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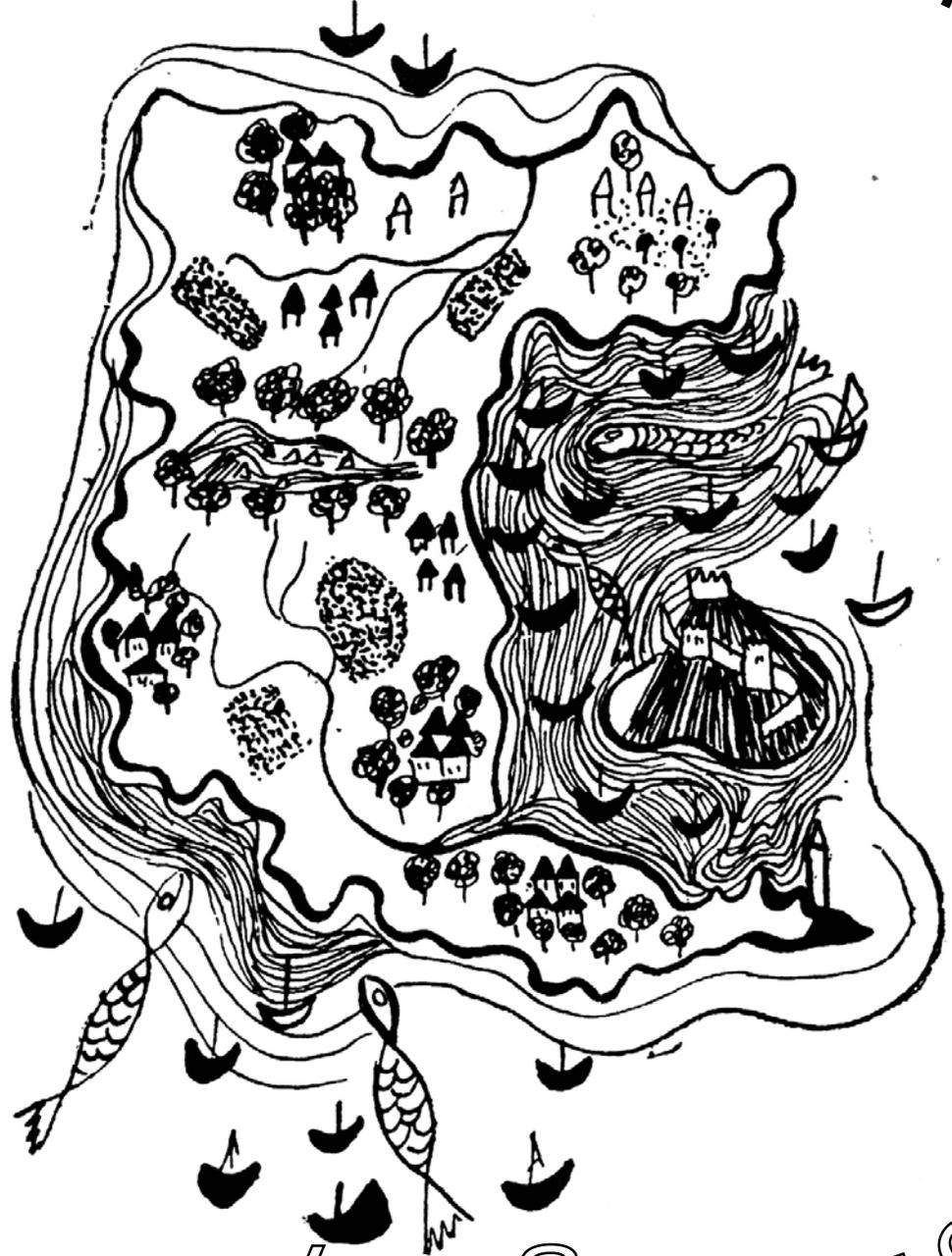
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You have got a letter from Ivi Stangali

Ivi Stangali is an artist who was trained and later worked at Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu atelier at the academy between 1942-1949 and 1949-1964 respectively. She is one of the founder members of the Group On'lar established in 1947. Stangali was expelled from Turkey during the 1964 expulsions which resulted in the expulsion of twelve thousand Greeks, and she lived in Athens for the rest of her life. The only available resources on her artistic production are the books she illustrated. Among these books are *Ütopya* [Utopia] (1986), *Ateş Yakmak* [Lighting A Fire] (1953), *Cüceler Çarşısı* [Dwarf Market](1955), and *İlyada Destanı* [The Iliad](1962). Her most famous work are the illustrations she drew for the Turkish translation of the Iliad by Azra Erhat and A. Kadir. Hera Büyüктаşçıyan and Dilek Winchester have taken two exhibitions, "20 Dollars, 20 Kilos" and "Letters from Bedri Rahmi Eyüpoğlu and His Contemporaries- We Used to Write Letters", as a point of departure for their research. We can find the traces of Stangali's experience of being in exile, in a letter she wrote to her professor immediately after coming to Athens, dated November 10, 1964 . There is no evidence that she continued with her artistic productions afterwards. Due to her identity and gender, she has been made invisible. The traces of her artistic practice remains hidden among book pages without much tangible data elsewhere. The Iliad, which Stangali illustrated, addresses the displaced humanity but it also bears the traces of the displacement of an artist who sees the world from a different perspective and struggles to create a space of belonging for herself in the social, political and emotional sense.

