



EXAMINING AUTHENTICITY OF GOUACHE PAINTED LETTER OF FIKRET MOULLA

Mustafa Okudan*, Aysegul Sen Yilmaz*, Faruk Ascioglu*

*Istanbul University Institute of Forensic Medicine



INTRODUCTION

Fikret Moualla, one of most important modern Turkish painting artists, was born in Istanbul in 1903 and died in France in 1967. He had a blissful childhood in Istanbul. He graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Berlin. The city's bohemian lifestyle inspired him to get into modern art. He spent last quarter of his life in Paris. He came across financial difficulties in Paris during the Second World War. For this reason, he offered to give his gouache paintings to waitress to pay the bills and wrote his friends who were living in Turkey using his gouache painted letter paper to ask them to send traditional food and drinks [1].

He had an improvisational style and painted mostly nudes, landscapes, Paris streets, marketplaces, cafés, bars, jazz musicians, card players, children, animals. It is also known that he painted very fast and composed several small art pieces.

This case came to our laboratory by its owner asking its authenticity. An art object which is suspected to belong to Fikret Moualla's work of art was submitted to ask for an expert opinion from Istanbul University, Institute of Forensic Medicine. This document has been presented here due to being the first painting analysis using handwriting and document analysis in the world according to our knowledge.

CASE

The art object requested to be analyzed for authenticity is the paper which contains both gouache painting and handwriting (Figure 1) and an envelope it was delivered (Figure 4). The purpose of the analysis is to determine the authenticity of the handwriting and whether the painting is created by Muoalla. Examination has been carried out by Stereo- Microscope (Lecia M205, Germany) and VSC 8000 Video Spectral Comparator (Foster Freeman, UK). Several books about Fikret Moualla in which contains his known handwring letters have been used as comparison materials.

Investigation of the letter on where gouache paintings at top :

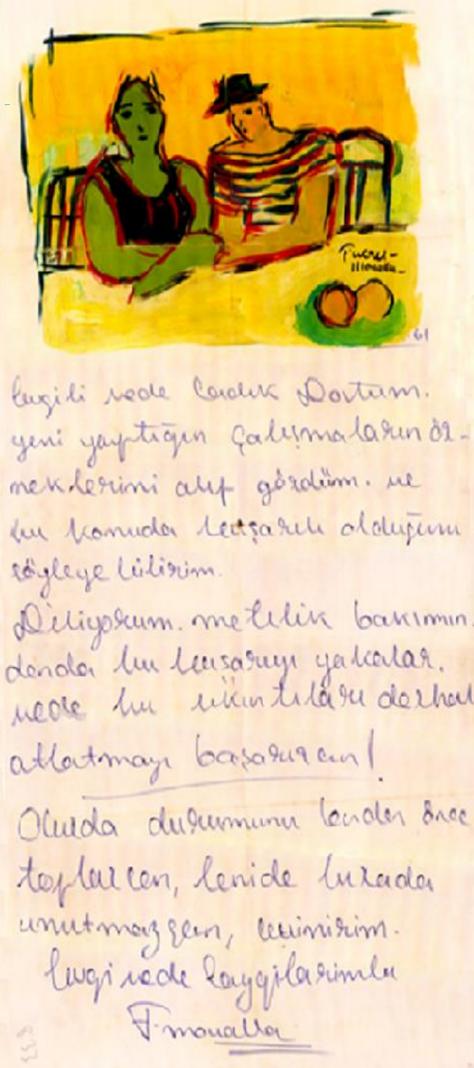


Figure1: Questioned Gouche Paintings

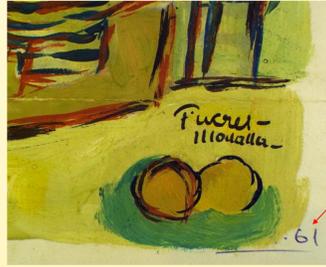


Figure2: The year of paintings (red arrow)

| | Letter Comparison Table | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|
| | Letters From Known Hand Writings | | Letters From Requested Letters | |
| b | | | | |
| D | | | | |
| d | | | | |
| k | | | | |
| p | | | | |
| r | | | | |
| S | | | | |
| ş | | | | |

Figure3: Questioned Gouche Paintings

Investigation of the stamps and seals on the envelop:



Figure 4: Envelop of the letter

- ✓ Perforations of all stamps are worn out and include adhesive residues
- ✓ The wavy (undulation lines) and Eiffel tower seals on the purple stamp are too simple (Figure 4).



Figure 5: Stamp issued in 1962

- ✓ The frame of the seal on the landscaped stamp is lack on top (Figure 7-Red arrow)
- ✓ The seal on the landscape stamp (right uppermost) is dated in 1958 (Figure 6- elliptical circle). The gouges painting has the date 1961, however the issuing year of the stamp which includes castle is 1962 (Figure 5) Lit. no Web linkinin [3].



Figure 6: The year of the seal

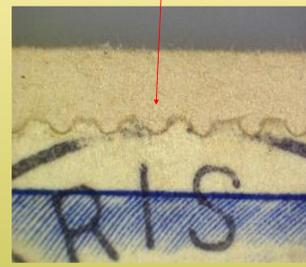


Figure 7: Frame of the seal is lacked on top

CONCLUSION

The evaluation report are given as “the handwriting on questioned letter is not written by Fikret Moualla”, “the stamps on the envelope is transferred from previously used ones”, “the wavy and Eiffel tower seals on the purple stamp is probably faked by forger”. As a result, these evidences are shown that the paintings on top of the letter are not belong to Fikret Moualla.

As a conclusion, analyzing a hand writing and / or a signature of a painter, if available, can be an alternative approach to other technical methods like surface examination, background analysis, and close body examination of the paintings using scientific tools in order to detect forgery [4].

REFERENCES

- [1] CEBRAĞLOĞLU, Orhan. “Yaratıcılığın Dualistik Sınırlarında Fikret Mualla Gerçeği” Idil Journal, Vol 1/5, 2012
- [2] “Biography of Fikret Mualla Saygi”. Archived from the original on October 8, 1999. Retrived April 2, 2005.
- [3] [https:// www.wikitimbres.fr/timbres/2375/chateau-de-fougeres](https://www.wikitimbres.fr/timbres/2375/chateau-de-fougeres)
- [4] JEHANE, Ragai “The Scientifi c Detection of Forgery in Paintings” Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, Vol.157, No:2, 2013

CONTACT INFORMATIONS

Corresponding Author : Faruk Ascioglu, MD.,PhD.
Director, Institute of Forensic Medicine, Istanbul University
faruk.ascioglu@istabul.edu.tr