



## INTRODUCTION

### *To Draw the Curtain*

I have selected the title *Torn is the Curtain* as a gateway into the vivid tapestry of cultural expression, inherently self-aware of impermanence. Taken from the evocative verses embedded within the curtain poems of Turkish shadow play: ‘yıktın perdeyi, eyledin viran / varayım sahibine haber vereyim heman’ (‘Torn is the curtain, left are the ruins behind / Let me hasten to the master and speak my mind’), this phrase may initially sound enigmatic but resonates with the inherent materiality of the shadow play itself. Chanted at the end of each show, these phrases functioned as the tearing of the fourth wall in shadow theatre. Here, the silhouettes of puppets cast reflections upon a white cloth curtain, imprinting upon the collective consciousness. Curiously, this legacy persists in contemporary Turkish vernacular, as the cinema screen continues to be referred to as the ‘curtain’. Exploring the history of early film production, I came across a cinematographic use of a curtain, beyond a decorative *mise en scène*, to refer to the materiality of cinema. A 1919 film made about a courtesan living in eighteenth-century Istanbul, *Binnaz* (Ahmet Fehim, Turkey, 1919), uses close-ups and point-of-view shots peeping through the opening of a curtain, instead of an early film classic keyhole shot, to show us voyeurism and belly dancing in a sensual harem setting. Regardless of the apparent self-Orientalist tactics, the film places the curtain as a self-reflexive tool. Among the only women who worked behind the camera was Sabahat Filmer. In her memoirs, Filmer, as a pioneering figure in Turkish cinema, unveils a determining moment a few years after the production of *Binnaz*, in 1923. Filmer describes orchestrating a cinema experience that transcended societal norms by dismantling the practice of segregating male and (Muslim) female audience members with a physical curtain. This symbolic act marked a seismic shift in Ottoman film cultures’ etiquette, embodying the spirit of rapid change that characterised the era.

Torn is the Curtain  
Early Film Cultures in Istanbul

Canan Balan

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Moreover, the titular phrase extends its reach to capture the ruptures instigated by photographic images within the Ottoman visual corpus.

Beyond the tangible barriers of curtains, this book explores the intangible ones lifted and fluctuations unveiled by the cinema. My exploration is interwoven with an analysis of the Ottoman/Turkish intelligentsia's patriarchal ambivalence towards cinema, mirroring the broader societal shifts and sometimes violent reconfigurations that permeated the established frameworks of Ottoman cultural heritage. In essence, *Torn is the Curtain* explores the intersections of gender, religion, shadow play, the emergence of film cultures, and societal transformations to scrutinise the shifts in cultural narratives and intellectual discourse surrounding the early film cultures of Istanbul.

My labour on this topic began by investigating the interplay between Ottoman/Turkish modernity and cinema, particularly against the backdrop of turn-of-the-twentieth-century spectatorship practices and the silent cinema era. While my view on the complex relationship of cinema with modernity deepened, it also changed to the point of recognising multiple modernities as an attitude towards diverse film cultures around the world that managed to serve, to use Appadurai's term, 'community of sentiments'.<sup>1</sup> The more I explored the subject the more I came across terminology on essentialist binaries such as East and West, male and female, moral and immoral, and the ways that they were used to construct Turkish nationalism that stemmed from 'Ottoman exceptionalism'. Comparing Ottoman exceptionalism with British exceptionalism, Palmira Brummett observes a distinction that is also prevalent in many of the primary and secondary sources of this book: 'While Britain justified its imperial and colonial ventures by promoting "Englishness", technology, morality, and Christianity, the Ottoman Empire emphasised its multiethnic, polyglot nature, a rich history of cultural achievements, morality (particularly female morality), and Islam to argue for its survival. Gender, including the critique of "infidel immorality", was an intrinsic element in both endeavours.'<sup>2</sup> Considering itself, departing from the Middle East, as a modern Western country whose women were moral, the new Turkish Republic maintained this discourse of exceptionalism, but this time as a Turkified, Sunni and secular nation state, which parallels the observation made by feminist historians as evidenced in my sources too.<sup>3</sup>

## TO SPATIALISE

My contextual emphasis resides primarily on Istanbul during the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the formative years of the Turkish Republic. Consequently, this book focuses on the period from the latter half of the nineteenth century up to the 1930s, as a time frame marked by profound social changes.

My deliberate focus on Istanbul in this study is underpinned by a multitude of considerations, one of which is rooted in my film studies education that challenges the confines of the national cinema paradigm. More urgently, my framework here is to express the fact that cinema unfolded within the context of this geographical location before the establishment of the nation-state itself, rendering any conceptualisation of 'early Turkish cinema' inherently anachronistic.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, the vast territories of the Ottoman Empire, covering from the Balkans to the Middle East and North Africa, presents a barrier to a comprehensive exploration of cinema's impact on multiple geographical contexts. Furthermore, expanding the scope of my inquiry to include the entirety of the Ottoman territories would not only obscure this book's focus on the transformative dynamics occurring post-nation-state establishment but would also pose challenges in exploring deeper into the nuances of the reception of cinema. An alternative approach could involve a homogenising treatment of these territories or emphasising imperialistic policies on film as an undertaking that, when executed with critical theories, could be intellectually alluring. However, such an ambitious approach proves irrelevant to my specific objectives, given my favouring of the cinematic experiences of people over the machinations of governments or state apparatuses.

My comprehension of Istanbul transcends its mere geographical role as a nexus bridging the continents of Europe and Asia. Consequently, I resist the reduction of the city's identity to a trite notion of bridging cultures, often employed as a facile cliché for regions extending from the Balkans to the Levant. Mainstream film histories in Turkey exhibit a fixation on Istanbul, primarily centred on Pera, due to their perception of cinema as a quintessentially Western form of entertainment. According to this prevailing perspective, Istanbul, particularly the district of Pera, emerges as the epitome of Westernisation within the empire. Despite the risk of redundancy, throughout this book, I will keep asserting the necessity of scrutinising the entrenched Westernisation paradigm, marked by essentialist tendencies, and the equally problematic notion of belated modernity. My goal is to avoid perpetuating essentialist cultural binaries based on superficial ties between the hierarchy of civilisations and the movements of the earth around the sun or religious differences, assuming that 'West' is Christian and always already modern and 'East' is non-Christian and doomed to stay behind in time and need to catch up. I keep these societal constructions in mind even when in pursuit of identifying interconnecting spaces that also imagine differences. My deliberate choice to focus on Istanbul, characterised by its heterogeneity as a metropolis, presents significant opportunities for accomplishing these objectives.