This work is dedicated to the memory of Ivi Stangali.

Apricots from Damascus



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Hera Büyüктаşçıyan, Istanbul

Ivi Stangali by Dilek Winchester & Hera

Dedicated to Issue 08 Damascus

November 10th, 1964

My dear professor,

It's been twenty days since I arrived here, and I could not write a single line to you. Who knows what you thought about that! In fact, I am having difficulty writing now, too. I have a terrible vacuum inside me, I cannot get involved with anything... Athens is a beautiful city, but not under these conditions. No home, no sea, both of which I am terribly longing for. I could paint, but my paints are in İstanbul. They are too expensive here, and I don't have a place either.

As some wooded mountain-spur that stretches across a plain will turn water and check the flow even of a great river, nor is there any stream strong enough to break through it- even so did the two Ajaxes face the Trojans and stern the tide of their fighting though they kept pouring on towards them and foremost among them all was Aeneas son of Anchises with valiant Hector.



I don't want to get to know the people around here, I am always busy with the things in İstanbul. Studio... Home... Mühürdar coast, the sound of seagulls, the pigeons on Saynur's roof... No sea, no pigeons, no seagull sound, no cats for twenty days.

Thus did they make their moan throughout the city, while the Achaeans when they reached the Hellespont went back every man to his own ship.



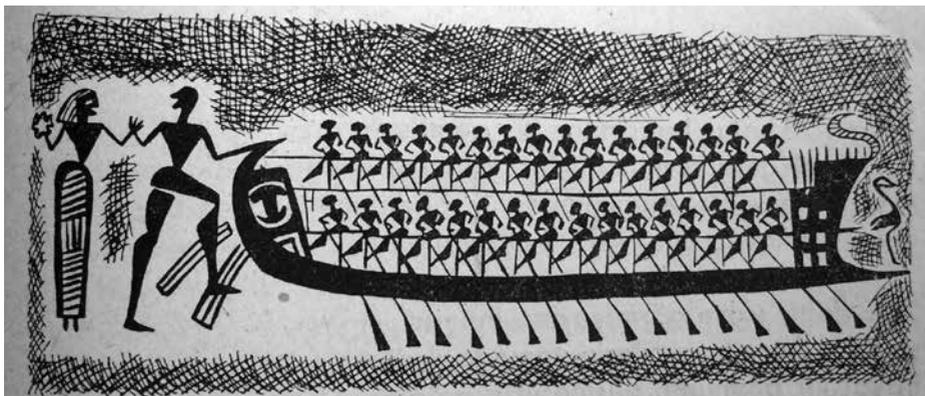
Many people were crying on the plane, and I, more than others. But as soon as we started descending to the Athens Airport, everybody started laughing, joking around with one another. And I, how can I say, I felt something like death.

A thousand camp-fires gleamed upon the plain, and in the glow of each there sat fifty men, while the horses, champing oats and corn beside their chariots, waited till dawn should come.



Journalists surrounded us with their flashing cameras, constantly taking photos. I was able to avoid them by turning my back, but Maya could not save herself. She was the one whom they bothered the most, and showing her to one another, they were saying "A dangerous person for Turkey" and laughing all together.

...for he was angry with the king and sent a pestilence upon the host to plague the people, because the son of Atreus had dishonoured Chryses his priest. Now Chryses had come to the ships of the Achaeans to free his daughter...



They had a compassionate countenance, an excessively compassionate one, and were talking to me as though I was something fragile.

All day long from morn till eve, was I falling, till at sunset I came to ground in the island of Lemnos, and there I lay, with very little life left in me, till the Sintians came and tended me.



I don't want to know anyone. I was able to get to know only a lady. This lady reminded me of Aliye Hanım. She is a singer, now over fifty; she is making little money but she is still singing. This lady directed me to an editor, actually she introduced me to the editor. The editor will direct me to a publishing house. I have with me the books that I illustrated; I will show these to them.

Can we hope to find helpers hereafter, or a wall to shield us more surely than the one we have? There is no strong city within reach, whence we may draw fresh forces to turn the scales in our favour. We are on the plain of the armed Trojans with the sea behind us, and far from our own country. Our salvation, therefore, is in the might of our hands and in hard fighting.



I have been searching for a way to go back to İstanbul, but I came to the following conclusion: I have to work and make some money first because you cannot return anywhere without money, be it Paris, Bulgaria, or directly İstanbul.

“Why, son of Peleus, do you, who are but man, give chase to me who am immortal? Have you not yet found out that it is a god whom you pursue so furiously? You did not harass the Trojans whom you had routed, and now they are within their walls, while you have been decoyed hither away from them. Me you cannot kill, for death can take no hold upon me.”



How is Nedim doing? How come he did not call? I will write to Saynur, too. I wrote to auntie, and I received her reply yesterday. She says that she had been ill for so long, and she was very worried. She is cleaning up and ventilating the house for my return.

Tell me about there at length. How are you doing, who are you seeing, what are you getting angry with, what is making you happy?...

Please do not be angry with me because I could not write you until now... I am very very bad, I cannot express.

When he had thus spoken his eyes were closed in death, his soul left his body and flitted down to the house of Hades, mourning its sad fate and bidding farewell to the youth and vigor of its manhood.

With much love,

Ivi Stangali