river flowing down Sahand's peak passes through the valley, creating a number of natural springs which also adds to the beauty of this vacation spot. To add to such an extraordinary experience, tourists can stay at Kandovan Tourism Cliff Rocky Hotel, located at the heart of Kandovan. It is the first of its kind in Iran and the second in the world after Turkey's Rocky Hotel. This 5-star hotel was created with much detail, mostly hand-made to resemble the houses carved in the Rocks. Each room takes a long time to build because the architecture of this hotel precisely carve the rocks to build this breath-taking resort. Kandovan's clean air and beautiful scenery makes it a great getaway from the city life.





Izmir

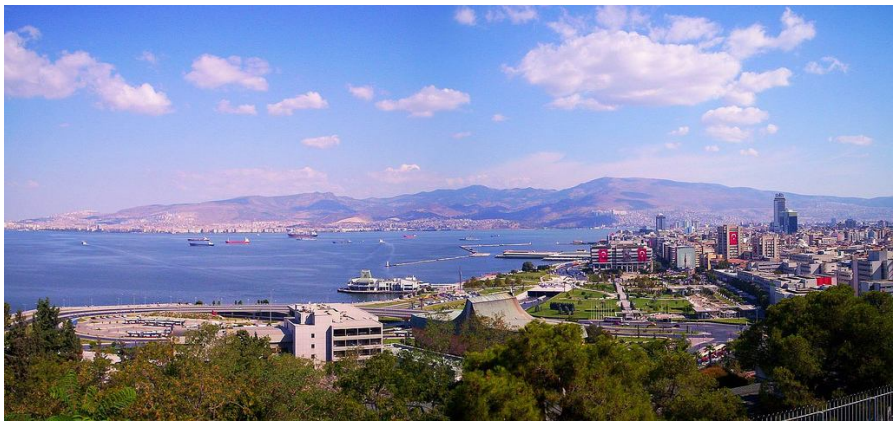
Zorbey Ozdilek

The famous Turkish poet Cahit Kulebi writes, "Izmir's sea has the scent of a girl, its girls smell like the sea, and its streets have the scent of both its girls and the sea." Long before him, the ancient historian Herodotus also wrote about the city, noting that it was founded "under the most sublime blue sky and in the most remarkable climate of the world." If you ask any ordinary Turk to list the top reasons why they like Izmir, most will agree with both Kulebi and Herodotus, as they will surely mention the weather, the waters and the beautiful people. While I do agree with them, I know from personal experience that Izmir's appeal is in no sense limited to these three factors.

Izmir is the most liberal city in Turkey and it is the country's third largest city. It is also a leader in industry, having the second largest port in the country, and many large factories. In its 5000-year history, people of all religions and ethnicities have

coexisted in Izmir, the "pearl of Aegean." Most claim that Izmir's weather, waters, handsome boys and beautiful girls have something to do with the city's timelessness.

People visiting Izmir for the first time notice that the residents of Izmir tend to move slower than the rest of their countrymen. This is because the people of Izmir know they are surrounded by all kinds of beauty and take their time to appreciate the city's offerings. The sunny, gentle climate of Izmir encourages you to take the longer route when walking and you can't help but smile as the wind softly brushes back your hair. The sea is the perfect compliment to the weather and is an integral part of the city. The calm waters pacify ones soul. And on top of it all, everywhere you look, you see stunningly beautiful people. It is easy to see why people of Izmir tend to be laid back, a bit dreamy and take a special interest in leisurely activities. And thus, they also love to eat.



The majority of Turkish people are addicted to Turkish food and disinterested in trying new cuisines or adventurous restaurants. I don't blame them, especially those from Izmir. Izmir is home to a unique cuisine formed by a mixture of Aegean and Anatolian ingredients, prepared in ways invented by the city's cosmopolitan population. For example, one of my favorite restaurants in Izmir, located in the old bazaar, uses olive oil made right outside the city, while they have their butter shipped to them from Urfa, a town hundreds miles to the east near the Iraqi border. The result is a wonderful combination of tastes and textures, like meat and rice stuffed artichokes (Etli Enginar Dolmasi). Izmir's cuisine also includes kebab-style favorites like Izmir Koftesi (Izmir Meatballs) while incorporating lots of vegan friendly options. The people of Izmir are known for their love of eating almost all kinds boiled or steamed vegetables, using only lemon juice, olive oil and salt for dressing as they set free their inner herbivores.

