

AS THOUGH / *SANKI*  
Concealed Within Images

by  
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AS THOUGH/ *SANKI*  
Concealed Within Images

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## ABSTRACT

AS THOUGH / *SANKI*

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MA. in Visual Arts and Visual Communication Design

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Thesis Advisor: Erdađ Aksel

Keywords: concealed, figure, ground, mark, shadow

In this thesis, I aim to describe both the conceptual and practical process behind my works. I also want to suggest a reading for my exhibition named “As Though” / “*Sanki*”.

The concept of ‘the concealed’ is meant to refer to an indefinable space within images in the text. I aspire to create images which have something concealed within them. My goal is hereby to make various on-going interpretations of my images possible.

In the first chapter, I discuss my images with an eye on the idea of mark and how the concepts of the concealed, and figure and ground relate to each other. In the second part, I look at the archetypes, especially the shadow archetype I trace in my works. In the third chapter, some works of mine from the exhibition, “As Though” / “*Sanki*” are explained conceptually and in terms of the practical process they have gone through.

## ÖZ

SANKİ

İmgenin gizliliği

Burcu Yağcıođlu

M.A., Görsel Sanatlar ve Görsel İletişim Tasarımı

Güz 2007

Tez Danışmanı: Erdağ Aksel

Anahtar Kelimeler: giz, figür, zemin, iz, gölge

Bu tezin amacı işlerimin hem kavramsal çerçevesini hem de pratikteki sürecini anlatmak ve “Sanki” / “As Though” isimli sergimin bir okumasını önermektir.

Bu metinde, ürettiğim imgelerin içindeki 'giz' üzerinde durdum. İçerlerinde gizli bir alan barındıran imgeler üretmeye çalışıyorum. Bunu, imgelerimin ardlarında çeşitli olasılıklar barındırabilmesi amacıyla yapıyorum.

Birinci bölümde işlerimi, giz, figür ve zemin ilişkisi, ve iz kavramı bağlamında tartıştım. İkinci bölümde, arketipler üzerinde durdum. Özellikle gölge arketipinin çalışmalarımındaki yerini ele aldım. Üçüncü bölümde, birçođu “As Though”/ “Sanki” sergisinde bulunan çalışmalarımı, hem kavramsal olarak hem de pratik süreçleri bakımından ele aldım.

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## INTRODUCTION

In this text, my aim is to reflect on my art works, which partly constitute the exhibition “As Though/ *Sanki*”.

During the process of producing my works, I am engaged with the concepts of concealing and revealing. I am interested in unfolding an image while simultaneously hiding it. In other words, I am interested in ‘the concealed’ within something displayed. I think that, concealing and revealing something at the same time change the nature of that which is presented. This concern is bound with the question of “how to display something?” I ask myself “how”, more than “what” in the process of creation.

The nature of the concealed, I want to bury in my images, is not definable. I do not hide some parts or aspects of my works as if I were to create an illusion or make a mind trick. Instead, I strive to include some kind of a concealed part in my images which are not meant to reveal themselves. I think that, the revelation of the concealed corresponds to the transformation of the concealed within an image into something ‘known’ which is the object of the rational mind. What I want to do, however, is to relate my images to the unconscious and not to the reason.

Consequently, this text is an attempt to define something which cannot bear any definitions. Writing about it directly is impossible, because it might lose its hiddenness and turn out to be revealed. I describe ‘the concealed’ indirectly and mention what it is not more than what it is. I also exemplify it with my works in order to make it less abstract.

I strive to conceal images, because the concealment provides an image, a space which is open to different interpretations. Concealed images revolve around various possible interpretations, and through these possibilities the viewer becomes more active in experiencing the image.

As an artist who expects viewers to relate themselves to my images, I am also very interested in the archetypes. Archetypes, arising from shared experiences, interests me because of their indefinability and capacity to fit into different realities of different people. They refer to the concepts in the widest meaning and at the same time they are experienced by people in a very personal and private way. Archetypes

connect the widest and the common to the personal and the private. This is the basic reason for my interest in them while producing my works.

Among archetypes, the shadow archetype is the one that I relate my works most with. The shadow archetype is the potential of everything in human which is evil, bestial and immoral. Like ‘the concealed’ I intend to have in my images, the shadow is the covered part of human which is repressed by the morality and rationality.

In the first chapter, ‘the concealed’ is discussed through my images. The second chapter is on the ‘archetypes’, of which ‘the shadow archetype’ is the most prominent. Finally, the third chapter is a reading of my works from the exhibition “As Though/*Sanki*” in the light of the conceptual framework I draw.

I try to avoid ambiguity in the text, which might easily occur while mentioning ‘the concealed’. I do not seek to explain ‘the concealed’ and turn it into something concrete, but at the same time I try to avoid being too abstract in order to avoid misunderstandings.

**AS THOUGH**  
**Concealed Within the Images**

**CHAPTER 1**

**i) Concealed Within My Images**

The idea of 'the concealed' is my main concern while producing my works. 'The concealed' refers to a hidden field within the image.

The reason why some of the aspects or parts of my images are concealed is that I aim to create a space that can be impregnated with different interpretations each time a different spectator comes in.