Despite the contemporary addition of physical bridges uniting the two continents within Istanbul, my focus on the city extends beyond a mere

crossroads. Instead, I approach Istanbul as a locus for cultural studies, a domain where the cultures of film flourished, ultimately giving rise to the popular cinema in Turkey known as *Yesilçam*. Similar to the iconic designations of Bollywood and Hollywood, *Yesilçam*, too, is not merely a term but a toponym referencing a specific location. Named after a street situated in Beyoğlu, formerly and popularly referred to as Pera, *Yesilçam* holds historical significance as the site of numerous early film screenings. This street subsequently became the hub of the majority of Turkish film companies during their zenith in the 1950s and 1960s. Beyond its role as a cinematic cityscape, Istanbul, a former capital city of three former empires since the third century, offers a multifaceted allure.

Istanbul's correlation with the gaze is materialised etymologically too. In Turkish and Arabic, the words *şehir* ('city' in English), *teşhir* ('display and exhibit' in English) and *şöhret* ('celebrity' in English) share the same etymological root *şhr*.<sup>5</sup> City life, in essence, has historically been viewed as a spectacle, but the gaze originating from the metropolis is not merely glorified; it is concurrently scrutinised for its condescending and prejudiced outlook towards the residents. In her exploration of urban spectatorship, Judith Walkowitz presents an alternative urban culture, one that exists beyond the romanticised notions of the *flâneur*. Her depiction of London includes slums, 'dark and noisy courts', 'foul-smelling swamps' and a deprived abyss where the impoverished population resides with restricted access to spectacles.<sup>6</sup> The advent of modernity and urban spectatorship reshaped the city into a realm of unfamiliar faces and hidden mysteries, necessitating state intervention. Late nineteenth-century Istanbul mirrored this transformation, witnessing a growing dominance of state control mechanisms facilitated by surveillance devices.<sup>7</sup> Its captivating visual and cinematic façade, on the other hand, is complemented by its multilayered cultural milieu that long fostered and sustained the vibrant cinema cultures within the city.

## TO TEMPORALISE

This book's understanding of Istanbulite early film cultures covers a long period between the late 1890s, with the first public film screening in the city, and the 1930s, when cinema came to be evaluated beyond moral codes and judgements. My periodisation points to transitional periods rather than selected moments. The *cinématographe* came to be celebrated as a technological invention, but its internalisation involved processing cultural anxieties, fluctuations between cynicism and curiosity, ambivalent responses, social segregations and deeply moral judgements. When I first began my endeavour on this project in the mid-2000s, I dealt with concepts of absence and

lack assuming various forms. The narrative of absence within the critical discourse on Istanbulite early film spectators was coupled with the scarcity of research on this subject, primarily stemming from the perceived 'lack' of primary sources. The purported scarcity of data often leads to assumptions, speculations and oversimplified generalisations, perpetuating the narrative of absence. The identified significant lack in the exploration of early cinema spectatorship emerged from self-Orientalist assumptions that the small number of film audiences consisted only of a Westernised minority and that the Muslim majority was prejudiced towards any technologies and thereby did not appreciate or even understand cinema.<sup>8</sup> This stems from the Kemalist narrative that before the foundation of the Turkish Republic, the Ottoman society was completely backwards.<sup>9</sup>

This is the manifestation of the narrative of belated modernity, which still to this day remains unexamined and unchallenged within Turkish film historiography despite the available resources now indicating otherwise. It serves as a marker of a paradigm deeply rooted in the equation of modernity with the Eurocentric model and cinema as its tool. This paradigm, evident in Turkish cultural history beyond film, often simplistically insists on Westernisation as the predominant answer to any research question associated with modernity. This reductionist perspective fails to acknowledge the influential roles of globalisation, mass migrations, displacement, diaspora and the vernacular in shaping mass culture. The persistence of the belated modernity paradigm in this context also involves the aforementioned *Turkish exceptionalism*, whereby Turkey regards itself as the only modern country departing from the Middle East. This exceptionalism finds its roots in Ottoman exceptionalism, asserting that Turkish society successfully transitioned from an empire spanning Eastern Europe, the Middle East and parts of Northern Africa to Eurocentric modernity. Despite being labelled the 'sick man of Europe' before its dissolution, the Ottoman Empire was considered to transform into an independent secular nation-state, positioning itself as a modernist model for numerous other Muslim societies. This summarised narrative leads to a deliberate oversight of postcolonial criticism in the examination of Western technologies and a totalitarian understanding of modernity.

However, there are also great examples of critical analysis challenging the equation of media and Eurocentric modernity, as exemplified in Meltem Ahıska's pioneering book on Occidentalism and radio in modern Turkey.<sup>10</sup> Focused on the history of radio, her critical analysis advocates for a fresh approach to theorising Turkish cultural history within the context of Eurocentric constructs of modernity. Ahıska employs the concepts of 'Occidentalism' and 'Occidentalist fantasy' to scrutinise the dialogical shaping of Eurocentric modernity in a non-Western context.<sup>11</sup> Arguing that the political subjectivity of the Turkish elite played a leading role in designing, con-

trolling and problematising radio broadcasting in Turkey, Ahıska sheds light on the dynamics of Occidentalism within a society typically associated with the so-called East in its relations with the so-called West, while aspiring to be 'Western' and modern. Her nuanced analysis offers a valuable perspective on the interplay of media, modernity and cultural identity in Turkey. Revisionist literary scholarship on late Ottoman history has also moved away from the assumption that modernisation necessarily entails Westernisation. In a similar vein, my research, as reflected in my doctoral dissertation and this book, seeks to distance itself from the notion of late Ottoman culture as merely imitative. While I initially conceptualised Istanbulite early film cultures as processes of hybridisation, my later re-examination of Alevi-Bektashi spectatorship culture and its treatment by the traditional patriarchy prompted a reassessment for this book. It became evident that the dynamics at play were more about morality and the restructuring of a unified patriarchal sovereignty than a Eurocentric understanding of modernity. If modernity is understood as an inclination to question the present, as articulated by Baudelaire, then the responses of Istanbulites critiquing the perfection of *cinématographe* do not signify a resistance of tradition against the modern. On the contrary, they denote a modernist self-conscious attitude towards a modern apparatus. This nuance underscores the intricacies of cultural, moral and modernist considerations in the evolution of early film cultures in Istanbul.

