

↳ CLEANING  
OPERATION

17TH INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE EXHIBITION  
LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA  
PAVILION OF TURKEY

BARIŞ  
SEYİTVAN  
AND  
MEHMET  
ALİ BORAN

Architecture<sup>12</sup> as<sup>2</sup> Measure<sup>7</sup>  
Ölçü<sup>4</sup> Olarak<sup>6</sup> Mimarlık<sup>8</sup>

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Bariş Seyitvan and Mehmet Ali Boran, Cleaning Operation, 2019.

Ilisu Dam began construction in 2006 as a hydroelectric facility and started operating in 2020. Even though hydroelectric power plants are often attributed a certain innocence due to their clean energy production, they also do immense harm to their environment and nature. While hundreds of caves witnessed explosions during the construction process of Ilisu Dam, hundreds of villages were also cleared out. Such actions to construct the dam are threats not only for a single species; they constitute environmental injustice for all living and non-living beings in the region.

The Dam has flooded the town of Hasankeyf, forced thousands of people to migrate, and caused hundreds of architectural structures to disappear. When Hasankeyf's urban image will no longer be imprinted on the memories of a region that lies within the migratory path of storks, will this create a confusing path for this species or result in an inability to find the path of their ancestors?

By portraying the removal of the dust left by the machines used in the dam construction, this video focuses on how a historical site, the ancient city of Hasankeyf, the terrain it stood on for almost ten thousand years, and all of its other elements—its atmosphere, structures, bacteria, and parasites formed in time or made by people—were flooded, erased from maps, and destroyed. The project takes us to a moment right before Hasankeyf's overview and its Google Earth images were deleted and right before it will be impossible to be located from afar and cleanses the site's rocks, trees, weeds, markets, and structures that will no longer exist along with the very machines that left clouds of dust on the site as the dam was being built.

## About the authors

Barış Seyitvan is an artist and curator who lives in Diyarbakır and Berlin.

Mehmet Ali Boran lives in Mardin and researches the security systems of the new era through 'kalecols' [castle stations], mines, asphalt coating works and hydroelectric power plants.