Figure 1, *Untitled*, 2007

I make mostly paintings and drawings. The forms in my works might seem to be a part of a body or an object, as though they would reveal what they really are only upon engagement by the spectator. I want the spectator to feel that s/he could see the

body as a whole or, if looked carefully enough, understand the object's identity. I am after the feeling of 'about to find out' something. However, I do not intend to give the spectator cues about the form and subject matter, which would lead her/him to 'find out' the concealed.

This indefinability prevents the viewer from fixing the image to a single, well defined reality. My aim is to leave a space of endless possibilities within the image. Even though exhibition of an image brings about an insistence of a certain kind of reality, I would rather have images which can fit in different realities of different spectators. In other words, I aim to create images in such a way that the 'blind' space contained within them makes several interpretations possible.



Figure 2, *Untitled*, 2007

This concealed part within the image is not designed to be revealed. Instead I aim to keep it hidden. "Image is a curtain which only hides the invisible within itself and contains an inexhaustible dowry behind it."<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>(Sayın, 12) I want the concealed part of my images to communicate with the unconscious and not turn into knowledge of the rational mind.

'The concealed' in images is not concrete. 'The concealed', in my use of the term, cannot bear any definitions or explanations. When tried to be explained, then it is revealed: The concealed transforms into the revealed, hence, concrete and tangible data

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<sup>1</sup> Sayın, Zeynep. *İmgenin Pornografisi*, İstanbul, Metis Yayınları, 2002

<sup>2</sup> The translations of the quotations which were not originally in English are done by me

that can be conceived by the rational mind. However, I would sooner facilitate the irrational and the indefinable in my images. “It is only possible to comprehend what it is by comprehending what it is not.”<sup>3</sup> (Florenski, 13) In this sense, it is very crucial that the concealed remain a space bearing limitless possibilities of comprehension.



Figure 3, *Package*, 2006

The concealed within my images is mostly born by the interplay of figure and ground. My intention is to use figure and ground as a transition. I do not try to prioritize one to the other, nor do I use them as a binary opposition. I am curious about the potential of reversibility that figure and ground possess. I am interested in how a ground transforms into a figure and how a figure transforms into a ground. This approach, I believe, is one of the ways to conceal an image and to create an indefinable field within it.



Figure 4, *Patterns*, 2006

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<sup>3</sup> Florenski, Pavel. *Tersten Perspektif*, presentation Zeynep Sayın, Trans. Yeşim Tükel. Istanbul, Metis Yayınları, 2001

In order to make a transition from figure to ground and vice versa possible, I prefer not to use linear perspective. Flatness is one of the main underlying elements of my works. Because, I think, linear perspective strictly defines the separation between figure and ground, it transforms the ground into a rigid element. I, on the other hand, prefer ground to be an indefinable field in my images, so that it can contain concealed. “This perspective which determines what is forth, what is back, what is far, what is close in the image space, reclaims not only the visible but also the invisible, since it transforms the image into a space that can be observed from the opposite side and controlled.” (Sayın, 16)



Figure 5, *Outstretch*, 2007

The figure and ground relation is also connected with the social structure as regards to gender differences. In her essay, “Is Female to Male as Ground Is to Figure?”, Barbara Johnson underlines the subordination of the ground in images and relates this to gender inequality. She examines the link between the figure/ground relation in images and masculine/feminine relation in the social structure. She claims that the subordination of ground in images corresponds to the subordination of women. Generally, figure and ground as a binary opposition in images tend to subordinate the feminine ground and privilege the masculine figure:

When a figure or “positive space” [call this “the male child” or simply “the child” or “Oedipus”] is drawn inside a frame [ call this frame “psychoanalytic theory”], an unavoidable consequence is that its complementary shape – also called the “ground”, or “background”, or

“negative space” [call this the “girl” or the “other”] - has also been drawn.<sup>4</sup>  
(Johnson,18)

Privileged and prioritized figure and its 'unavoidable consequence' the ground can be seen as a reflection of the social structure and gender inequality. “Our culture is deeply committed to myths of demarcated sex differences called 'masculine' and 'feminine', which in turn revolve (...) on dominance – submission pattern. This positioning of the two sex genders in representation clearly privileges the male.”<sup>5</sup>  
(Caplan, 25)

In order to evade this whole dominance and submission scheme, I do not situate figure and ground as separate and opposite elements in my images. It is also vital for me that, I do not exchange the roles of figure and ground, because an exchange between them would reproduce the same structural relationship of dominance as if “the roles remain locked into their static boundaries.” (Caplan, 25). In other words, transforming a figure into a ground and transforming a ground into a figure per se leaves the structure intact. Hence, I try use figure and ground transition.

In the painting below (Figure 6), I wanted to use the animal-like figure both as a figure and a ground. I have realized that, when we zoom in on a figure that covers most of our vision, it might start to be seen as a ground. Using the figure in such a way makes it resemble a landscape. Moreover, this painting's size (3mx1.90m) also helps us to conceive the figure as a ground.

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<sup>4</sup> Johnson, Barbara. The Critical Difference: Essays in the Contemporary Rhetoric of Reading, “Is Female to Male as Ground Is to Figure?”. Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 1980.