The primary reason that Turkish film historians initially crafted this Occidental narrative was their comparison of the beginnings of cinema in this region with early film histories written particularly in North America and Western Europe. These comparisons led the historiography to adopt the same time frame for the periodisation of early cinema in Turkish and Ottoman society as well.<sup>12</sup> However, a reconsideration of early cinema as a critical category and new periodisation in the growing literature on non-Eurocentric cinemas especially by film scholars such as Neepa Majumdar, Debashree Mukherjee, Hamid Naficy and Zhen Zhang have opened up new discussions and conceptualisations surrounding film history.<sup>13</sup> Keeping these in mind, my periodisation of early cinema in this book extends towards the 1930s since the seeds of an analytical look at cinema were sown in this period by writers like Halide Edib Adivar and Said Nursi.

## TO WEAVE INTO THE FABRIC

The central themes I explore integrate the significance of early film screenings in different public venues, the Alevi-Bektashi and Sufi aspects of spectatorship culture that were gradually marginalised after the abolishment of

the Janissary corps in 1826, and the socio-economic divisions along the lines of gender and class within the urban milieu of the *fin de siècle*. This transformative era is discerned through the prism of visual perception, driven by two distinct forms of change: the demographic restructuring of audiences and the evolution of film programmes. The demographic shift unfolded as the locale transitioned from a multi-ethnic, multi-confessional empire at the crossroads of constant border and demographic changes to a more compact nation state. Simultaneously, the Ottoman/Turkish visual landscape underwent a notable transformation, with local spectacles giving way to 'Western-imported' visual entertainment as a response rooted in the nation's economic and cultural alignment with the global rise of mechanical images. Inclusively examining pre-cinematic practices, I aim to offer a holistic and vivid panorama of the transformative processes under consideration.

While the sociocultural and visual transformations of late Ottoman society shaped new modes of spectatorship and entertainment, exploring these shifts resonates with the broader academic discourse on early cinema, which has increasingly sought to expand its focus beyond Eurocentric narratives to encompass global and comparative perspectives. Film studies underwent a notable surge in research and analysis focused on early cinema and spectatorship after the FIAF (The International Federation of Film Archives) Conference in Brighton in 1978. This included investigations into the pleasure of looking and its connection to late nineteenth-century cinematic entertainment, the novelty of cinema spectatorship and the cinema of attractions, acting in early films, cinema as vernacular, the emergence of a star system, the institutionalisation of cinema, and the locations of first screenings and movie theatres. While early film literature predominantly scrutinised practices in the USA and Western Europe, there is now a discernible growth in literature addressing broader investigations that facilitate generalisations and global comparisons within the under-researched realms of cinema history over the past decade. The pioneering work of scholars such as Zhen Zhang, Brian Larkin, Hamid Naficy, Rielle Navitski, Golbarg Rekabtalaei, Laura Isabel Serna, Debashree Mukherjee and Ana Grgic represents only a small number of the publications contributing to the expanding discourse on the history of cinemas worldwide, thereby preparing us for the emergence of novel and lesser-explored scholarly areas of cinema history, particularly in the last decade and a half. Research pertaining to the emergence of film cultures in the Ottoman world and the early Turkish Republic remains to a certain extent underdeveloped, especially within the English-language scholarship. While being an otherwise great addition to the topic, Enis Dinç's manuscript on Turkish film history is centred on the founder of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and the context in which Atatürk's views on cinema and films made about him developed.<sup>14</sup> His book has a chapter dedicated to the

prior period that mainly relies on the old mainstream Turkish film history instead of primary sources. Dinc's repetitions of the older histories regarding the early period parallel the sections on early cinema in Savas Arslan's *Cinema in Turkey*.<sup>15</sup>

Focusing extensively on the early film period, *Torn is the Curtain* enriches the scholarship by shedding new light on the burgeoning film cultures of the Ottoman Empire and Turkey during their formative years, offering a distinctive intervention inspired by both studies of feminist histories and the Near East and Balkans. To achieve this, I aim to provide an in-depth, exploration of evolving nationalist and religious concerns, alongside an analysis of the shifting roles and moral expectations assigned to gender within a society transitioning from an Islamic to a secular framework. Notably, the existing historiography of early cinema in Turkey lacks a comprehensive feminist perspective, a gap evident in the literature. Thus, this book seeks to address this lacuna by situating itself at the intersection of gender, societal transformation and film cultures, with a particular focus on Istanbul. While my arguments share certain parallels with feminist film histories, pioneeringly written by Shelley Stamp and later on by Laura Isabel Serna<sup>16</sup>, mainly in their central exploration of patriarchal concerns surrounding women's morality and cinema-going, my work emerges from a different context: Istanbul's multilayered history as the former imperial capital. By focusing on the cultural exchanges between the Ottoman Empire and its neighbouring regions – including the Balkans, the Middle East, North Africa and Russia – this book addresses the unique multi-confessional and Muslim undertones of the region. In doing so, it not only fills a critical regional gap but also challenges prevailing paradigms of Eurocentric modernity, offering a perspective that complements and expands upon existing scholarship. Additionally, I seek to investigate pre-cinematic practices and spectatorship experiences during the Ottoman period, aiming to illuminate the Alevi-Bektashi and Sufi philosophical underpinnings of spectatorship within that historical context. Through these efforts, I hope to contribute to a more holistic understanding of the unique cultural manifestations of film in this region.

