

Herkesten bir anı ----- Like roads, in my veins
Saklar --- The memories are hidden
Bu yollar --- Of every single lover
Herkesin acısı --- I had
Sevgisi --- Everyone's pain
Kadar --- Is as big as
Güzelmiş, --- Their love
Çirkinmiş --- Pretty or ugly
ne farkeder ki? --- It doesn't matter
Deli gibi --- It's in our souls
Sevmek --- To fall in love
Ruhumuzda var --- Madly.

These lyrics are from the song 'Hangimiz Sevmedik?' by Müslüm Gürses, an Armenian-Turkish musician. Meaning 'Who hasn't fallen in love?'. The song is written and sung by Müslüm Gürses, widely known as 'Baba' (Father) among Turkish society, who was the most popular singer of the music genre 'arabesque.'

Arabesque is a hybrid-genre, mixing Turkish classical and folk elements with Western and Egyptian styles. It was founded by the immigrants of Turkey, moving to bigger cities, having financial issues and struggling with modernity.

The mournful poems of Arabesque music reflect a transitional period -a collective memory of displacement. It was first produced in the city of pain and glory- Istanbul by the new residents, suffering from non-belonging. It became a new language that these new residents, mainly labourers, could express themselves with - a language of hope, separation, desire and love.

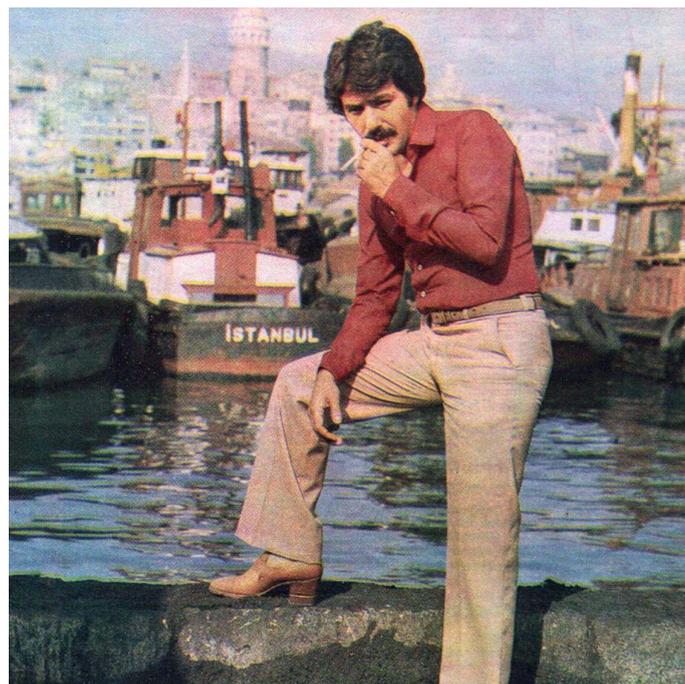
Leaving their small towns, families and lovers behind, new residents were in a big city to achieve their dreams but it all seemed far away by the end of the night. In the mid 50s, the Turkish government didn't offer much for these rural migrants.

They were even left deprived of one's most basic rights, such as housing.

However, they built their own houses, or urban squatter settlements.

That specific type of housing, called 'gecekondu' in Turkish, is originally made bringing 2 words together the night and to perch. It refers to immigrants and how like timid birds, they'd perch on the city and build a home for themselves, with their own hands, in a night.

Having to settle outside of the city, they could only watch what they wished to be a part of. In this melancholic atmosphere, their resistance against the capitalist system, modernity or so-called 'westernisation' and rising expectations and rage has emerged arabesque culture which is reflected in human relations, clothing, cinema, music; in other words, many aspects of social life.



A photo of Ferdi Tayfur, an arabesque singer known as 'Ferdi Baba' after he moved to Istanbul in the 70s.