<sup>5</sup> Caplan, E. Ann. Women and Film: Both Sides of the Camera, “Is the Gaze Male?”. New York: Methuen, 1983.



Figure 6, *Figure*, 2007, 3mX1.80m

I do not only seek to use figure and ground as reversible entities on the canvas and paper, but I also want to have the same sense of transition between the figure and the ground by means of the canvas and paper.

My large scale paintings are big enough that the viewer can make eight to ten steps in their width and experience them from different angles. During the process of painting, I first consider the aspect of ground. Because it is usually the case that the ground in my paintings generally constitutes the largest part of the canvas and the canvas contains several layers of paint, which also constitute the ground layers. In some parts, I leave bare and untreated space without any paint on it, in order to attract attention on these multiple layers of paint.



Figure 7, *We Came*, 2007



I also intentionally leave some forms and figures on the canvas unpainted, so that these unpainted areas constitute the figures. In contrast to what is expected, I create and develop the figure out of the ground. Figure arises from the lack of paint. Therefore, the figure is not made, it exists through its absence.



Figure 8, *Untitled*, 2007

In the painting (Figure 8) above the white figure in the centre is not painted. The ground is painted, whereas the figure is the area left-over by the ground itself. I try to transmit some attributes of the figure to the ground and vice versa which I believe is a way to create a transition.



Figure 9, View from the exhibition in Proje 4L, 2007

The element of transition is also there in my drawings. The way my drawings are exhibited is very crucial for revealing their potential. In this sense, I exhibit them in two different ways.



Figure 10, View from the exhibition in Proje 4L, 2007

First, I hang the papers by leaving a distance between the wall and the paper. I prefer this in order to present my work as a two dimensional ground which is drawn on and also as an object which has its own materiality. Recently I have also started to use handmade Japanese rice papers to draw on. They are light and yellowish and their veins are visible. These papers and my drawings are both resemble fabrics and they arouse a sense of fragility. For this reason, I think, they relate with my drawings better than regular drawing papers. They prioritize the material which thereby gives me the chance to utilize them not only as grounds but also as figures.



Figure 11, View from the exhibition in Proje 4L, 2007

Second, some of my works, generally the large scale ones, are hung in such a way that they cover the wall and the floor partially. In doing so, the exchange between the

wall and the floor is accomplished, as well as the transition from the vertical figure to the horizontal ground.

Another critical characteristics of my works which is vital for the concealment, is the element of mark. Generally I paint on the canvas after I draw on it. I make the drawings almost invisible by covering them with paint. I use brush strokes leaving only some implications of the original drawings. Through these semi-visible drawings and brush strokes, I want to imply the time the paintings were made. These drawings and brush strokes are the marks of the past. In other words, I prefer to leave the mark of the imperfect and corporeal hand on my paintings which is the painting's potential of reference to the past, bringing the mark of a past to the present. I think that, Francis Bacon's statement is very close to my approach in terms of understanding the notion of mark: "I want my paintings to seem as though people passed through them. Appearance of the mark left by human existence, exactly like a snail that leaves traces."<sup>6</sup> (Bacon in Altinel, 47)



Figure 12, *Untitled*, 2007

My drawings have the element of mark too. I leave marks, especially when I draw patterns. I generally draw patterns out of fabrics. These patterns are the repetitions of the same form. However every repetition is slightly different which makes the patterns imperfect. I aim at this imperfection, as a reference to the past of my hand. In my opinion, imperfection in something which is expected to be perfect, such as fabric patterns, gives the image a potential to refer to the past, to the time it was made.

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<sup>6</sup> Altinel, Cem. "*Francis Bacon*", İstanbul, Genç Sanat, #153, September, 2007.

A mark is caused by a touch. It implies “a touch, a breath from the past which does not exist anymore” (Sayın, 22); a touch of the corporeal body. The mark carries the memory of a certain retrospective materiality which intersects the past with the present. “The one and only footprint left on a sandy beach will maintain its effect even after its mark is carried away by the waves long time ago.” (Sayın, 85) In my opinion, the images that let the past and the present concur by means of a mark, point to an element of concealment within themselves. This concealed part is out of reach of the rationality. It is something very primordial, bestial and material and at the same time very impalpable. “An image that extends to the past and the present at the same time cannot certainly claim that it reveals the concealed which lies beyond the visible.” (Sayın, 22)