The intricate relationship between modernity and Westernisation in Turkey is often framed by the assumption that the two became synonymous at the turn of the twentieth century. However, as Cemal Kafadar demonstrates, the roots of modernisation can be traced back to the sixteenth century, marked by the rise of coffee houses as transformative public spaces and the increasing centralisation of state control over these domains.<sup>17</sup> The Ottoman Empire's historical engagement with the West was complex, shaped by its centuries-long colonial rule over the Balkans and the Middle East as a dynamic that persisted even as the Empire itself fell under the informal colonisation of the Great Powers following the First World War. This multi-



faceted relationship is further illuminated by Palmira Brummett, who highlights the frequent comparisons to European imperialism that permeated Ottoman popular culture in the early 1900s.<sup>18</sup> The Ottoman intelligentsia, while suffering politically, economically and culturally, considered itself inherently 'better' than its European counterparts. This perception, infused with gendered elements, portrayed Ottoman males and females, especially females, as morally superior due to their 'Eastern' and 'imperial' qualities.<sup>19</sup> Unlike British India, the Ottoman Empire did not see itself as subjugated despite compromised sovereignty. Ottoman exceptionalism emerged to counter criticisms, rejecting easy imitation of Western culture. The Ottoman and British empires, while distinct, both aimed at defending territories and preserving their way of life, with the Ottoman Empire facing challenges of being labelled despotic, 'Oriental' or obsolete. The adoption of Western culture had not delivered the promised rejuvenation by 1914.<sup>20</sup>

Charrière and Ringer contend that equating modernisation with Westernisation implies that to be modern is inherently to conform to Western models of modernity, at least to some degree.<sup>21</sup> This perspective, however, risks oversimplifying the complex dynamics at play when reducing the *cinématographe* and cinematic spectatorship to mere tools of 'Western culture' or Eurocentric modernity, ignoring their intricate interplay with what were understood as 'Turkish culture', values and practices. To avoid essentialising differences, such as those between 'Western' and 'Eastern' cultures, Arjun Appadurai critiques the use of 'culture' as a noun, for it risks portraying social groups as monolithic entities. Instead, Appadurai advocates for an adjectival approach to culture, one that emphasises its contextual, heuristic and comparative dimensions. This shift in perspective directs attention to culture as a site of difference, particularly in the ways it shapes and reflects group identities.<sup>22</sup>

In the early twentieth century, highly educated Young Turks spearheaded a national movement, championing 'Westernisation' alongside Turkish nationalisation as a progressive step to align Turkey with developed European nations. This introduces a second problematic aspect, exploring the degree to which early cinema was distinctly Turkish in the Ottoman and post-Ottoman eras. As Brummett notes, the terms 'Ottomans' and 'Turks' remain contested in historiography, with 'Turk' in the late Ottoman Empire often signifying a Muslim 'Ottoman' as part of efforts to preserve the empire.<sup>23</sup> The terms 'Turkish film history' and 'early Turkish cinema' seemingly disregard the rich cultural and cinematic heritage of the Ottoman Empire. While Istanbul, as the capital of the Ottoman Empire, boasted a cosmopolitan, multi-confessional, multilingual, and multi-ethnic society, the advent of the Turkish Republic saw Turkification reshaping all societal strata. The establishment of Ankara as the new capital further exemplified this transfor-

mative process. However, the late Empire exhibited blurred ethnic identities, notably in the Balkans, and terms such as ‘early Turkish cinema’ proved problematic, considering the multi-ethnic backgrounds of entrepreneurs and the diversity of spectators until the mid-1920s. With all these critiques in mind, I strive to use the plural ‘film cultures of Istanbul’ instead of a more totalising ‘Turkish film culture’.

## TO NAVIGATE

One of my main concerns addresses the often-overlooked class and gender divisions within spectatorship in Turkey. Despite clear evidence of movie theatre seating arrangements reflecting pricing distinctions and the relatively high cost of early film tickets, the prevailing narrative within ‘Turkish film historiography’ has largely focused on cultural and religious divisions with a self-Orientalist emphasis on Westernisation and Islam’s backwardness. Consequently, the crucial role of women in shaping the cultural perception and interpretation of the cinema, particularly evident in both men’s and women’s fiction writing and memoirs, has also been underexplored. Literary works written by Ottoman men during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries often perpetuate discriminatory and problematic attitudes towards women in cinema. Drawing on Turkish-language literature from this period, particularly the intelligentsia’s perspectives on the reception of the *cinématographe* and gender, I engage with novels and memoirs through a ficto-critical lens. This approach, as described by Jeanne Randolph, playfully oscillates between authenticity and artifice, appealing to those ‘indifferent to immediate satisfaction’.<sup>24</sup> For me, ficto-criticism provides a way to bridge the gap between the personal and the scholarly, allowing me to interrogate historical narratives while weaving in my own lived experiences and cultural heritage.

As an Alevi, leftist and feminist film lover from Istanbul, I aim to offer insights into early film audiences by focusing on how Alevi-Bektashi faith and gender dynamics shaped spectatorship in Istanbul. My perspective is deeply informed by my upbringing as the granddaughter of Alevi-Zaza cinephiles from the Dersim region, arguably one of the least Westernised and least favoured areas in Turkey by the modernist state. My grandmother, born in the early 1930s, played a guiding role in my formative years, introducing me to ceremonial film viewings that were deeply intertwined with her Alevi faith. Her life narrative, marked by a steadfast commitment to both cinema-going and Alevism, unfolded against the backdrop of a transient existence as the family moved across Anatolia, concealing their ethnic identity due to conservative Sunni-Turkish majorities and my grandfather’s

occupation as a clerk. It was only in the multitudes of Istanbul that they found stability. Within my grandmother's memories, movie theatres and the private performance of Alevi rituals within the secure confines of home merged as recurring thematic spaces of refuge and ritual. These narratives prompted me to reflect on the intricate intersections between film-going and Alevi-Bektashi cultural traditions. By grounding my research in these intersections, I seek to challenge the oversimplified narrative that early cinema-goers were merely 'Westernised' because cinema originated in the West. Instead, I argue that early cinema spectatorship in Istanbul was shaped by a complex interplay of local faith(s), gender dynamics and cultural practices as an interplay that my ficto-critical approach allows me to explore with both scholarly rigour and personal resonance.

