

UC Berkeley

TRANSIT

Title

Selections from Kopfstoff

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/0cc704mx>

Journal

TRANSIT, 4(1)

Author

Zaimoglu, Feridun

Publication Date

2008-11-26

DOI

10.5070/T741009723

Peer reviewed

Sistem versus Soopcoolture

Ferah, 24, Student (Film and Television)

Works as a go-go dancer in a trendy disco. She likes the fact that she doesn't have to deal with the people while dancing. She is virtually alone; she forgets everything around her and only thinks about what she'll buy with the money she earns. Our meetings took place in the bar of the disco.

And then this one time I seen punks pogo dancing in the soopcoolture, that was somethin' different than just playing the kissymouth diamond slut or showing your bare hairy legs as a gag tranny at some event, that was somethin' else man, that was energy and not giving a shit about the art-full bourgeoisie, 'cause in the soopcoolture every everyman misjudges: Not just what you see, but what's hiding behind it, and the more everyman struts his hip under-underground, the more's hidden behind it in the soopcoolture, and for every everyman who quits posing, another cult-ured creep creeps along, and some well-behaved man freaks politely out. So whatever he dumps in the shaker, it's guaranteed the stuff's gonna boil over, and pounding in the ingredients brings the hip pot to the breaking point, I think shaking the shaker does somethin' for the soopcoolture, but it doesn't matter what feed you shove in, the sick motor just has to stay on and keep the feeding trough full: a lot of people get their potbelly from the feeding trough, and even the ones who bitch about the soopcoolture get their fat from it. And that kinda thing is its pure function, everyone living off of everyone else, making this kinda circle thing, where everything and anything dies a dismal death, and the guru-god figures out what's going on about half-way down the line, lays back, loosens up, and floats down the mainstream and threatens that the soopcoolture will have its Explosion Day and its Action Day, but only if all goes well. And 'til then: an outfit and an opinion about it, a movie a record a book and a statement about it, and fuck pint and fuck pussy, and menfrustration and womenhate. This loser-hoopla is tip top, 'cause the industry employs system-gluttons and critical pop and AIDS pop and Anti-Aleman pop and your

Kanak Attak shit are great lookouts for the system, 'cause you, we and the whole world make noise for dough and whine for hard cash. Everyone's showing everyone what he's got and the coolest line goes: I've got the better throwing arm for shard-shatterin' and cop-crazy-makin'. Who's the tuffest hustler, who can dig the longest tunnels, and what's my best trait and didn't I fool the enemy good, and we all taunt the pig 'cause the pig brings us down, and here, there you've rammed a skewer through his flank. The pig covers us all, and we grunt in the stall, and he's the keeper: That's our only truth, but we all hold onto the goddamned scoundrel's Palazzo-dream and someday we're gonna kick our poor skins and our rock bottoms into the hot hell and drive the pig into the stall, and until then: dead man and soopcoolture, where crazy tricks are the thing, and a handful of folks brain around the thing about guessing games, how to get a good hashstone from which '68 dealer, and who when where hip or not pulls off a slippery speech, and who when where hip or not ripped a raw scratch from a few grooves, and who when where hip or not shat a cult-trace in a Prussian drill, and altogether what who where the puppet state roughly amply offered as soopcoolture, in and out, on the go and gone again. And another one's felled by the virus, the virus has hollowed another one out. And someone's fed up, takes the resistance gun and plays Action Day, and then he's gone too: no immunity, no protection at all. And what's going on in the calves' heads: that little people get the radical fever and can say: I stole the Purina from the mutt. This multi-armed middle class sowed its kids in all the fields, and now they're running 'round with their seminar pussies: an idea forwards, an idea towards the edge, where you can rustle around unnoticed for a minute, a step into freaky leather and then back to just doing things for the sake of happiness, they run 'round: full speed to where it's at and on the run from the big snooper state, they run 'round on the roll to the meatless hardware, but all those sweet small actors aren't clear. The damn ignominy lasts forever, swallowing trips and that kind

of stuff like a Host for an acquittal or a picture that even shakes a dead man in his sarcophagus: black hungry cells that swallow everything they see, and that tie themselves together in zen communion wafers and cross paths with everyone who does anything in the soopcoolture, even if it's just being there, even if you just sniff the good old sugar pop air: the black hungry cell is your shadow.

And the system starts right outside your front door, and what we bring in is like dog shit smeared on your brand new Persian, fresh from the heel, it's system schmaltz that everyone and everybody feeds on and shits out, and the system gives us schmaltz and digest-stomachs and shitout-asses and toilet bowls to boot, and in the soopcoolture our Jesus hearts have the biggest apeshit bloodthirst, so you pull in your neck, and drown in your wineglass, and don't know shit and separate yourself from all those überclever matters, and take riffraff rah-rah as the best and better of what can befall you, and feed on the beggar's bread that the Germans stuff into the yaps of their better-minded kids so that they never yammer about the crude conditions or whimper for the merciful hand that pulls the plug. 'Cause otherwise you're a soopcoolture-stiff, and Germany's shat on you.