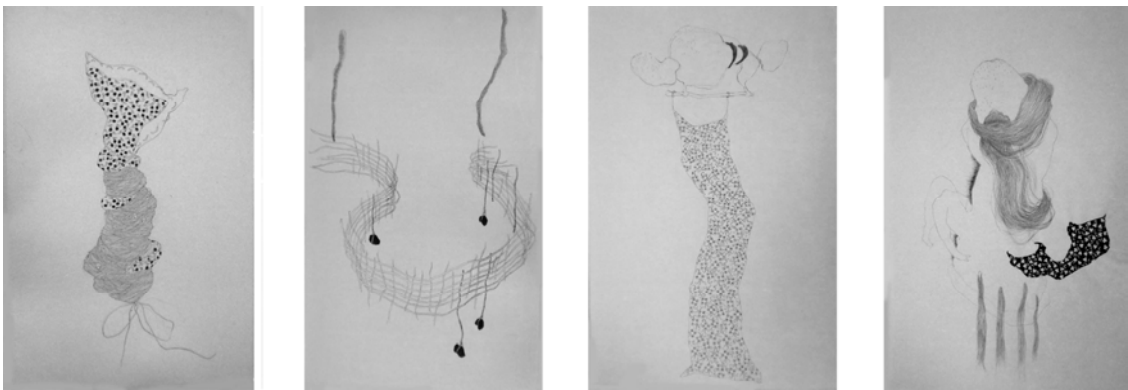


Figure 13, *Untitled drawings*, 2007



Figure 14, *Untitled*, 2007

Consequently, for the present time, I try to include concealed in my images through the use of the figure and ground relation and the idea of mark. I consider these concepts to be key points in my works.

## CHAPTER 2

### ARCHETYPES

#### i) Archetypes

My works emerge from my personal and private sources. However, this does not mean that I represent my own experiences and personality in my works. Instead, I want to create an undefined space within my works, to which each viewer can relate a part of himself/herself. Yet, it is very essential that I try to reach this indefinability through my very own personality and corporeality.



Figure 15, *Bolg*, 2007

I write another chapter on this issue, because I relate the creation of this indefinable and concealed field in an image to 'archetypes'. Among them, I am especially concerned with 'the shadow archetype'.

Archetypes are structural elements in the psyche. They are the marks of the common encounters that are experienced since the archaic times to the contemporary ones. For instance, all human beings' being born by women is a shared experience that gives rise to the 'great mother archetype'. This archetype refers to the concept of mother in the widest meaning.

Archetypes are indescribable and primordial. They can only be experienced by reflection, that is, by reflecting an archetype on a real person or on a figure in dreams or in phantasy. “Archetypes are 'identical psychic structures common to all'(CW V, para 224) which together constitute 'the archaic heritage of humanity.’” (Jung in Stevens, 47)<sup>7</sup> All the archetypes constitute the collective unconscious.

Essentially, he conceived them [archetypes] to be innate neuropsychic centres possessing the capacity to initiate, control, and mediate the common behavioural characteristics and typical experiences of all human beings. Thus, on appropriate occasions, archetypes give rise to similar thoughts, images, mythologems, feelings, and ideas in people, irrespective of their class, creed, race, geographical location, or historical epoch. An individual's entire archetypal endowment makes up the collective unconscious, whose authority and power is vested in a central nucleus, responsible for integrating the whole personality, which Jung termed the Self. (Stevens, 48)



Figure 16, *Big Yellow*, 2006

In the painting above (Figure 16), I sought to make forms which trigger a sense of incompleteness. A certain amount of incompleteness is a toll, I pay to provide a room the viewer. Incompleteness, I believe, refers to the archetypes, because, archetypes are not imbued with the ‘knowledge’ of the concept they refer to. Instead, they refer to that

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<sup>7</sup> Stevens, Anthony. *Jung, A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1994

concept in a primitive way. Like the empty forms above, they are available for different contents. I tried to make forms which give the same sense of emptiness in this painting.

I have already stated that I seek to create images which are open to different interpretations. I make images which give little information about their subject matter. I also try to give them the potential to connect with each viewer. Since archetypes are shared by all human beings, I think, getting involved in them and referring to the experiences of archetypes are very crucial for me to achieve my goal.

## ii) The Shadow Archetype

The concealed in my images, is especially related to ‘the shadow’ archetype. ‘The shadow’ is the personification of all the human aspects which are called bad or evil. “Everything an individual relates to directly or indirectly, however never admits that she/he does, falls under the shadow archetype. The inferior attributes of our characters and our inclinations which we cannot come to terms with, can be given as examples of the content of the shadow archetype.”<sup>8</sup> (Sambur, 95) The individual represses these aspects of her/his personality in the process of self-creation. I think, Ursula K. Le Guin's description of the contrast between the conscious mind and the repressed shadow by analyzing a fairy tale is very illuminating on the issue:

Man is everything that is civilized – intellectual, gentle, idealist and chaste. While, the shadow is everything repressed during the process of becoming a chaste, civilized adult. The shadow is man's interrupted selfishness, abuses he never made, murders he never committed. The shadow is the dark side of his soul, unaccepted and unacceptable.<sup>9</sup> (Le Guin,31)

The shadow is the opposite of all that is civilized and ethical. It holds a great potential of evilness through its bestiality. As a result, most of the people tend to ignore their evil sides. “Even though, everybody possesses a shadow personality, people mostly avoid facing these shadow sides, since things in this area definitely inflict a lot of pain. We don not like looking at our shadows at all.” (Sambur, 96) However, the

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<sup>8</sup> Sambur, Bilal. *Bireyselleşme Yolu, Jung'un Psikoloji Teorisi*, Elis Yayınları, May, 2005

<sup>9</sup> Le Guin, Ursula. “Çocuk ve Gölge”, *Kadınlar Rüyaları, Ejderhalar*. Trans. Bülent Somay. Metis Yayınları, Mayıs, 1999. Trans. of “The child and the Shadow”, *Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress*, April, 1975

denial of this repressed, instinctive and evil part of human prevents the individual from experiencing herself/himself as a whole.