As Izmir is a sea-town, fish and other sea creatures are also local culinary favorites. Simply grilled on charcoal and served, once again, with lemon juice, olive oil and salt, fresh Aegean fish is most often enjoyed in restaurants that line the shores of the city.

If you follow this shoreline you will find many beaches and resort towns along the coast, the most famous one being Cesme, located some 30 miles to the west of the city. The turquoise waters of Cesme and its small villas are home to a huge chunk of Izmir's population when summer rolls around. Almost everyone who has a car deserts Izmir in the summer for nearby beach towns, as Izmir tends to get a bit too hot in this season. Until recently, it was common practice for movie theatres and most restaurants to shut down during summer months as the city's population dwindled, but this has changed in the last decade. Nowadays, those who work in Izmir often choose to commute to the city in the summer instead of taking long vacation breaks.

This "summer town" trend has helped Izmir's surrounding beach towns to develop as major destinations for both local and international tourists, offering vacation options suited for everyone. For example, in Cesme, you can choose to spend your idle days in secluded beaches with your books and sleep on a hammock at night under the stars. If that is not your cup of tea, you can fill your cup with vodka as you dance away the day in a beach club, finding yourself still in your swimsuit as the day becomes night. Hey, at least you can have a quick dip in the sea to sober up before changing into your nightlife attire. I recommend you try all vacation options the city has to offer, including world-class windsurfing in the nearby town of Alacati.

If you have a chance to visit Izmir, I encourage you to take your time as you enjoy the city, just like the natives do. While a few days might be enough to get a basic feel of the city and its surrounding areas, Izmir is a lively city that will you entertained for any length of stay.

Izmir is best enjoyed in spring, accompanied by new friends and a glass of raki.



The Cityscape of Baku

Aleksei Lund

Baku has not retained its cosmopolitan character in the last twenty years. The demographic predominance of Azerbaijanis, who formed a majority of the city's population only relatively late in the Soviet period, has continued unabated since the 1960s. The dislocations of the perestroika period—economic collapse and more importantly the conflict over Karabakh—exacerbated these tendencies, as growing numbers of Armenians and Russian left the city, to be replaced by Azeris fleeing from Armenia and the growing swath of Armenian occupied territories as the Karabakh conflict unfolded. While the development of the Azerbaijani oil industry has renewed international interest in the city and revitalized the expatriate community there, the situation today is still a far cry from the turn of the twentieth century, when Baku produced one-half of global oil supplies and attracted hundreds of thousands of laborers from throughout the Transcaucasus region, other areas of the Tsarist Empire as well as from northern Iran.

Nevertheless, the cityscape of Baku retains many traces of the city's past; owing to the durability of the media involved (primarily buildings), the architectural layout and city planning provide a more revealing history of than much of the historiography produced in the post-Soviet period. The historical core of the city, the Inner City (İçəri şəhər), remains the most picturesque area of Baku, elevated to the status of a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2000. With external wall, narrow, winding alleys and ancient "caravansaray"s, the Inner City evokes Azerbaijan's roots in medieval Islamic architecture, which dominated the region prior to the final Russian conquest in 1828. The centerpieces of the Inner City, the Palace of the Shirvanshah, located within the city walls, and the Maiden's Tower, located just outside of them, remain the most unambiguous markers of Azerbaijan's cultural affinities with its Islamic neighbors. To be sure, there are many statues of artistic and literary figures claimed by Iranians and Azerbaijanis alike to be found throughout Baku, but the heroic proportions of those statues speak more the nationality policies of the Soviet Union than they do to the traditional culture of Azerbaijan. As such, the position of the Inner City within Baku reveals the greater anxieties of national self-understanding; it is the most traditional and "Azeri" part of Baku, but also the smallest and most circumscribed section of the city. Owing to its architectural distinctiveness, to say nothing of its walls, one gains a clear perception



of entering and exiting it.

