



MEVLANA CELALEDDIN RUMI

1207-1273

Rumi was born in the early thirteenth century, in what is now Afghanistan. He later settled in Konya, in present-day Turkey, with his family. His father was a preacher and religious scholar, and he introduced Rumi to Sufism. Rumi would come to blend the intuitive love for God that he found in Sufism with the legal codes of Sunni Islam and the mystical thought he learned from Shams. Aphorisms attributed to Rumi circulate daily on social media, offering motivation. "If you are irritated by every rub, how will you ever get polished," one of them goes. Or, "Every moment I shape my destiny with a chisel. I am a carpenter of my own soul." Barks's translations, in particular, are shared widely on the Internet; they are also the ones that line American bookstore shelves and are recited at weddings. Rumi is often described as the best-selling poet in the United States. Rumi has helped the spiritual journeys of many celebrities such as Madonna, Tilda Swinton, Chris Martin... In the twentieth century, a succession of prominent translators strengthened Rumi's presence in the English-language canon.

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NAZIM HIKMET

1902-1963

Nâzım Hikmet, the poet who brought a new concept into Turkish Poetry, was born in Selonika. His interest in the October Revolution in Russia took him, to the USSR. Nâzım Hikmet returned to Turkey as a committed marxist. Nâzım Hikmet was imprisoned many times because of his poetry. The last charges against him resulted in a 28 year prison sentence in 1938 for inciting mutiny in the navy. A campaign in support of Nâzım Hikmet's innocence started in 1949 in protest of his imprisonment and created significant reverberations abroad. With the passing of a general amnesty in 1950, Nâzım Hikmet was released from prison. Following his acquittal, Hikmet left the country because political pressure . He was extradited from Turkish citizenship in 1951. He died in Moscow where lived until 1963. Without departing from Turkish poetical tradition, Nâzım Hikmet was able to consistently renew his poetry. His most unchanging characteristics, however, were his belief in a bright future and his devotion to the people of his own country.

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SABAHATTİN ALİ

1907-1948

He was born in Bulgaria and graduated from İstanbul Primary Teacher Training School (1927). After serving as a classroom teacher in Yozgat for a short period of time, he was transferred to Germany and stayed there for two years. Upon his return to Türkiye, he taught German in Aydın and Konya secondary schools. Because of his political ideas and satires, he was imprisoned for three months and one year in Aydın and Konya respectively. He also served time in Konya and Sinop prisons. On the tenth anniversary of the Turkish Republic, he was pardoned (1933) and then he worked as a civil servant at the Ministry of National Education, Publication Directorate as a translator and as a dramatist at Ankara State Conservatory. He was again imprisoned for three months due to his articles in 1947. While he was planning to escape to Bulgaria in 1948, he was killed by the person who agreed to smuggle him abroad. Where his grave is located is unknown. He was mostly known for his stories on the topics of life in towns and villages. His novel *Kuyucaklı Yusuf* (Yusuf from Kuyucak) is regarded as "one of the most successful representations of the genre in Turkish literature"