I should emphasise that in tracing the roots of Turkish/Ottoman spectatorship to Alevism-Bektashism, my intent is not to narrowly characterise early film-goers as exclusively Alevi or Bektashi. Given that Alevi-Bektashis constitute religious minorities, they did not numerically dominate the demographic landscape. However, their vernacular artistic expressions, particularly in music, dance and poetry, have historically been among the most vibrant, enduring and prevalent manifestations of folk culture, especially in the pre-cinematic era. As Zeynep Oktay's thorough research demonstrates, the influence of Alevi-Bektashi culture is deeply embedded in vernacular literature, where poets, musicians and other practitioners of this faith have long dominated artistic domains, leaving an indelible mark on the cultural fabric of the region.<sup>25</sup> It is no coincidence, then, that the emergence of Karagöz as a precursor to cinema in this region reflects these cultural currents. Karagöz has consistently embodied dissidence, satire and secularity, drawing from the rich traditions of Alevi-Bektashi and Sufi poetry, which were ritually chanted at the beginning, end, and sometimes even during performances. Notably, the origins of Karagöz are attributed to a Bektashi dervish, Sheikh Küşteri, and it was practised mainly by Bektashi dervishes who were also Karagöz masters, which further underscores the profound connection between this art form and Alevi-Bektashi cultural practices.<sup>26</sup>

I believe that incorporating fiction writing and memoirs alongside newspapers and archival documents has enriched my research process by fostering a playfully critical attitude towards both the fantasies presented in fiction and the so-called historical accuracies found in official records. I chose to analyse novels not only to uncover how the Westernisation narrative shaped Ottoman and Turkish responses to cinema but also because both newspapers and novels reached and influenced new audiences. As Charrière and Ringer argue, the Ottoman reform project was not merely a top-down initiative focused on institutional changes; it was also an effort to cultivate new citizens.<sup>27</sup> This is exemplified in Ahmet Midhat Efendi's renowned 1875

novel, *Felâatun Bey and Rakım Efendi*, which not only modelled modern citizenship through its content but also aimed to empower readers by inviting them to actively engage and exercise agency through the act of reading itself. Ottoman reformers of the mid-nineteenth century believed that the general public needed to adopt contemporary sensibilities and mindsets, and they deliberately sought to shape attitudes, behaviours and values through literature. As a result, the emerging Ottoman novel became a key medium for encapsulating the ideals and values of the ‘modern Ottoman citizen’.<sup>28</sup> In my analyses, I explore these narratives to examine the discourses critical of the Westernisation process and the patriarchal concerns that permeate them.

## TO TRACE THE THREADS OF EVIDENCE

In addition to literary works, I draw on newspapers, cinema journals and trade records from the period to explore the cinematic interests of diverse societal segments, ranging from royals to mystics and intellectuals. These sources provide valuable insights into the public’s film preferences, the emergence of fandom, and developments in filmmaking, offering a panoramic view of the film industry that extends beyond national borders. A key aspect of this book is its exploration of how cinema-going evolved into a matter of taste and class and how cinema played a transformative role in reshaping public spaces, as evidenced in the selected sources. To comprehensively grasp the dynamics of spectatorship, my research methodology integrates postcolonial and gender theories, ficto-criticism, archival investigations, interpretive historical anthropology and a quantitative approach to audience analysis.

I rigorously engage with primary sources, largely daily newspapers and weekly magazines from the 1890s to the 1930s, housed in the Istanbul Atatürk Library, the former Istanbul Şehir University’s Taha Toros Archive, Beyazıt Library and the National Library in Ankara. My sources also include novels, memoirs, biographies and autobiographies of filmmakers and distributors. Additionally, Constantinople trade annuals from the formerly Ottoman Bank Archives in Istanbul, Beyoğlu Salt Archive and trade reports from the University of St Andrews library shed light on the business aspect of cinema. The British Library in London also contributed to my work with valuable materials, such as travellers’ journals and English and French-language newspapers printed in Istanbul. During my doctoral research, an unexpected discovery at the British Library, the French newspaper *Stamboul*, which before had gone largely unmentioned in the literature of Ottoman printed media, became a crucial source detailing the first public screening and the continuous cinema shows in Istanbul. This fortuitous find

prompted further research, whereby additional issues of *Stamboul* were gathered from the French Studies Institute in Istanbul and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. In addition to the aforementioned sources, I paid several visits to Mimar Sinan University Film Archive, visited the private archive of Lale Film and had the opportunity to work at the film archive in Macedonia during the summer of 2006, facilitated by AHRC funding thanks to my doctoral supervisor, Dina Iordanova. The Macedonian Film Archive houses films by the Manaki Brothers, purportedly the first filmmakers in the Balkans and official photographers for the Turkish Sultan Abdulhamid II (r. 1876–1908). Examining these films was essential as they offered valuable insights into the broader geographical context of the topic, even though I did not include them in this book as I chose to give space to feature-length films that were screened to the audience at the time.<sup>29</sup>

Having just mentioned the archives I worked at, I would now like to revisit the gentle warnings of Greg Denning about performing in the archives. Denning poetically states that in our pursuit, persuasion, not domination, is our objective, for our archival performance allows others to perform.<sup>30</sup> Denning claims that the heart of our research performance lies in the signature gesture of ‘being there’, where the past reveals itself most vividly.<sup>31</sup> Without this, he conveys, we risk becoming mere literary critics.<sup>32</sup> However, claiming ‘being there’ without performance consciousness is also blind arrogance.<sup>33</sup> My performance at the archives was significantly challenged by the language barrier stemming from the polyglot nature of Ottoman society during that period. Primary materials are available in a diverse array of languages, including English, Armenian, Greek, Arabic, French, Italian, Ottoman Turkish and others. English-language newspapers proved less inclined towards covering spectacles and entertainment, while consular reports and travellers’ journals in English provided useful statistical data. French-language newspapers emerged as particularly beneficial, given their prevalence among educated Muslim and non-Muslim publics. Ottoman Turkish-language newspapers, written in the Arabic script, posed a challenge, necessitating specialised training for individuals, like me, educated in the modern Turkish Republic, which transitioned to the Roman alphabet in 1928. I received enormous help in that regard from more proficient readers such as Banu İşler and Fatih Altuğ.

