

Göksu Kunak:

AN(A)KARA and its ruins

WELCOME ! HOPE YOU ARE SAFE TODAY. IT'S 3:30 PM.

AN(A)KARA and its ruins is a sci-fi TV variety-show hosted by Gucci Chunk. The autobiographical solo text-based performative installation focuses on the late modernism of Turkey in relation to the city of Ankara and governmental politics. AN(A)KARA investigates the collapse and decay of an imaginary society with references to real absurdities such as nationalist monuments and TV variety morning shows of Turkey. The name plays with the words "Ankara", the name of the capital of Turkey and "anakara", meaning motherland. Besides the ghosts of memories of my own childhood, AN(A)KARA wrestles with the notion of a phantasmagorical national unity in relation to mechanical embodiments that I myself have been suffering from.

TV variety-morning shows of Turkey, targeting mainly housewives living in Turkey and Germany, are perfect examples of neoliberal speed blended with conservative values. While using patriarchal and contemporary political lingo, the famous hosts invite various singers, doctors, cooks to entertain and to give tips to the audience. While officially serving just as 'entertainment,' these shows proliferate and strengthen the suppressive governmental politics as well as patriarchal discourses. The body and the gestures of a TV host are manifestations of a ruling ideology, a propaganda tool. For that reason, the body of the host in AN(A)KARA is aiming to create a different kind of a monument that fa(i)/(ll)-s in the constant that it intends to arrive at.

The performance contemplates on the slippage of meaning as a result of the neoliberal lingo around news, advertisements, announcements and signs. I use materials from TV-variety morning shows of Turkey not to recreate their aesthetics and theatricality on stage, but to break their neoliberal timing and generate a poetic dimension. Through that I aim to create a completely new form, based on the materiality of the language and textuality of the body that takes culturally embedded conceptions of the body and nationhood into account.

The slow-paced structure, with fragmentation and brokenness in the piece, registers a stretch in time in relation to the pejorative view on the laziness of the monstrous (!)Eastern. The perception of the Middle Eastern as always coming from the past, as never enough; a late modernity doomed to fail and the Orientalist views in relation to time are some of the starting points. Furthermore, the three flags depicting the kiss of two queer divas of Turkey, Zeki Müren and Bülent Ersoy, that created a turmoil in the 1970s; the image of the wife of the Prime Minister Turgut Ozal, who brought the neoliberal market economy to Turkey in the 1980s; the crane that was forgotten in a hotel that became another symbol of the city of Ankara, all those give references to the different eras of the political history of Turkey. AN(A)KARA is kindly supported by the Senate Department of Culture and Europe. Thank you, Europe for accepting this white-passing once-Muslim and always secular Eastern me. I have been dreaming of you, imagining that the West must be a better place. When I told my maternal grandmother Makbule that I applied for the visa and will move to Berlin, she said, İnşallah, my dear. I said, grandma, there's no Allah involved this time. And Saadet, my paternal grandmother, asked me not to do that. Haven't we given enough people to them?, she asked, and added: This time, instead of the labor, the immigration of the brains is happening. Saadet was only a primary school graduate.

// Senâ Göksu Kunak

BIO:

Göksu Kunak (Ankara, 1985) a.k.a Gucci Chunk is a writer, researcher, performer, and performance maker based in Berlin. Göksu's interest lies in queer methodologies (especially chronopolitics) and hybrid texts that deal with the performative lingo(s) of contemporary lifestyles. Influenced by the Arabesk culture of Turkey, the loss this culture deals with and late modernities, Göksu imagines new situations out of real encounters that point out the problematics of hetero-patriarchal structures.

Orientalism, self-Orientalization (the perception of the 'Eastern', and how the Eastern sees themselves through this construction), as well as Eastern masculinities in relation to state governmentality, and Eastern science-fiction are other interests of Göksu. Their pieces have visited Sophiensaele Berlin, KW Institute of Contemporary Art - Pogo Bar, HAU Berlin, Center d'Art Contemporain Genève, The Parliament of Bodies-Bergen Assembly 2019, Akademie der Künste, Centrale Fies a.o.

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