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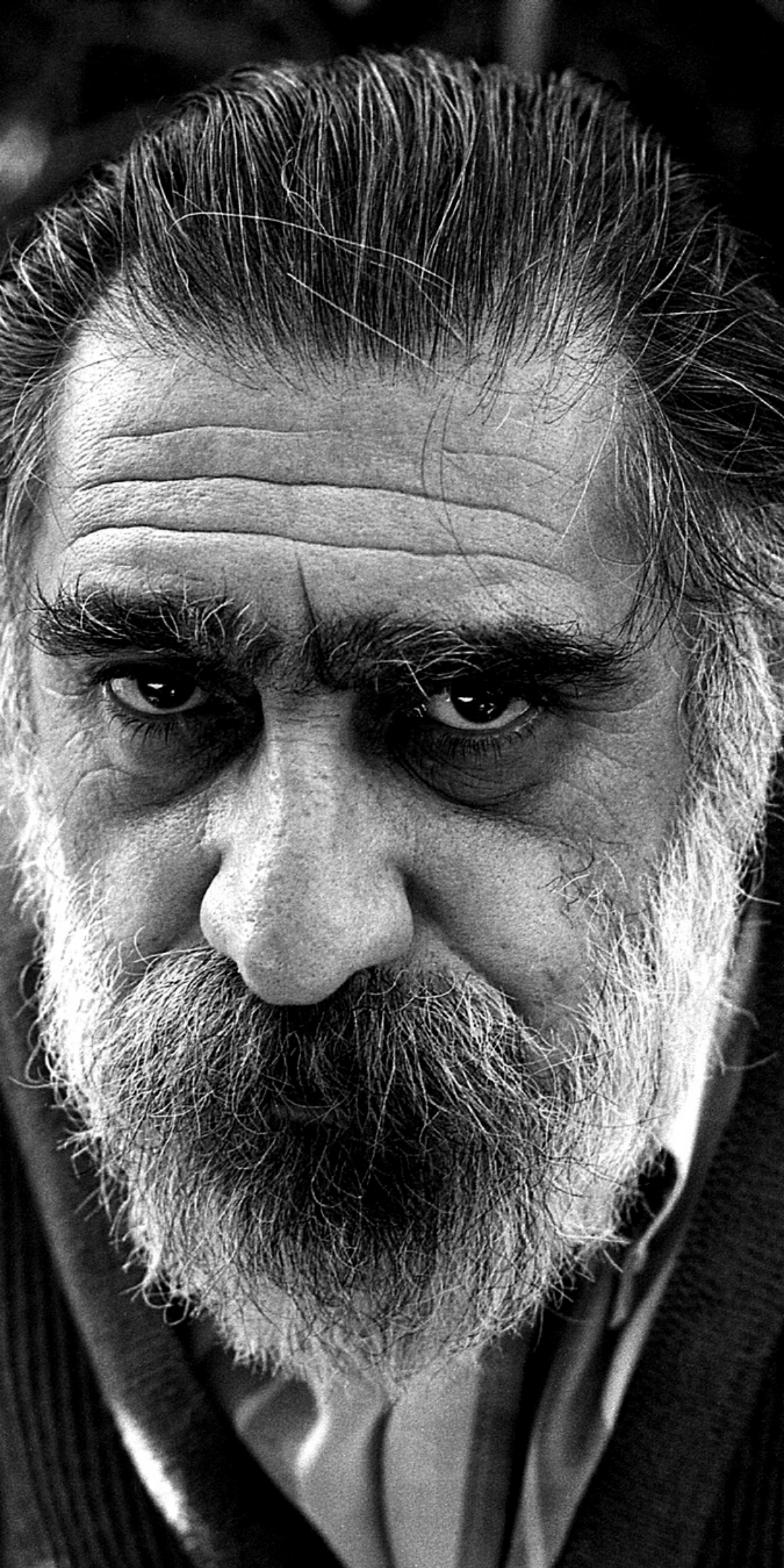


YAŞAR KEMAL

1923-2015

Yasar Kemal was one of the most renowned Turkish writers and novelists of 20th century. He lost one eye by accident during his childhood. Yasar Kemal came from Kurdish origins, he had a very tough life due to economic problems hence he had to work in almost any job he could find until his twenties, and he even spent some short time in prison for his communist political views during those days. After the military coup of 1971 he traveled abroad for many years to live and attend various conferences. During all these years Yasar Kemal won many prizes, doctorates, and international awards. He also received Legion d'Honneur from French president Mitterrand in 1984. He was influenced by Iliad and Odyssey of Homeros, as well as writers such as Lev Tolstoy, Anton Chekhov, Dostoyevsky, Stendhal and John Steinbeck. His most famous novel is Ince Memed, published in the West as "Memed, My Hawk" which gained a worldwide success and was published in 40 languages. With this book he was the first Turkish writer to be a candidate for the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2002.

