



Press Contact:
Erin L. Cox
347-581-0211
erinlcox@gmail.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**GOETHE-INSTITUT ANNOUNCES DUNCAN LIEN AS WINNER
OF THE 2020 GUTEKUNST PRIZE
OF THE FRIENDS OF GOETHE NEW YORK**

New York, NY (May 27, 2020)— Today, the Goethe-Institut is pleased to announce Duncan Lien as the recipient of this year's Gutekunst Prize of the Friends of Goethe New York. Each applicant for the award was asked to translate an excerpt from Dilek Güngör's novel *Ich bin Özlem (I am Özlem)*. A jury consisting of writer and editor Jeremy Davies and translators Tess Lewis and Alta L. Price evaluated the anonymous submissions and came to a unanimous decision.

"Duncan Lien's supple translation not only persuasively captures Özlem's voice but also the contradictory and complementary emotions and tones that shift throughout the narrative," said the jury in their statement. "There is a sense of shame pervading her account but also one of pride, impatience with her heritage and nostalgia for it, genuine affection for her family and a longing to shed what they represent. Sometimes these emotions alternate, sometimes they overlap. His accomplishment in these eleven pages is having found the register, vocabulary, and rhythm to make them tangible. This year the 34 entries were particularly strong but Duncan Lien's stood out for its inventiveness and *sprezzatura*."

Lien is a third year Ph.D. candidate in Comparative Literature at Penn State University who specializes in transnational German literature with a focus on German-Turkish literary relations. His dissertation project examines the intersection of Cold War-era labor and political migration in the genesis of Turkish-German literature. Additionally, Duncan has published on Turkish-Albanian literary encounters and his article "Rehearsing Better Worlds: Poetry as A Way of Happening in the Works of Tomlinson and MacDiarmid" appeared in *Philosophy and Literature*.

"Dilek Güngör's 2007 work *Das Geheimnis meiner türkischen Großmutter* was one of my first encounters with Turkish-German writing so it was a particular pleasure to return to her latest novel *Ich bin Özlem* as a translator," said Lien. "Since then I have lived in Turkey and come to a position of familiarity with Turkish culture as an intimate outsider. Although fundamentally different from the protagonist Özlem, who is born in Germany to Turkish parents, this did offer me a privileged position to appreciate her often ambivalent relationship to elements of Turkish culture. Moreover, it helped to make clear that neither the character nor her story can be understood solely in terms of cultural conflict."

Lien will take part in an event “digital salon: Translating Cultural Identity” on June 13th at 3pm EDT. Translators Alta L. Price and Tess Lewis join Lien for a discussion about the role of translation in articulating questions of cultural exchange and identity. Lien will read from his winning translation. Click [here](#) to register.

The prize was created in 2010, a generous donation in memory of Frederick and Grace Gutekunst, to identify outstanding young translators of German literature into English and assist them in establishing contact with the translation and publishing communities. The prize has been supported by the Friends of Goethe New York since 2017.

The Goethe-Institut is Germany’s cultural institute, operating worldwide with currently 159 branches in 98 countries. We promote knowledge of the German language abroad and foster international cultural collaborations. Combining cross-cultural expertise with the experiences of local partners, we support and advise cultural institutions and artists, universities and schools, local authorities and businesses with an interest in Germany and its language and culture.