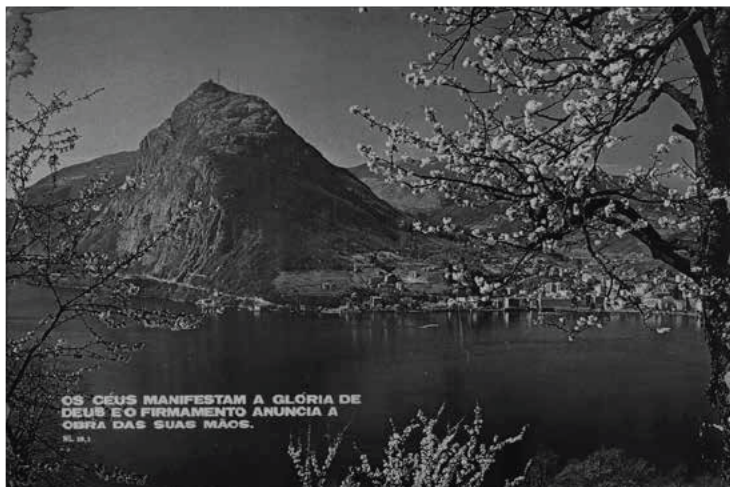


En écho au projet *Billboards* présenté dans l'espace public, les pages qui suivent proposent un autre travail réalisé par Meriç Algün Ringborg. Partant une nouvelle fois d'un récit personnel, elle a cherché l'origine de deux tableaux hérités de son grand-père. Grâce à des échanges d'e-mails, elle remonte peu à peu à la source de ces images et réalise une surprenante découverte. En 2013, ce texte est paru dans la publication en ligne *This Long Century*. Les échanges d'e-mails sont conservés dans leur langue originale, l'anglais.



Les cleux expriment la gloire de Dieu et le firmament annonce l'œuvre de ses mains. SL. 19,1

« Mon grand-père travaillait à bord de cargos et a donc parcouru le monde, du nord de la Russie au cap de Bonne Espérance en Afrique, du Brésil au Japon en passant par le Canada. Il a commencé à travailler à bord de navires dès la fin de son service militaire obligatoire, qu'il a effectué à Zonguldak, une ville située dans la région de la mer Noire en Turquie. Il n'avait que 20 ans à l'époque et il a travaillé jusqu'à ce qu'il soit atteint d'un cancer à l'âge de 65 ans. Il avait cinq filles et a eu la chance de connaître trois de ses cinq petits-enfants. Mon grand-père était loin quasiment six mois par an. Sa présence (et les souvenirs que nous gardons de lui) était donc très fragmentée. À chacun de ses retours, il ramenait des cadeaux et des souvenirs pour chaque membre de la famille.

Un jour, en rentrant du Brésil, il nous a ramené deux reproductions de paysage, montées dans des cadres en bois, sur lesquelles étaient inscrites deux phrases en portugais. Les tableaux furent accrochés dans la cuisine, là où nous passions le plus clair de notre temps. Nous pensions tous que ces photos avaient été prises au Brésil, mais personne dans la famille ne parlait une autre langue et nous ne savions donc pas ce que signifiaient ces phrases. Malgré cela, toute la famille avait fini par mémoriser l'une des deux phrases, peut-être pour se sentir plus proche de mon grand-père, et la répétait à haute voix à chaque repas, avec un mélange de dérision et d'émotion véritable, comme une sorte de prière.

Le turc est une langue phonétique et les mots se prononcent donc tels qu'ils sont écrits. Nous lisons donc l'inscription portugaise comme suit :

"Osceus manifesitam aglorya dedeus eofirmamante anunçia obraaasuasmaos."

La cuisine où avait lieu ce rituel se trouvait dans la maison qu'il avait lui-même construite. Les membres de la famille qui y résidaient sont partis les uns après les autres, et la maison a depuis longtemps disparu. Ainsi, les tableaux ont subi plusieurs déménagements, avant de finir sous un lit, d'où je les ai extirpés l'hiver passé. Ce que je remarquai tout d'abord, c'était la mention "SL. 19,1" écrite en petits caractères sous l'une des phrases. Je compris aussitôt qu'il s'agissait de versets de la Bible. Après l'avoir entendue si souvent prononcée par mes tantes, j'avais fini par assimiler la phrase et je me suis sentie un peu bête en réalisant qu'elle provenait de la Bible... Ma famille n'est pas particulièrement religieuse et si nous devons nous proclamer d'une quelconque religion, ce ne serait certainement pas du christianisme.