“One side of human belongs to a primitive, bestial nature that will exist as long the bestial body exists. On the other hand, this side is related to the most sublime condition of the soul. Only when the soul and instinct are in unison, can they develop and grow. If they lack one or the other, the result will give rise to illness or unilaterality which could easily turn into morbidity. The bestiality in excess in humans will sicken the civilized person, while excessive civilization will raise sick animals.”<sup>10</sup> (Jung, 110)

This denial is shaped by the Rebirth and the Enlightenment which have gone hand in hand with Christianity and which eventually constitute the Modern Man. The Rebirth and the Enlightenment greatly changed the perception of human kind and his nature. Since then, the human has been considered as an entity who dominates the earth, and is able to manage everything by the power of rationality and knowledge. A 'good' man who is completely apart and different from an animal. A man, who is supposed to 'enlighten' his 'shadow'. As Sayın puts in her book; “I think that what the Modern Ages, reinforced by Ancient Greece, try to put out of sight, always originates from this shadow.” (48) However, people are reduced by the denial of the shadow.

“There should be a power that announces to us that we cannot become complete without this negative side, that if we deny this side of our body, which remains in the shadow just like the other objects, we will detach from three dimensionality and become to plain and lifeless. However, this body is an animal with a bestial soul. It is an organism who submits unconditionally to the instinct. To identify with the shadow means accepting the instinct, that appalling dynamism this hides in the background. The ascetic ethic of Christianity aspires to redeem us from this identification, but it realizes this at the expense of turning the bestial nature of humans upside down deeply.” (Jung, 113)

Shadow is the other side of our personality. “Somewhere in us, we have an ominous and dreadful twin from our own flesh and blood, who preserves, conceals and collects everything with bad intentions and who we desire to sweep under the carpet.” (Jung, 121) “The other within us is actually another person. It is a real person who thinks, takes action, hears and desires everything disgusting and mean.” (Jung, 117) According to Jung, accepting this dark side is the first step to becoming a full-fledged

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<sup>10</sup> Jung, Karl, Gustav. “Eros Kuramı”, Analistik Psikoloji. Trans. Ender Gürol, Payel Yayınları, June 1997.



person. Unless people accept this, they will not be able to reach an inner sincerity. This acceptance leads the individual to discover her/his own inner potential

“That individual took a step towards genuine togetherness, self awareness and creativity and is grown up. Because, the shadow waits at the doorstep. We can allow it to obstruct the way to the creative depths of the unconscious or we consent it to take us to those depths by holding our hands. Because, the shadow is not simply bad. It is despicable, primitive, ugly, bestial, and childish, it is powerful, dynamic, and spontaneous (....) it is not decent; it is dark, hairy and indecent. However, a person is nothing without it. What is a body without its shadow? Nothing but a deformation, a two dimensional comic book character. If I deny my deep relationship with the evil, I deny my own reality. I can not do or make anything, I can only damage what has been done or made.” (Le Guin, 35)

Shadow brings with itself a space which cannot be comprehended by rationality. “Neither rational thought nor can rational ethics can explain these deep and awkward levels of the mind that imagines.”( Le Guin, 389) I am very interested in the shadow archetype in the context of the irrationality and indefinability I aspire to create in my works.

According to Zeynep Sayın, Modernist thought which has its basis in the Rebirth and its extension in the Enlightenment is irritated by the hidden indefinability of the image. “The invisible hiding in a volume is frightening, unsettling and dark. It carries an appalling dowry that defies domestication. Such a fear remains inexplicable by the logics of both the Renaissance and the Enlightenment.” (Sayın, 23)

In my opinion, the fear Sayın mentions aroused by the concealed within images is bound with the denial of 'the shadow archetype'. Fear, like the fear of ‘the concealed’, makes human beings want to clear each and every obscurity. This fear of the obscure is also experienced within the individual herself/himself as she/he experience the shadow. I think that, the desire to illuminate ‘the shadow’ and the fear of the obscurity caused by the concealed within an image are linked to eachother.

Generally, I do not refer to the shadow archetype directly in my images. However, in the painting below (Figure 17), I tried to make forms resembling shadows. These forms refer to figures sitting on chairs, but I wanted them to be in a limbo between indefinable forms and seated figures. I aimed at the feeling of familiarity, but also at the feeling of alienation. I sought to refer to the shadow which is familiar as it is a part of our personality, but might, at the same time arouse alienation as it is repressed and denied.



Figure 17, *Sitters*, 2006

Finally, I sometimes refer to the shadow archetype directly in my works. Yet, generally, I only imply the shadow archetype by way of concealing images, because the shadow archetype is concealed within human beings, just like ‘the concealed’ within images. I consider getting involved with the shadow archetype to be a step or a way for me to produce concealed images in order to create a space of indefinability and interpretation.