Beyond the walls of the Inner City lie the districts dating from the Oil Boom period (1870~1900) and the construction of the Soviet City (largely initiated beginning in the 1930s). While architecturally distinct, these districts cannot be easily separated owing to the Soviet occupation and continued use of the historic buildings of the Oil Boom period. Establishing a precedent for the post-Soviet period, the personal mansion of Zeynal Taghiyev, the foremost Azeri entrepreneur, as well as that of the Rothschild's agent, were converted into museums. Similarly, other higher cultural institutions, such as the Baku Philharmonic date from the pre-Soviet period. The remainder of Baku's architectural ensemble, differs little from other Soviet cities, consisting of large, uniform apartment buildings in varying degrees of repair. Similarly, the tall apartment buildings under construction (even four years ago one could not look in any direction without seeing several high-rises under construction) compare with those being built

in the residential districts of Moscow and St. Petersburg. In its architectural ensemble, Baku, no less than Kiev, Tashkent or Moscow, remains part of Soviet space.

The unresolved tensions of Azerbaijani national identity, however, are best revealed by the statues to be found throughout the city. To be sure, the most conspicuous symbol of Soviet power, the statue of Lenin, as well as the statue of Sergei Kirov ("the Lenin of the Caucasus") overlooking the city, has long since been removed and replaced by the memorial of Martyrs' Lane, dedicated both to the victims of the Soviet massacre of January 20, 1990 (including at least one Slav) and those killed in the Karabakh conflict. One can hardly imagine a more assertive declaration of national independence. While the Independence Day of the first Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, May 28, 1918, is an official holiday, as well as the name of a street downtown, little space has been dedicated to the commemoration of the ADR, to say nothing of its most prominent leader, Mammed Emin Rasulzade. Alexander Pushkin still enjoys both a street and statue in his honor. In a particularly ironic juxtaposition, Lermontov Street, named after the nineteenth century Russian poet, meets with Sheikh Shamil Street, named in honor of the mystic who led the most powerful military resistance to the Russian conquest of the Caucasus.

While many of the important markers of earlier periods of the history of Baku have been lost in time, a simple walk through Baku reveals many of the different layers of the city's history and the contributions made by different ethnic groups. While one may regret this, or the loss of Baku's cosmopolitanism, one last site suggests that this may not be so bad in and of itself. The cemeteries of Baku still provide an eerie monument to the diversity of Baku's population; Russians, Ukrainians, Jews, Poles, Georgians, Lezgins, Persians and Azeri-Turks are all to be found. However, the largest cemetery maintains separate sections for Muslims, Jews and Christians. For all of the cosmopolitanism of Baku's past, it was in many ways a city in which different people lived aside one another and not together. For better or worse, Baku is not only the main city of Azerbaijan, but the main Azerbaijani city, more so now than it has ever been.

Qizil Bash in Afghanistan

Mustafah Shamsher

Although the nation of Afghanistan is predominated by Persian and Pashtun culture, the country nevertheless maintains a rich Turkic history akin to its neighbors to the north. Many of the medieval rulers of what is present day Afghanistan were in fact Turks, such as the Ghasnavid Empire and its infamous king Mahmood of Ghazni as well as Nadir Shah, founder of the Afsharid Dynasty. These rulers held an appreciation for both their native Turkish traditions and the Persian culture to which the local populace belonged. However, Turkish culture and language were eventually diluted into the local Persian culture with the fade of Turkish rulers. Nevertheless, Afghanistan maintains a strong Turkic legacy and presence. Turkish influence can be seen the clothing, food, and several words in Dari (Afghan Persian) are of Turkish origin. Additionally, many people still bare Turkish family names such as Seljuki. Currently, over 4 million Turkic people live in Afghanistan, including Uzbeks, Turkmens and a few Kazakh and Kyrgyz communities. One of the lesser know groups is the Qizilbash, who actually

"Finding themselves as a minority in a new country, the Qizilbash were turned into political scapegoats at times by the government."

descend from a confederation of Azeri Turks, specifically the Safavids and their allies, who controlled Persia (Iran) in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries.