La prochaine étape dans la déconstruction de ce souvenir serait de savoir où se situent les paysages représentés dans ces photos. J'ai tenté de faire quelques recherches sur Google, mais je n'ai pas pu les identifier. On m'a suggéré, sans conviction, qu'il s'agissait peut-être d'un endroit à Rio de Janeiro. Si vous lisez ceci et que vous reconnaissez ces paysages, je vous serais reconnaissante de m'écrire à cette adresse : mericalgun@gmail.com. »



Sois loué, ô Dieu, au plus haut de cieux que ta gloire règne sur la terre entière.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Mon, Dec 22, 2014 at 5:16 PM
Subject: about the picture in this long century (and religion)
To: mericalgun@gmail.com

dear merica,

i think the first picture shows lagoa rodrigo de freitas, a famous lagoon in rio de janeiro. i think the second picture is not brazil, we don't have that sort of architecture and the mountain looks too alpine. we definitely don't have snow here! i would say it's switzerland.

the first text reads: The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. it's psalm 19. the second text reads: God shall be exalted in heavens; his glory, all around Earth. it's also religious, but there's no indication of the source.

i find it curious that your family in turkey learned a sentence in portuguese. i would never imagine. and the pronunciation must be quite right, because the writing is almost perfect. you can listen to the sentence here, between 15s and 22s. (funny narration though.)

brazil has the biggest number of catholics in the world. we have churches everywhere and the pope often visits us. (we were really sad that a brazilian lost the papacy for an argentinian a few years ago. argentina and brazil are rivals in football.)

but we are also very much influenced by african religions, like umbanda and candomblé. my mother always leaves coffee close to a window, an offering for the spirits. and, once year, she sets a big tray of candy in our backyard, also for a spirit.

i'm not religious and i don't believe in god, but i'm interested in religion sociologically, as someone would be interested in an experiment. seeing it from a distance, watching it behind a piece of glass. (besides, i rather never mess with spirits. you never know, right?)
i found one section of your text particularly interesting: "Nobody in the family is particularly religious. And if there is a religion vaguely present, it certainly isn't Christianity." it resonates with me because i cannot imagine a country where christians are not a majority.

what is the major religion in turkey? and how does it affect the behaviour of people and your life? i know how secular your country is, but i met a person from istanbul once and she told me about your president and the menace he represents to this secularity.

also, what is the major religion in sweden? i met quite a few people from scandinavia and never spoke about religion with them. actually, i never speak about religion with anyone, not even close friends. we say here in brazil it's not polite. i hope we can break this rule for once.

best wishes,

[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: 2015-10-28 13:26 GMT+01:00
Subject: Souvenirs for the Landlocked ,2015
To: mericalgun@gmail.com

Hola Meric , como estas?
Me llamo [REDACTED], vivo en Suiza, Lugano-Paradiso, Ticino.

En la postcard, de tu trabajo Souvenirs for the Landlocked.
encontre que es:
El lugar donde vivo. Se llama Paradiso, el monte, San Salvatore.

Te digo algo de mi... Soy Mexicana, Artista pintora, vivo en Paradiso junto al monte San salvatore.
Te escribo en mi ideoma, pues entra en mi identidad.
Creo, que esto te puede ayudar para tu proximo trabajo.
Felicidades y que tengas mucho exito.

Mi direccion es: Via Guidino 15, 6900 Paradiso.
Si quieres venir estas invitada.
Saludos de Paradiso.
[REDACTED].

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Sat, Jan 9, 2016 at 7:19 AM
Subject: Paintings in your site
To: "mericalgun@gmail.com" <mericalgun@gmail.com>

Hi,
my name is [REDACTED], i am from Brazil.
I was googling for some paintings on google images and ended up in your site, in this post:

<http://www.thislongcentury.com/?p=6788>

My grandmother have two paintings in her house wich used to be in my house, and one of them is exactly the same one you want to know the place. So do I.
I will upload the two pictures i have.
Have you found the name of the places?
I'd love to know.

Sorry for the bad english
hope you answer me.
[REDACTED]



----- Forwarded message -----

From: Meriç Algün Ringborg <mericalgun@gmail.com>
Date: Sat, Jan 9, 2016 at 8:42 AM
Subject: Re: Paintings in your site
To: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for emailing me. A few months ago I received an email from a Mexican woman living in Switzerland that the image with the mountain is from a town in Switzerland called Paradiso in Lugano, Ticino. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paradiso,_Ticino

I don't know if the ones your grandmother has are also from the same town but it looks like there is a big chance.

I grew up thinking that these places were in Brazil so it was very surprising to find out that it's from Switzerland.

You mention that these pictures are paintings. Is that true? Mine are photographic prints only. And your grandmothers' pictures don't have the bible quotes underneath them, which is interesting.