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CAN YÜCEL

1926-1999

Can Yuçe studied classical philology at Ankara University and then at Cambridge. He worked five years for the BBC. Yücel was a poet with a keen political and social awareness. His poetry thrives on a strong combination of lyricism, jovial irony and sarcasm. Because of his strongly critical poems he was imprisoned several times. Yücel was certainly one of the most prominent and controversial translators in Turkey. His poetry thrives on a strong combination of lyricism, jovial irony and sarcasm. His major poetry collections include;

Bir Siyasinin Siirleri (Poems of a Political Prisoner / 1974),

Sevgi Duvari (Wall of Love / 1973),

Olum ve Oglum (Death and My Son / 1976),

Gokyokus (Steep Heaven / 1984),

Canfeda (Life Offering / 1988),

Cok Bi Çocuk (The Child Colors the Man / 1988),

Mekânim Datca Olsun (Let Datca Be My Domicile / 1999) and

Rengâhenk (Col'armony / 1991).

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ORHAN PAMUK

1952 - . . .

Orhan Pamuk was born in Istanbul in 1952 and grew up in a large family similar to those which he describes in his novels *Cevdet Bey and His Sons* and *The Black Book*, in the wealthy westernised district of Nisantasi. As he writes in his autobiographical book *Istanbul*, from his childhood until the age of 22 he devoted himself largely to painting and dreamed of becoming an artist. After graduating from the secular American Robert College in Istanbul, he studied architecture at Istanbul Technical University for three years, but abandoned the course when he gave up his ambition to become an architect and artist. He went on to graduate in journalism from Istanbul University, but never worked as a journalist. His first novel *Cevdet Bey and His Sons* was published in 1982. Orhan Pamuk's books have been translated into 63 languages, including Georgian, Malayan, Czech, Danish, Japanese, Catalan, as well as English, German and French. Pamuk has been awarded The Peace Prize, considered the most prestigious award in Germany in the field of culture, in 2005. The 2006 Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded to Orhan Pamuk.

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A black and white portrait of Buket Uzuner, a woman with short dark hair, smiling and resting her chin on her hand. She is wearing a watch on her left wrist. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people.

BUKET UZUNER

1955 - . . .

Buket Uzuner is an author of short stories, travelogues, and novels. She is an environmental activist and animal rights advocate. Ms. Uzuner is trained as a molecular biologist and environmental scientist. She studied and worked at universities in Turkey (Hacettepe and METU), Norway, USA and Finland.

Ms. Uzuner won The Yunus Nadi Literature Prize for her novel *The Sound of Fishsteps* (Balık İzlerinin Sesi) in 1993 and her novel *Mediterranean Waltz* (Kumral Ada- Mavi Tuna) was awarded as the Best Novel of 1998 by the University of Istanbul. Her books are translated into eight languages.

Ms. Buket Uzuner has been presented as honorary fellow writer by The University of Iowa in 1996. She was presented The Middle East Technical University (METU) appreciation award in 2004 and The Life Achievement Award by Ankara University and Ankara Oyku Gunleri Literary Society in 2016.

She was selected among the 75 Most Influential Women of the Republic of Turkey, by the civic leaders, members of the press, and academia to celebrate the Republic of Turkey's 75th anniversary.

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ELIF ŞAFAK

1971 - . . .

Elif Şafak is an award-winning British-Turkish novelist. She has published 19 books, 12 of which are novels, including her latest *The Island of Missing Trees*, shortlisted for the Costa Award, RSL Ondaatje Prize and Women's Prize for Fiction. She is a bestselling author in many countries around the world and her work has been translated into 56 languages. *10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World* was shortlisted for the Booker Prize and RSL Ondaatje Prize; and was Blackwell's Book of the Year. *The Forty Rules of Love* was chosen by BBC among the 100 Novels that Shaped Our World. *The Architect's Apprentice* was chosen for the Duchess of Cornwall's inaugural book club, The Reading Room. Şafak holds a PhD in political science and she has taught at various universities in Turkey, the US and the UK, including St Anne's College, Oxford University, where she is an honorary fellow. She also holds a Doctorate of Humane Letters from Bard College. Şafak is a Fellow and a Vice President of the Royal Society of Literature and has been chosen among BBC's 100 most inspiring and influential women.

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