## CHAPTER 3

### SPECIFICATIONS OF WORKS

#### i) *Nihayet/Ne Yazık ki / Finally/Unfortunately*

*“Marks are impressions left by the actions that are peculiar to animals, such as, the traces of ashes and fire or a devastated piece of land which is the trace of an enemy army left.” (Sayın, 19)*

I draw with lemon juice and brown ink on paper. Lemon juice drawings/marks are invisible at first, only the brown ink drawings can be seen. In about two months, the lemon juice drawings start to become visible. They turn out to be a very light yellow which becomes darker and darker as time passes. The period which is needed for the revelation depends on the weather. If it is cold, the revelation occurs slowly and vice versa.



Figure 18, *Finally/Unfortunately 1*, 2006

In these works, the lemon juice drawings attract attention to the mark of a touch. The lemon juice leaves traces on the paper which refers to a certain retrospective materiality. These traces have their own history which began with the touch of a brush. They are invisible at first, become yellow after a while, then go brownish and may be after a long while, these traces will pierce the paper, because the acid in the lemon juice will continue to process the paper.



Figure 19, *Finally/Unfortunately 2*, 2006

On the other hand, the ink drawings will start to fade away as time passes if a protective intervention is not made. Much later, they will become invisible because of the volatile nature of the ink. However, even if they became completely invisible, the paper still carries their touch. “Things that are bonded to one another for once through a touch will remain bonded with a sympathetic relation and will affect each other forever.” (Sayın, 75) These works, therefore are going to be in constant change. They carry their own history, visible with a mark which starts by a touch that belongs to the past.



Figure 20, *Finally/Unfortunately 3*, 2007

In the drawings I made with the invisible lemon juice and visible brown ink, my aim is also to propose a figure ground relationship different than a binary opposition. In a binary opposition, the privileged figure and the subordinated ground are strictly separated. In these works, however, the ground is not a left-over. It is not a part of the drawing which is not worth looking at, but space which conceals something inside. I want to draw the viewer's attention to the ground as I would like to break the visual tradition which prioritizes the figure.



Figure 21, Detail from *Finally/Unfortunately 4*, 2006

When I exhibit these works, I realize that spectators are very impatient to see the revelation of the lemon juice drawings. I consider this curiosity to be the consequence of the desire to transform the hidden and unknown area into knowledge. Satisfaction is

expected from this transformation. In a sense, these images exist on a very thin line. They may be considered to be satisfying when they reveal what they hide, but this is not my intention. My aim is not to satisfy the spectator with a revelation. Instead, I would like my images to keep on concealing, even if the lemon juice traces are appear on the paper.

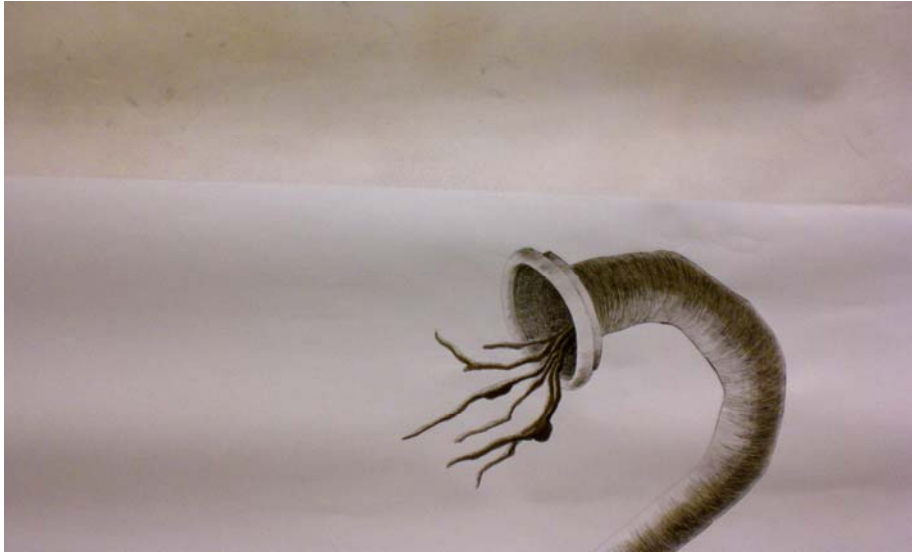


Figure 22, Detail from *Finally/Unfortunately 4*, 2006

In other words, my aim is not to transform the background into the figure, but to emphasize their mutability. Such as the brown ink drawings, lemon juice drawings do not give enough information to the spectator to “understand” the image. I do not want the marks of ink and lemon juice to reveal themselves. In opposition to what is expected, I aim to retain ‘the concealed’ within the image.

As a conclusion, my purpose is to let the mark and the image concur on the surface of the paper in these works, as I use the figure and the ground as reversible and mutable elements.

## ii) *Üstünde* / *Whereon*

*“The body that opens itself to the sun and looks at the sun, will not be able to write its own writing unless it falls on its four feet; it will not be able to experience itself as one of the signs which not only writes but at the same time are being written, and not only see but at the same time is being seen.”*  
(Sayın, 179)

In this work, I drew on a sheet with silicon which makes the drawings embossed. Then I spread out the sheet on a bed. I laid on the bed and changed the position of my body every 20 minutes. The silicon drawings left marks on the parts of my body that I was lying on. Meanwhile, two cameras recorded a video of the parts of my body which had marks of the sheet. The cameras recorded until the marks disappeared.