Do you know where she got them from?

Thank you again for your email.

All the best,

Meriç

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Sat, Jan 9, 2016 at 5:17 PM
Subject: RE: Paintings in your site
To: Meriç Algün Ringborg <mericalgun@gmail.com>

Hi,

Yes, they are photos, i'm sorry, think i was sleepy, it was 5 am here hahah.
Yes, they don't have the quotes, i found it interesting, because, your have and it is in portuguese. I was thinking, maybe its from Portugal, or maybe some African place where they speak portuguese too.

As I mmentioned, they were from my father, I remember them since ever, I am 23 now, so the pictures should be around this or maybe more. My father got divorced from my mother, and, don't know why, they ended up whit my grandmother. She have no idea where they came from =(

I looked for this place you said the woman said, I think it's possible to be the place.

<http://nirvanadmc.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/The-Switzerland-Paradiso-Tour-by-Nirvana-DMC.jpg>
<http://www.investorsinproperty.com/public/uploads/mainlisting-586.jpg>

The architecture is familiar and the mountais with snow on top.
I think they are not from Brazil because there is no mountain with snow on top here, according to wikipedia, the last time there was snow in a mountain was in 1984.
I am still not satisfied, when I was a child i used to play that I was in those places, need to find it hahaha

Thanks for everything.

All the best for you too,

[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Sun, Jan 10, 2016 at 5:40 AM
Subject: RE: Paintings in your site
To: Meriç Algün Ringborg <mericalgun@gmail.com>

Hi,

After some research, I ended up asking my father, he told me, it is on the Dutch Alps, I searched for it and find some results, the best one was this:

<http://www.taringa.net/posts/noticias/13064978/Suiza-el-pais-mas-lindo-del-mundo.html>

<http://fotos.diariovasco.com/201109/imagen8-3.jpg>

I am really convinced that this place is on the Swiss Alps, couldn't find the name of the Hotel that looks exactly as the house on the photo.
Please, let me know if you find something.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Sun, Jan 10, 2016 at 5:47 AM
Subject: RE: Paintings in your site
To: Meriç Algün Ringborg <mericalgun@gmail.com>

Sorry for another email. Right after writing the last one, I finally found it.
The place is on Grindelwald Switzerland.
Here is the name of the place, the date of the photo and even the name of the Hotel.

<http://www.isvcs.org/isvcs2.htm>

Our search has come to an end o/

Hope you like it,

[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Meriç Algün Ringborg <mericalgun@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Jan 18, 2016 at 10:09 AM
Subject: Re: Paintings in your site
To: [REDACTED]

Hey [REDACTED],

Sorry I didn't write back earlier. I was so amazed that you found that photograph online. How did you do that?!

But it seems like the house on the photo is not the hotel. Still at least we know which town it is from.

All the best to you and thanks for a great detective work,

Meriç

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Mon, Jan 18, 2016 at 1:52 PM
Subject: Re: Paintings in your site
To: mericalgun@gmail.com

Hi Meriç,

No problem hehe. So, I asked my father about, to see if he knew where he bought. He said it was here in Curitiba (Capital of Paraná, one state of Brasil) in a street fair, and that the place is on Dutch Alps. Looking for Dutch Alps on google I found the picture. From that I was able to found that it is on Swiss Alps and ended up founding the last site I sent you. Yes, sometimes it just doesn't look like the right place =(

I've just thought that we could send an email to the hotel and ask if it is the same place and if doesn't, see if they know where it is. What do you think?

Glad you like,

[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tue, Jan 26, 2016 at 6:02 PM
Subject: RE: Paintings in your site
To: Meriç Algün Ringborg <mericalgun@gmail.com>

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your e-mail and your interest in Grindelwald.

No, this picture doesn't show the hotel Sunstar. It is at the Terrassenweg a little bit above Grindelwald. The address should be Terrassenweg 61, 3818 Grindelwald. Today, on the ground floor of this chalet, there is a small restaurant called Cafe 3692 (<http://www.cafe3692.ch/karte.html>).

We hope, we helped you with this information and if you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact us again.

Kind regards from Grindelwald

GRINDELWALD TOURISMUS
Andrina Strässle

Postfach 124
CH-3818 Grindelwald
Tel. ++41 (0)33 854 12 13
Fax ++41 (0)33 854 12 10

touristcenter@grindelwald.ch
www.grindelwald.ch

I looked into google maps and surprise:
<https://goo.gl/maps/3PDJJmEDMym>

I am convinced that this is the place. Changed a little =(

Hope you like.

All the best for you.

[REDACTED]