Another significant challenge I faced was the regrettable loss of Ottoman/Turkish fiction films. Stored on nitrate, these films were housed in the National Film Archive in Istanbul, which unfortunately suffered a fire resulting in the preservation of very few copies. The surviving copies are now housed in a university archive in Istanbul, specifically at Mimar Sinan Üniversitesi Film Arşivi, under stringent supervision. The archive administrators, who do not maintain an accessible film catalogue, still exhibit reluctance in per-

mitting open access or viewings of silent films to external researchers. To my knowledge, the archive has been closed ‘temporarily’ for months now as it is undergoing structural shifts. Thanks to this archive, I was able to view the fragments of two feature-length silent films, *Binnaz* (1919, Ahmet Fehim) and *Bican Efendi* (Ahmet Fehim, 1921), purportedly constituting the entirety of their collection.

I benefit from various *fin-de-siècle* Turkish novels since they deal with a range of imaginary spectatorship experiences within the diegesis, and I explore novels and stories by Peyami Safa, Fahri Celal Göktulga, Halide Edib Adıvar, Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar, Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil and Mehmet Rauf in different chapters according to the periods in which they were written or which they describe.<sup>34</sup> These literary sources, despite being fictional, proved to be particularly valuable for my research, given the limited number of first-hand cinematic observations in memoirs and the fact that newspaper records do not offer in-depth personal accounts. More importantly, they help me understand how the authors view cinema. While a strictly empirical approach may raise questions about the reliability of fictional characters and experiences as credible witnesses to actual events, these sources played central roles in shaping public opinion within the nationalist intelligentsia, some of whom were moralistically regarding cinema-going as a ‘Western form of pleasure’. Furthermore, and perhaps more significantly, they provide a comprehensive understanding of the gender dynamics inherent in their understanding of spectatorship. In this context, works of Turkish literary criticism become essential for grasping various authors’ concerns related to the Westernisation paradigm, modernity and the patriarchal structure of society. In this regard, Nurdan Gürbilek’s analysis in her critique of Turkish literature from the early twentieth century serves as a fitting starting point for my undertaking.<sup>35</sup> Gürbilek’s critique of Turkish cultural criticism, which depicted modernity as a belated arrival and portrayed female characters of the period as susceptible to Westernisation, has laid a thought-provoking foundation for subsequent exploration.

## TO TRACE THE THREADS OF THOUGHT

To comprehend the visual repertoire and cultural spectatorship of the era, I benefit from philosophising on the traces of Alevi-Bektashi vernacular culture within pre-cinema, namely the Turkish shadow play, akin to the reading of Plato’s cave theory by Kaja Silverman in her theorisation of world spectatorship.<sup>36</sup> Plato’s allegory of the cave influenced Ottoman Sufism and its Alevi-Bektashi manifestations that were widespread among the spectators in awe of early popular visual delights. The interconnection between

the sense of wonder or awe and the cinema experience can be traced back to antecedent cultural expressions and traditions initiated in spectatorship and described in early modern vernacular literature, dating back to at least the sixteenth century. This connection was maintained in the pre-cinematic exhibitions of subsequent centuries but rarely found an explicit place in spectatorship culture after the cinema. Consequently, pre-cinematic practices and the Alevi-Bektashi popular poetry of the early modern era merit examination because their influence on spectatorship later sank into obscurity within cinema. Ottoman shadow play and its curtain poems inspired by Alevi-Bektashi mysticism may not have been ‘torn down’ completely but they were disregarded due to political upheavals and oppression. The Janissaries faced abolition and extermination in 1826 and their affiliation with the Bektashi order brought about the closing down of the Bektashi lodges.

Revisionist Ottoman historiography also plays a crucial role in challenging and subverting the dominant Westernisation narrative. Scholarly efforts focusing on the transformation of the Ottoman public sphere, its vernacular culture and everyday life, particularly during the early modern period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, contribute significantly to dismantling the universalising and timeless methodologies entrenched in the Westernisation narrative. Engaging with the poetic expressions of renowned troubadour Karacaoğlan and his contemporaries, who delve into themes of carnal love and beauty, further enhances this revisionist perspective. Secularisation and gender liberation within Ottoman daily life predate the French Revolution and found expressions through the practices of Alevi and Bektashi communities. In the medieval era, the Ottoman military system displayed a certain degree of ‘progressiveness’, notably with the deployment of a professional army, the Janissaries, skilled in the use of firearms. Another significant trend in late sixteenth-century Ottoman society was the widespread consumption of coffee and tobacco, originating from Arabia and America respectively. These historical nuances challenge simplistic narratives of Westernisation versus Islamic dogmas by highlighting complexities within Ottoman history and culture.

Keeping this historiography in mind, at the project’s initiation, I fervently believed, albeit with minor reservations, that there should not be a ‘lack’ of audiences with specific backgrounds, at least not in the absolute sense implied by the notion of absence. I held the view that, if thoroughly investigated, discourses suggesting such exclusions could be debunked. The Ottoman Empire, characterised by a complex demographic structure and the cosmopolitan nature of its capital city, presents a backdrop in which pre-cinematic spectacles enjoyed popularity. This popularity calls into question why audiences of shadow plays, public storytelling, Western theatres, dioramas, panoramas and magic lanterns, as documented historically, would

seemingly ignore cinematic spectacles. My reasoning was multilayered. Shadow play was known to be open to all layers of society, with a strong background in the Alevi-Bektashi belief that was almost always in dissent. Additionally, cinema, as a global medium, inherently contains multitudes. Istanbul, being a multi-confessional, multi-ethnic, and polyglot imperial capital, suggested that the *cinématographe* and early film cultures in this place should have been allies to the marginalised, encompassing groups such as immigrants, people with modest means and women. But the more I explored the newspapers and archival documents the more my assumptions were proven wrong.