Figure 23, View from the video *Whereon*, 2007

Afterwards, I made a collage out of my body parts using the video footage. I made an indefinable figure out of them, as I do in my drawings and paintings, too. I also

accelerated the video in order to clarify the fading out of the marks. Finally I projected the video on the ground.

My aim in this work is to use my body and the sheet as figure and ground in transition. My body is a figure, since I am actively lying on the bed. But it is also a ground, in the sense that the sheet is acting on my body by leaving marks on it. The sheet as well is both active and passive. It is a ground which is laid on, but also a figure which leaves traces on me. The sheet and the drawings on it are subjects, which are not only active, but also passive in the way I use them.



Figure 24, View from the video *Whereon*, 2007

In a relation between a sheet and a body, the sheet is the object and is passive whereas the body is supposed to be the active subject. I seek to reverse this relation. I created a situation where the body is passive as well as active and the sheet is active as well as passive. My aim was to do away with the binary opposition of the figure to the ground and situate them in a transition.





Figure 25, the making of *Whereon*, 2007

The opposition between the vertical and the horizontal is another important concern I have in this work. Like the figure, verticality is privileged in relation with horizontality. According to Freud and Bataille, this aim originates from the vertical status of human. “Like Freud, Bataille thinks that the human's desire to dominate the space in which he takes part, rather than being included within it, is connected with the vertical standing position of human.”( Sayın, 163)

My body had a horizontal posture while making the video when I lay on the sheet, and during the exhibition when the video is projected on the ground. I use the horizontal position in order to break the pattern of domination and submission between human and space. If a human being gives up her/his verticality, she/he is not dominating anymore. The horizontal position allows a perception through which a human being's existence is determined by space as well as herself/himself. In other words, horizontality brings a different perception of subjectivity than a subjectivity which only sees and dominates, and is thus unilateral. Horizontality “is the moment when a human being (...) perceives herself as a subject who not only sees but also is seen by the space.” (Sayın, 163)

This one minute video is in a loop which begins with the most visible state of the marks. At the end of the video, the marks become indistinguishable. The video starts again. It is difficult to distinguish the slow change of the marks during the video. However, when the video re-starts and the distinctive marks appear again, the difference between the beginning and the end is clear. Therefore, the video shows the fading out of

the marks in a gradual and concealed way, however eventually makes it clear how the marks have changed in one minute.



Figure 26, Views from the video *Whereon*, 2007

Finally, this video brings another point of view to the issues I deal with. I decided to use the medium of video for this work in order to benefit from the possibilities it provides. When I first intended to make a work with marks left on my body by linen, I realized that I cannot paint or draw it. Moreover, any other medium like performance, photography and installation would not be as appropriate as video for this work. Video, as a time based medium gave me the opportunity to document the temporal marks and gave me the chance to show the process of fading out of the marks.

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## QUOTATIONS IN THE ORIGINAL

“İmge yalnızca görünmeyi kendi içinde saklayan ve ardında tükenmez bir çeyiz barındıran perdedir.” (Sayın, 12)

“Bunun ne olduğunu anlamak, ne olmadığını anlamakla mümkün olabilmektedir” (Pavel, 13)

“İmge mekanında neyin önde neyin arkada, neyin uzakta neyin yakında olduğunu belirleyen bu perspektif, yalnızca görüneni değil, görünmeyi de ehlilleştirir, onu karşıdan bakılabilir ve denetlenebilir bir uzama dönüştürdüğü için bakışı tatmin etmekte, bakana egemenlik bahşetmektedir.” (Sayın, 16)

“Resimlerimin arasından insanlar geçmiş gibi görünmelerini isterim. Tıpkı bir salyangozun iz bırakması gibi insan varlığının bıraktığı izin görünmesi.” (Bacon quoted in Altınel, 47)

“artık bugünde yer almayan, geçmişten soluklanan bir dokunuştur” (Sayın, 22)

“Kumsalda bir kereliğine bırakılan bir ayak izi, dalgalar çoktan alıp götürmüş olsada, o bir kerelik dokunuşun etkisini sürdürecektir” (Sayın, 85)

“Kaldı ki imgede izi sürülen, geçmişle bugüne aynı anda uzanan bir imge ise, görünenle beraber görünenin ardında yatan görünmeyi görünür kıldığını elbette iddia edemeyecektir.” (Sayın, 22)

“Kişinin dolaylı ya da dolaysız ilişki kurduğu ama hiçbir şekilde itiraf etmediği herşey gölge arketipinin kapsamına girmektedir. Karakterimizin aşağılık derecesindeki nitelikleri ve kendileriyle uzlaşma sağlayamadığımız eğilimlerimiz gölge arketipinin içeriğine örnek olarak verilebilir.” (Sambur, 95 )

“Adam uygar olan herşey – bilgili, kibar, idealist, nezih. Gölge ise, nezih(chaste), uygar bir yetişkin olma sürecinde baskı altına alınan herşey. Gölge, adamın engellenmiş bencilliği, hiç etmediği küfürler,hiç işlemediği cinayetler. Gölge onun ruhunun karanlık yüzü, kabul edilmeyen ve kabul edilemez olan” (Le guin, 31 )