Qizilbash literally means "red heads," derived from the red turbans their forefathers wore on their conquest of Persia(Iran). Safavid rule of Persia (Iran). lasted into the early 18th century, however Qizilbash communities did not settle in Afghanistan until the debacle of the Safavid Dynasty. With the old rulers gone, the Qizilbash become allies to the newly arisen Nadir Shah, a Turkmen, who began campaigns into Afghan and Indian territories in the mid 18th century. Qizilbash were used not only for military assistance, but for clerical work as well. Since very few people in the regions outside of Persia were literate in Persian, many of the Qizilbash became scribes to keep official records. However, Nadir Shah's grip on the area would eventually slip and in 1747 Ahmad Shah Durani, a Pashtun from Kandahar, rebelled and created what is today the state of Afghanistan. Despite finding themselves under new rule, the Qizilbash that remained in Afghanistan chose to settle. Finding themselves as a minority in a new country, the Qizilbash were turned into political scapegoats at times by the government. They were easy targets, because they adhered to the Shia School of thought in Islam, as opposed to the Hanifi School, to which most Afghans belong. In the late 19th century, when Great Britain was attempting to colonize Afghanistan, King Abdul Arahman Khan blamed all Qizilbash for aiding the English and compelled them to wear red turbans to distinguish them from the rest of Afghan society. Even as recently as September of 1999, when a bomb was set off in attempts to assistant Taliban leader Mullah Omar, Qizilbash in Kandahar were immediately arrested, even though it turned out to be an assassination attempt by rival Taliban members. These are a couple examples of the trials the Qizilbash have endured, but for the most part they have maintained good relations with their fellow Afghans and have even held high position in Afghanistan's Government. For example, King Amanullah's secretary of state was Qizilbash and a former mayor of Kabul during communist rule was Qizilbash as well. These positions were not difficult to obtain, because Qizilbash are considered to be Farsiwan (Persians) like many other Afghans and not outsiders. A British historian visiting Afghanistan in the 19th century stated, that the Qizilbash were "a colony of Turks, ... (speaking) Persian, and among themselves Turkish...in fact Persianized Turks." Today, Qizilbash in Afghanistan no longer speak Turkish, but primarily speak Persian and in some cases Pashto as well.

At their peak, the Qizilbash numbered approximately 100,000 prior to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, however today they number no more than 40,000. Qizilbash usually marry within themselves which keeps their numbers low, however, time to time will marry other ethnic groups, even if they are not Shia. Outside of Afghanistan, there are several thousand Qizilbash refugees who now live in Europe and America. There are several Qizilbash families that reside here in the Bay Area, many of whom congregate in the Muhammadiyya Mosque of Fremont, which was founded by Qizilbash residing in America as a house worship and a community center.



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Istanbul Diaries

Naz Nami

I was born in Istanbul. A city that connects Asia and Europe. A city that changed so many different identities, lastly named as *Istanbul*, which means “in or to the city” in ελληνικά (Greek).

I was born in Istanbul. For some, the place of birth may not mean more than an answer to retrieve passwords. But to me, Istanbul has been my mother, my father, and the most importantly my protector from evil eyes. I forgot to tell you: I belong to a family who carries evil beads everywhere. Evil eye bead is a protection from the envy of people which has the possibility of causing misfortune. When I was growing up, most unfortunate things that I came across was somehow due to an evil eye. Sickness due to evil eyes, Ayrilik (Separation) due to evil eye, and sometimes if they are unbearable, marriages due to evil eye.

I was born in Istanbul. And thats when a terrible evil eye stroke according to the most credible sources such as my grandmother. The place that I was going to be placed was either in Asia or Europe, raised as either Christian or Muslim, spoken in either Turkish or Greek. My identity then would certainly belong to the Western world with little pieces of Eastern elements. Finally, politics, which I don't want to get into. But, come on, EU, we love you.



I was born in Istanbul, a city which was commented



by a French author Lamartine, *If one had but a single glance to give the world, one should gaze on Istanbul.* Going back to the ghetto streets of *Kasimpasa* or luxury Mercedes cars of *Etiler*, I was fed with cotton candies of Yenikoy when my uncle took us everyweekend “to get some fresh air” of Bosphorous. I was living every one poverty, every one wealth, and every one love of the world, when I was reluctant to kiss a tall handsome boy behind the green bench so that neighbours wouldn't see us.

