

**Pre-Winners' Story**

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HPA2017 Winners' Story

HPA2015 Winners' Story

HPA2015-Aydin Cetinbostanoglu-Last Duty for Priest Sami

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In Celebration of UNESCO's 70th Anniversary (2015)
International Decade
for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022)

Humanity Photo Awards 2015 "Winners' Stories" Series 21

Aydin Cetinbostanoglu (Turkey)

Traditional Rites Performance Award
Production & Commerce Performance Award
Living Custom Performance Award

Title: Last Duty for Priest Sami
Nationality: Turk
Time: February 24, 2014
Place: Antakya, Turkey



Title: Tobacconists in Adiyaman
Nationality: Turk
Time: April 14-August 17, 2014
Place: Adiyaman, Turkey

Title: Ramadan Meal at the Xi'an Grand Mosque
Nationality: Hui
Time: June 30-July 1, 2014
Place: Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, China

Winner's Story

He became one of the friends I made through photography. This is why I love documentary photography.

"Last Duty for Priest Sami" was an unscheduled work for me. He was my friend and a religious leader of a little society living in Antakya who speaks and prays in Arabic.

When I heard the news of his passing, I jumped on the first bus I could find in Istanbul and arrived in Antakya 15 hours later. His body was at the church morgue.

Antakya (Old Antioch) is one of the most important cities of the Christian world. Christian Arabs have lived and worshipped there for the last 2000 years. They are Arabic-speaking and pray in

Arabic. Between 2005 and 2014, I have travelled many times to Antakya in order to watch and photograph the rituals of this 1500-strong people. They grew to trust me and after a while we became friends. Sami, the aging priest of the church, was one of them. This man of God had served his church for sixty years. He played a part in each and every member of his congregation in Antakya. He married them, baptized them, mediated conflicts. He became one of the friends I made through photography. This is why I love documentary photography. I have made many friends through it. I visited him at his home each time I was in Antakya and I had the chance to talk with him at length. However, as a friend, I had one last duty to him. This also gives me the opportunity to document an interesting ritual.

"If you are not close enough to the subject, your photo is not nice". This means "Be a part of the subject."

One of the founders of Magnum Agency and legendary photographer, Robert Capa, saying: "If you are not close enough to the subject, your photo is not nice". This is the philosophy of the subject." I also use this philosophy for myself. I take photographs of people in Anatolia for a long time. Because of this I can work with them more easily and have good relationships with them today. I share life with them and over time, the photo becomes a part of me.

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When I was young, I had to learn a job to earn money. In 1960s the only way to learn a job was working with a master. I had to choose this path. In 1970 I took my first photograph with the camera which I borrowed from a friend. I was able to earn money by selling out photos I took. Besides earning money, I started taking photographs by myself and showed them to my art teacher in high school. He sent me to a friend who manages a library. And I opened my first exhibition while I was a high school student in 1973.

After graduating from high school in 1973, I traveled around Anatolia with money I had saved. This was the first encounter with the people of Anatolia, and culture. After I graduated from the university, I continued to travel and photograph Anatolia. I accepted the colors of different cultural traditions of Anatolia.

Cultures create memory of a community and should be documented and moved to the future.

Cultures are values which teach humanism and love to the followers from past till today. They create memory of a community and should be documented and moved to the future. Therefore, I care a lot about the effectiveness of CFPA. Together, we are moving into the future by contributing to the world's memory.

Work on cultural issues is both difficult and fun. First of all photographers must recognize culture which they want to work and they should be accepted by the culture. Then they can start working and become invisible to the subjects. When the work is finished they will undoubtedly learn something from them, perhaps the world outlook of them will change.

To take photographs and to be a photographer are different things. Photos are taken by eyes which see difference from the reality. If there is no eye that can see the difference and beauty, there is no good photograph. A camera is just a tool. If people who engaged with photography can develop themselves in cultural aspects they can take good images. A photographer must be a little bit sociologist, a little bit historian, a little bit painter and etc.

Photo Story

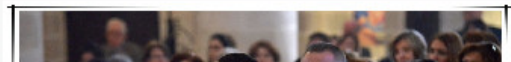
Last Duty for Priest Sami



1. Sami's coffin being carried out of the church morgue amidst prayers. Because he was a ranking priest, the metropolitan bishop from the church of Beirut came to direct his funeral.



2. Priests carrying the coffin to the altar for the funeral ceremony.





3. Funeral in the altar.



4. Everyone has a deep silence. They present their respects to the father who left a mark in their lives.

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5. The man who kisses Sami's hands may be thinking back on his wedding ceremony presided by the deceased priest.



6. Some women paying their respects to Sami by caressing his hands.



7. She is a refugee from Somalia. Antakya is the last stop of her long journey over from Africa.



8. The church is once again packed with people. But this time, the congregation is here to pay their respects to their late Father.



9. Father Dimitri was formed by Sami. Next in line, he will be the master of ceremonies.



10. The church ceremony came to an end with a speech on his life.



11. After the ceremony at the church, the coffin being carried to the cemetery.

12. The clergymen blessing the coffin by throwing dirt on it, which symbolizes the journey back into earth.



Tips: The other two stories *Tobacconists in Adiyaman* and *Ramadan Meal at the Xi'an Grand Mosque* can be viewed in the Gallery of HPA award-winning works after the award ceremony.

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