As illustrated later in the second chapter, while ticket prices were not exorbitantly high, they almost equalled the daily income of a working-class individual. Early cinema operated as an exclusive public sphere, especially with the gentrification of Petit-Champs in the 1880s and the subsequent inception of regular screenings at the Jardin de Petit-Champs complex. Cinema, as a routine activity, was primarily accessible to the ruling classes and the elite. Even upper-class women of Muslim confessions were excluded from mixed-gender shows until the mid-1910s. This exclusivity meant that average Muslim women, people of the arts and crafts or those with modest incomes, shadow play masters, fishermen, peddlers and bakers were noticeably absent from cinemas in the 1900s. Although many Muslim women gained access later, their affection for cinema often faced criticism, as it was seen as making them too susceptible to the moral dangers portrayed by European values in films. This also accounted for the sense that Ottomans were constantly feeling threatened. To prove this sense of threat, Avner Wishnitzer argues that European powers, wielding undeniable military, technological and economic superiority, were encroaching on Ottoman borders and vying for influence within Ottoman domains.<sup>37</sup> And in this context, the term ‘alafranga’ (‘like a French’) not only indicated the foreign origin of an object or a new cultural form but also came to signify reservation or even a sense of threat posed by these innovations to local culture. Şerif Mardin, providing a detailed analysis of the social origins of opposition to ‘super-Westernisation’, demonstrated that this opposition was rooted in popular culture and functioned as a mechanism of social control against those challenging established norms.<sup>38</sup> However, looking into other primary sources, especially those written by individuals rather than state apparatuses, such as novels, memoirs, poetry and teachings, I uncovered another plot twist. Cinema found appreciation among individuals from unexpected backgrounds, including surprising figures like Sabahat Filmer, Halide Edib and Said Nursi. Filmer, who came from an urban middle-class family, faced significant economic and societal challenges, even putting herself in danger during wartime. Despite these obstacles, she pursued her education, worked



tirelessly and wrote extensively about films, carving out a unique space for herself in the cinematic discourse. Halide Edib, though born into relative privilege and equipped with a strong education, confronted numerous challenges as a prominent woman in the public sphere, including political exile. Her novel *Strike the Whore*, first published in 1926, drew on her experiences at the war front and reflected her deep engagement with the world around her. Beyond her personal struggles, she developed profoundly philosophical perspectives on cinema that often surpassed those of her male counterparts, who enjoyed greater social privileges.

Equally remarkable is Said Nursi, an exilic figure whose Sharia-aligned Islamic perspective might seem at odds with the 'Western' values often associated with cinema. Yet, to my amazement, he frequently discussed the concept of a 'divine cinema' or a 'cinema of God' in his teachings, offering a unique theological lens through which to view the 'medium'.

## TO SKETCH THE TERRAIN

To the reader, it may seem as though I begin this book with a broad historical context; however, the absence of immediate reference to the cinema in the first chapter is intentional. This approach serves as a preliminary effort to provide the reader with a nuanced understanding of the sociohistorical conditions in late nineteenth-century Istanbul before explicitly exploring the subject of cinema. The chapter initially focuses on the Ottoman polity, aiming to elucidate the political climate, urban spectatorship and cityscape of Istanbul during this era. It also examines the prevalent gender and class divisions, as well as the ethnic demographics that collectively shaped the formation of spectatorship. As an imperial capital with a diverse, multi-confessional population, Istanbul was home to various ethnic and religious communities. According to the 1886 census, Muslims constituted 44.9 per cent of the working population, Greeks 22.5 per cent, Armenians 20.6 per cent and Jews 5.8 per cent. The chapter then delves into the transformation of the public sphere and the city's evolving entertainment landscape. In the 1850s, Istanbul had a limited cultural scene, with few novels, little theatre and minimal journalism. By the early twentieth century, however, a vibrant literary and theatrical culture had emerged. I scrutinise the transformation of everyday life, encompassing both work and leisure, to provide insights into the changing fabric of the city. Additionally, I explore the role of male *flâneurs* and dandies as markers of social class and gender, contributing to a broader depiction of the city's entertainments and cultural dynamics.

I then shift my focus from these dynamics to explore cinema-like modes of spectatorship that predated the invention of the *cinématographe*. While

it has been argued that shadow plays and public storytelling influenced the understanding of ‘realism’ in contemporary Turkish cinema, this chapter delves deeper into the viewing practices associated with these pre-cinematic displays. The investigation centres on the circumstances and narrative styles of these performances, as well as the socio-economic context of both audiences and performers. Building on this foundation, I explore pre-cinematic spectatorship with the aim of providing a comprehensive understanding of the Alevi-Bektashi and Sufi gaze that underpinned it. Drawing inspiration from Alevi-Bektashi poetry, which determined the aesthetics and themes of shadow plays, I examine the metaphysics of the gaze and its Ottoman interpretations. These interpretations are deeply rooted in the learned and intuitive dimensions of Alevi-Bektashi faith and Sufism. Through this analysis, I highlight the profound influence of Islamic mystical thought on pre-cinema spectatorship, shedding light on its significance as a dominant force in shaping the viewing experience long before the advent of cinema.

The second chapter of this book focuses on the initial encounters with the *cinématographe* and the subsequent screenings that took place between 1896 and 1914. The first *cinématographe* screenings, held for the Sultan at Yıldız Palace in 1896, remain shrouded in mystery, as little is known about their content. The first public exhibition, however, occurred at Salle Sponeck, a French beer hall in Istanbul, on 11 December 1896. My exploration of spectatorship begins with this landmark event and extends to the women-only screenings in 1908. In this chapter, I meticulously examine the sporadic and impromptu screenings of the *cinématographe* during its early years, acknowledging the significant role played by travelling showmen in shaping the city’s emerging film culture. The analysis then shifts to the proliferation of regular cinema shows and the establishment of (semi-) permanent movie theatres between 1906 and 1908. This includes a detailed investigation of venues, programming, gender segregation, entrance fees, viewing conditions and the gentrification that accompanied the rise of permanent cinemas. I also explore the emphasis on verisimilitude and technological advancements in contemporary journalistic reviews.

The period from 1908 to 1914 marked significant shifts in spectatorship habits, particularly with the introduction of women-only screenings mainly for Muslim audiences following the reinstatement of the constitution in 1908. Key events, such as the Armenian massacres in Adana in 1909 and the gentrification associated with the first permanent movie theatres, signalled a transformation in the cinematic culture of the ruling classes. My primary aim is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the *cinématographe*’s role in reshaping Istanbul’s urban entertainment landscape. The chapter concludes just before the onset of Ottoman/Turkish film production, as the First World War began to reshape the cultural and political fabric of the region.

Chapter 3 examines the period from 1914 to the 1920s, beginning with the First World War and concluding after the occupation of Istanbul by the Entente Armies and the founding of the Turkish Republic. This chapter focuses on the transnational impacts of the Great War on cinema attendance, with particular attention to gender politics and the distribution dynamics of films from various European countries. I explore the interplay between cinema attendance in Istanbul and the evolving wartime politics and global distribution policies that shaped it.