I was born in Istanbul, and winters were cold. It used to snow, and for me, skiing was sliding down the hills of my neighborhood with *Migros* plastic bags. It was incredibly inexpensive and drug prices were extremely high. I was prescribed antibiotics for an unimportant reason every week but somehow my grandfather's reciting *Fatiha* was working better than Penicillin. The lights went off for the second part of my House play when neighbors came to take me away. *The News*. Neighbors in Istanbul back then was our family. So, they had every right

to take care of me in the time of need.

I was born in Istanbul, just like my uncle. Every one of our relatives coming from different cities were envious of Istanbul Turkish that my uncle spoke. He had a wife who use to fry *Hamsi* with flour every Friday. My grandmother then would start talking about his mother who emmigrated from Selanik, Greece to Turkey. Then, I would tease him about his bald head, who would then tease me back as *Acem* (Iranian).

I was born in Istanbul, and here I can tell you all many other stories like this. But, like a proper *Istanbullu* lady, I will rather give you some advice instead. Wear evil eye bead if you get sick. If you want to get married, visit Telli Baba shrine in Istanbul. If you want to get a job, ask a family member instead of applying to jobs. Drink Raki and listen to Arabesk music if life is too hard, but don't forget, Ramadan comes, fast and ask forgiveness from Allah for all the sins. And, if you haven't already, **visit Istanbul**. Oh, before I forget, you don't have to be born in Istanbul to become *Istanbullu.* And, to be from Istanbul is to become Istanbul within.

Learn Some Words

Harbir Kaur

After living with an Azeri roommate while she was taking Turkish, I have enjoyed learning a mix of Azeri-Turkish for a while now. I have not been to any Turkic regions, nor have I taken any classes in Turkish. And in no way am I anywhere near fluency. But picking up words here and there has come in handy more times than I can remember. So, reader, here are some words that you can use in your daily adventures.

Salam/Merhaba...hello
Seni seviyorum...I love you
Necesiz?/Nasilsiniz?...How are you (formal)?
Iyi geceler...good night
Gule gule...See you soon
Yaxciyam/ Iyim...good
Ketab...book
Giz...girl
Oglan...boy
Evet...yes
Hyir...no
Lutfen...please
Evlen benimle...marry me
Bakmak...to look
Bu...this
Gece...night
yanliz...alone
Hayat...life
Danismak...to talk
Goz...eye
Araba...car
Guzel...beautiful



I hope they are useful to you or you enjoy popping them into your day-to-conversations (well, maybe not the marriage proposal).

A country where people sleep and wake up with soccer - Turkey

Emrehan Kirimli



If you ask a group of Turkish men what they are passionate for, the majority of them would say: Football (or soccer as US calls it) !



In Turkey, we sleep with soccer and we wake up with it. I do not know how many times my life ruined because Turkish national team or my club “Besiktas” lost an important match. And when I was going to stadium to watch a match with my friends, I remember we were all proud of what we are doing; we chanted slogans and sung anthems during our trip to the stadium.

In US, there are many sports which people are crazy for, but think about that: in Turkey we have only soccer. It is part of our lives, we are not watching it only to have fun like NBA supporters and we love our teams from our heart. In Turkey, we had many economic problems and soccer has been always a way for us to escape from our problems.

Because of this patience, when an important match approaches we call up players of our team as they were mythic heroes. However, during a match even the most loyal and kind fans will damn the failure of their players. You hear words such as :”For the love of God!”, “Son of donkey!”. And, imagine the atmosphere when the team scores.



If you have the time to visit Istanbul, try to buy a soccer ticket to see the magical atmosphere in the stadiums. You won’t regret.