Everything in This World is Fleeting

Hatice, 22, Law Student

She approached me in the university cafeteria during a reading of Abschaum. She mostly criticized the language in which the book is written. Her main concern was the possible misrepresentation of Muslims in Germany. When I asked her if she would be willing to represent Muslims living in Germany with her own account, she responded very positively.

I am seldom asked why I wear a headscarf, because most people think they already know. But of course they cannot know at all. No one can know what goes on in my head unless I have told him.

I cover my head, as religious Muslim women do. It is important to me, because in this way I confess my devotion to Islam and submit myself to its rules and laws.

My family is rather religious, but I have never been forced to do anything. I did everything voluntarily. For example, I did not have to wear a headscarf during elementary school like some other girls. I participated in gym, was allowed to play with boys. In no way was I restricted. My parents let me live out my childhood. But they raised me as a Muslim and sent me to Koran school, where I was educated about our religion and learned to read the Koran. I already knew as a child that I would cover myself as soon as I finished elementary school. Since then, that is one of the many rules that I follow, like for example praying five times every day. I had really been looking forward to it, but even earlier I already prayed with my mother and also fasted half-days for Ramadan. Afterwards, I felt relieved and sensed how my soul became purer through this process. I still feel the same way.

Back then, during my first years in elementary school, I had a very difficult time. Although I was born here, I only spoke Turkish until the age of six. My parents speak German poorly and all of my friends on the street were Turks. When I started first grade, I had great difficulties. I did not understand a word, and I was sent to kindergarten because I could not take

part in the lesson at all. There were a couple of Turkish boys and girls there who could not speak German either. Maybe we were all there for the same reason. At any rate, we always played together. At first, the kindergarten teachers tried to include us in the games, but none of them could speak Turkish, and at some point they gave up. When I went back to first grade, I could barely speak any more German than the previous year. Because of my poor performance I was supposed to be placed in special education. Allah'a Şükür, there was a Turkish teacher in our school who helped me. She gave me German lessons after school for free. She said it would be a shame if I were placed in special education just because I could not speak German well enough. I learned pretty quickly and was even recommended for the university-track high school. My father did not want me to go to university, but the hodja of our congregation convinced him to send me in the end. He said that I could always switch to the general education track if that school changed me too much. During the time I was in high school my grades continually improved. My parents saw that they could trust me and agreed without reservations to let me study law. I am now in my third semester, and Insha'allah I will not disappoint my family.

I am very happy that I have come as far as I have, Allah'in izniyle. Sometimes it is not easy to fight against so much resistance, but Allah gives me the necessary strength to continue, and if the congregation can someday benefit from my good services, then it will only have been because of his will.

Unfortunately, Muslims in particular are discriminated against in Germany. Of course no one can keep us from practicing our religion. But the freedom to practice religion in Germany is not guaranteed. There are still difficulties in obtaining authorization permits for Islamic slaughterhouses. Yet the same thing does not pose a problem for Jews at all, even though many more Muslims than Jews live in Germany. You can see how much Muslims are restricted here in

discussions about the ezan, the call to prayer, that is not even allowed to be sounded in a big Muslim community like the one in Duisburg.

Covered women at the university are also discriminated against. This is often reflected in the grading. A friend of mine who studies economics was even barred from a seminar because it was allegedly full. We have to live with these types of problems. Women who do not wear headscarves might have it easier, but I have never considered removing my headscarf for this reason. I would rather give up my studies, as my religion is the most important factor in my life. Everything in this world is fleeting: Money, power, beauty. What counts is faith. That is the only thing we will eventually be held accountable for. If a person has chosen the way of the prophet Mohammad, and when he has fulfilled his duties as a good Muslim, then he has nothing to fear. But someone who has strayed from the right path—who has placed his own desires and personal will before the will of Allah, or has been misled by other nonbelievers—will pay for it later. Then his friends who have led him from his religious path will not stand by him. Everyone goes down this path someday alone.

I also have friends who do not cover themselves. I respect their decision, because Islam is the most tolerant religion of all, for it is the last religion that was sent to the people. As a good friend, however, I also tell them the advantages of covering oneself. That is my duty. An uncovered woman, for example, has difficulties being accepted among men, as these men will always see first and foremost a woman before them, and feel enticed by her. Such feelings and thoughts can disrupt cooperation, or even make it impossible. Yet if a woman is covered, men understand right away that she is religious, and have respect for her and her beliefs. She can behave much more self-confidently. This is better for everyone.

I do not have any German friends. I know a few Germans from my studies, but when we

talk to each other it is usually about course requirements or lectures. I do not have anything against them; our cultures are simply too different. We just cannot be like them. Many things that are common to their culture are forbidden in our religion. Unfortunately, there are many Muslims living in Germany who want to be like Germans. In doing so, they forget their own culture and religion. Insha'allah they will find their way back to the right path.

I am not saying that I do not have any sins. I have sins just like everyone else. But my belief is unshakeable, and as Allah wills it, I will stay on the path of Islam, because everything is his will, everything.