“Herkes gölge bir kişiliğe sahip olmasına rağmen çoğunlukla insanlar gölge taraflarıyla yüzlemekten kaçınılmaktadırlar, çünkü bu bölgedeki şeyler kesinlikle çok acı veren şeylerdir. Biz gölge tarafımıza bakmaktan hiç hoşlanmayız.” (Sambur, 96)

“İnsanın bir yanı, hayvansı bedeni olduğu sürece varolacak ilksel, hayvansı yaradılışına aittir, öte yandan, ruhun en yüce hali ile ilişkilidir. Ancak ruh ile içgüdüğü doğru uyum içindeyken, gelişip serpilir. Herhangi birinden yoksunsa, sonuç hastalığa yol açar, ya da kolayca maraziliğe dönecek bir tekyanlılık olur. İnsanda,

aşırı kaçan hayvansılık, uygar kişiyi hasta eder, aşırı uygarlıksa hasta hayvanlar yetiştirir.” (Jung, 110)

“Sanırım Antik Yunan takviyeli Yeniçağla beraber üstü örtülmeye çalışılan şey hep bu gölgeden kaynaklanmaktadır.” (Sayın, 48)

“Bu olumsuz yanımız olmadan bütünleşemeyeceğimizi, tıpkı öteki cisimler gibi, bizim de, gölgede kalan bir yanı olan bu bedeni yadsıyacak olursak, üç boyutlu olmaktan çıkıp, dümdüz, tatsız tuzsuz bir duruma geleceğimizi bize duyuran bir güç olmalı. Ne var ki, bu beden, hayvan ruhlu bir hayvandır, içgüdüye kayıtsız şartsız boyun eğen bir organizmadır. Kişinin gölge yanı ile özdeşleşmesi, içgüdüyü, arkaplanda sinmiş duran o korkunç dinamizm kabul etmek demektir. Hristiyanlığın sofu ahlakı bizi bundan kurtarmak istemektedir, ancak bunu, insanın hayvan doğasını derinden altüst etmesi pahasına gerçekleştirmektedir.” (Jung, 113)

“Bir yerimizde, masanın altına atmaya can attığımız her şeyi saklayan, gizleyen, kötü niyetlerle istif eden, kendi etimiz ve kanımızdan uğursuz ve korkunç bir kardeşimiz var.” (Jung, 121)

“İçimizdeki 'öteki' gerçekten bir başkasıdır, gerçekte düşünen, eylemde bulunan, duyan, iğrenç ve alçakça olan her şeyi arzulayan sahici bir insandır.” (Jung, 117)

“O birey gerçek birlikteliğe, kendini bilmeye ve yaratıcılığa doğru adım atmış olur, büyümüştür. Çünkü gölge eşikte bekler. Onun bilinçdışının yaratıcı derinliklerine giden yolu tıkamasına izin verebiliriz, ya da bizi elimizden tutup o derinliklere götürmesine razı oluruz. Çünkü gölge, basitçe kötü değildir. Aşağılık, ilkel, sakil, hayvansı, çocuksudur; güçlü, canlı, spontanedir....nezih değildir; kara, kıllı ve yakışsızdır, ama onsuz kişi hiçbir şeydir. Gölgesi olmayan bir gövde nedir ki? Hiçbir şey, bir biçimsizlik, iki boyutlu bir çizgi roman karakteri. Kötülükle olan derin ilişkimi inkar edersem, kendi gerçekliğimi inkar etmiş olurum. Hiçbir şey yapamam, edemem; ancak yapılanı ve edileni bozabilirim.” (Le Guin, 35)

“Ne akılcı düşünce, ne akılcı etik, hayal eden zihnin bu derin ve garip düzeylerini açıklayamaz” (Le Guin, 389)

“Hacmin içinde saklanan görünmezlik dehşet verici, tedirgin edici ve karanlıktır; ehlilleştirmeye meydan okuyan, gözü yuvasından uğratan bir çeyiz barındırır. Bu tür bir dehşet gerek Yeniden doğuş, gerekse Aydınlanma mantığı içinde açıklamasız kalmaktadır.” (Sayın, 23)

“İz hayvanlara özgü hareketlerin bıraktığı izlenimlerdir (impressions), külün, ateşin izi ya da harap olmuş bir toprak parçasının düşman bir ordunun izi olması gibi.” (Sayın, 19)

“Kendini güneşe açan ve güneşe bakan beden, dört ayağı üzerine kapanmadığı sürece beden yazısını yazamayacak, kendini yalnızca yazan değil, aynı zamanda yazılan, yalnızca bakan değil, aynı zamanda bakılan göstergelerden biri olarak yaşantılayamayacaktır.” (Sayın, 179)

“Freud gibi Battaille de insanın içinde yer aldığı mekana dahil olacağı yerde, ona egemen olma isteği duymasının dikilmeyle ilintili olduğunu düşünür.” (Sayın, 163)

“kişinin....kendini gören değil, aynı zamanda mekan tarafından görülen bir özne olarak algıladığı andır.”(Sayın, 163)