Recipe: Gaiganakh-- South Azerbaijani Dessert



Serving size: 4 people

Ingredients:
1/2 teaspoon saffron powder
1/4 cup boiling water
1/2 cup sugar (Varies depending on preference of sweetness)
1 cup room temperature water
4 eggs
4 tablespoons flour
4 tablespoons milk or yogurt
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon cardamom
walnuts
butter

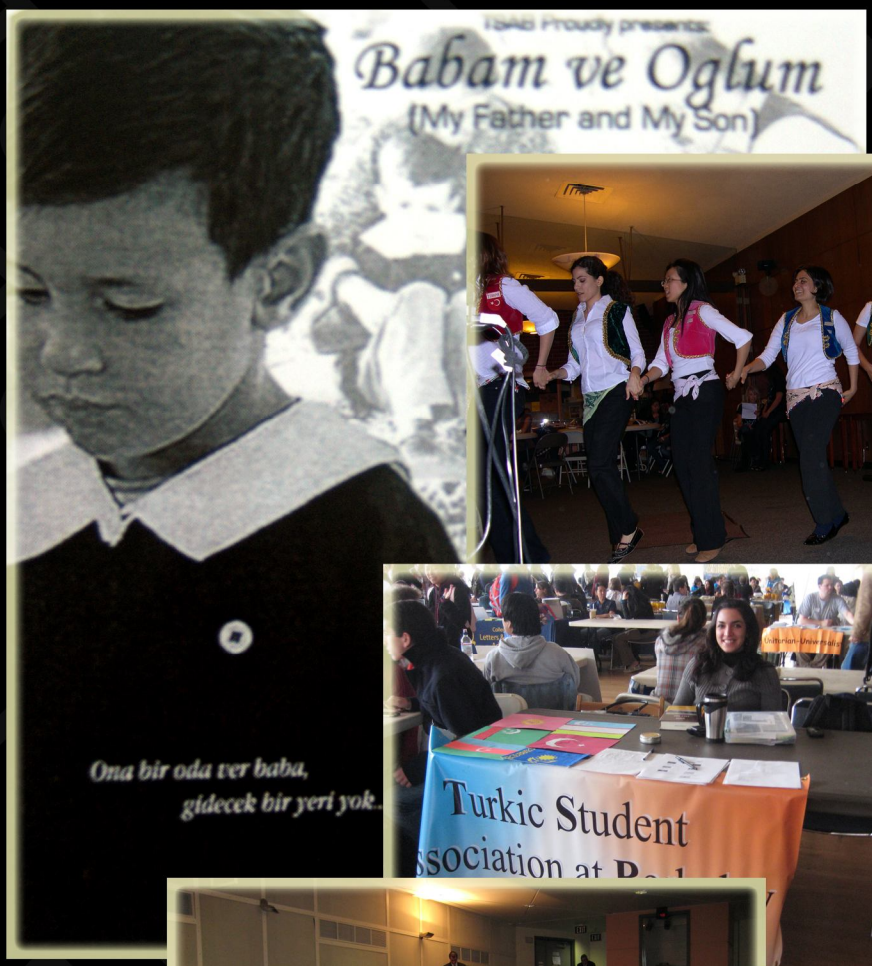
Get the saffron ready first. Add the saffron to the boiling water and cover for 30 minutes.Next, make the syrup by mixing the room temperature water and sugar together. Turn off the heat after the mixture boils. Add the saffron mixture to the syrup. Beat the eggs and add the milk or yogurt together and then add the flour. Turn on the heat and add a little bit of butter to the pan. Pour some of the mixture onto the pan to make a thin layer. Flip the mixture over so the other side would get cooked as well. Repeat until you are finished with the mixture. Add small pieces of walnut to the cooked mixture. Add cinnamon on top of that. Then add the syrup so it covers everything and top it all off with the cardamom. Serve and enjoy!

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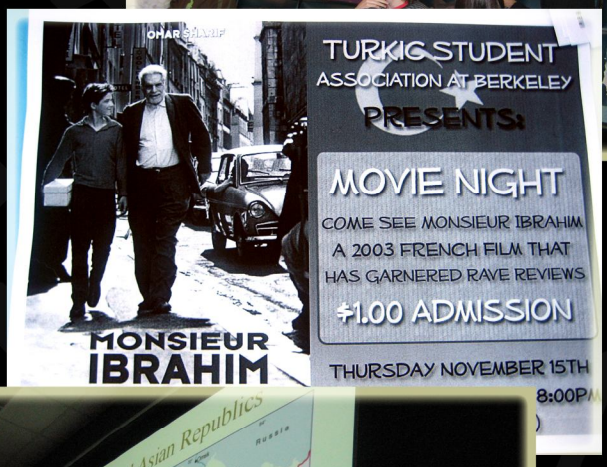
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