Central to this analysis is the imagination and perception of spectatorship as a predominantly female activity. This perception was influenced by the rise in women movie-goers following the second constitution and the growth of Occidentalism among the intelligentsia during the First World War and the subsequent occupation. The gendering of Ottoman cinema life, shaped by moralism, the trauma of war, and the surge of conservatism and nationalism, often portrayed spectators of the period as women in literary texts. These portrayals appear to stem from patriarchal anxieties about the perceived 'influence' of Western European nations – the occupiers of the time – on Muslim women. The nationalist Sunni Turkish male intelligentsia, for instance, viewed young Muslim women, who allegedly identified strongly with 'corrupted' Italian divas, as vulnerable to the 'corrupting' values presented in European films. My exploration of gender goes beyond these stereotypes, however, by examining women not only as perceived passive consumers but also as active agents. I highlight the pleasure women derived from cinema, showcasing their agency and challenging reductive narratives of passivity. Furthermore, I emphasise women's roles as agents of resistance, exemplified by figures like Sabahat Filmer, whose pioneering contributions to film history underscore the active and transformative presence of women in this cultural sphere.

In the final chapter, I explore the transformative period post-1920, marked by the industrialisation of cinema and the consolidation of the new nation state. The chapter begins by examining the stabilisation of representations of spectatorship in various media outlets, such as newspapers, magazines and specific novels. A significant shift in film distribution emerged during this period, characterised by the declining presence of European cinema and the increasing dominance of American films in the market. Media coverage also evolved, with a growing emphasis on fandom and a fascination with movie stars. The earlier focus on the wonderstruck audiences of early cinema gave way to a more nuanced exploration of the personalities on screen.

Intellectual discussions during this time shifted towards debates on the perceived absence or inadequacies of the Turkish national film industry. The framing of cinema audiences underwent a remarkable change, with increased attention on the new Turkish bourgeoisie. Cinema-going transformed into a matter of individual taste and preference, reflecting broader

societal shifts. This chapter traces the evolution of discourses surrounding cinema and film-going as both a public sphere and a lifestyle.

The narrative unfolds through the perspectives of influential figures like Halide Edib and Said Nursi, whose writings and teachings added layers of philosophical and cognitive depth to discussions on cinema. Their intellectual contributions provide nuanced perspectives that mark the end of the early cinema period in Istanbul. A poignant note concludes the book, symbolised by the tearing down of the curtain that separated genders across various confessions, carried out by a woman film pioneer, namely Sabahat Filmer. This symbolic act sums up the breaking down of barriers and the emergence of (a little) more gender inclusivity in film cultures, marking a fitting conclusion to a book called *Torn is the Curtain*.

## NOTES

1. Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 1–27.
2. Brummett, 'Gender and Empire', 287–88.
3. Ayse Durakbasa, for example, notes how the shift from segregation to desegregation in Turkey was still dependent on women's sexual modesty. See Durakbasa, *Halide Edib*, 27.
4. For similar reasons, 'transnational' or even 'international' might also be irrelevant, as demonstrated by Edhem Eldem. See Eldem, 'Istanbul as a Cosmopolitan City'.
5. 'Istanbul was rapidly developing those aspects of early modernity [in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries] that we associate with certain concepts that are conceptually related to the word şehir. The urge to see and to be seen, as we know is both one of the main aspects of urban existence the *flâneur* and the dandy. Those of us who studied the early modern periods see the beginning of this teşhir in 16th and the 17th centuries and the coffee-houses plus the urban promenades and public parts eventually have a lot to do with this.' See Kafadar, 'The City that Râilamb Visited', Swedish Embassy in Istanbul, October 2006.
6. See Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight*.
7. See Brummett, 'Dogs, Women, Cholera'.
8. These presumptions on a history of lacks and comparisons were made initially by otherwise amazingly written histories by Nijat Özön, Alim Şerif Onaran and Giovanni Scognomillo. For a recent history that was based on this ur-film history of Turkey and thereby repeats a similar discourse of Westernisation, see Arslan, *Cinema in Turkey*, and for the earlier Ottoman period especially see Dinç, *Atatürk on Screen*. A history using primary sources may tend to shy away from the discourse of lack, as I did in my PhD dissertation, while I was still in the same paradigm, trying to prove the presence instead of pointing out the absences in relation to primary materials and adapting the same periodisation, and comparisons with the USA particularly. See Balan, *Early Film Spectatorship*. On the other hand, Nezih Erdoğan not

- only uses these comparisons, but also still repeats the idea that early film audiences were Westernised. See Erdoğan, *Early Cinema-Going*, 699.
9. After the long dominion of the AKP government this narrative began to be questioned much more widely. Before the mid- to late 2000s, it was mainly the Turkish left who questioned this national history; now the revisionist version is becoming official but obviously without nuances and still in a polarising manner.
  10. See Ahiska, *Occidentalism in Turkey*.
  11. Ibid., 7.
  12. While I tried to be critical of the idea of belatedness, I also continued the comparisons in my doctoral dissertation on which this book is based. Whether it is the early film history in my case or the older film history in older Turkish film historians' case, the point we were addressing was Northern America and Western Europe.
  13. Majumdar, *What Is "Early" Cinema?* 136-139; Zhang, *Shanghai Cinema*, xv; Mukherjee, *Bombay Hustle*, 329; Naficy, *A Social History of Iranian Cinema*. The Domitor conference in 2024 was also devoted to a rethinking of the periodisation in early cinema; see '2024 Vienna Conference', Domitor website, [https://domitor.org/conference/2024-vienna-conference/?fbclid=IwAR0aH\\_oYeL0Cp1eAGpsf9YuLztK-McoLj\\_j3J8JeXRXdTVGYPqR7FPs3MAo](https://domitor.org/conference/2024-vienna-conference/?fbclid=IwAR0aH_oYeL0Cp1eAGpsf9YuLztK-McoLj_j3J8JeXRXdTVGYPqR7FPs3MAo) (retrieved 28 April 2025).
  14. See Dinç, *Atatürk*.
  15. Arslan's book presents a vast history of popular cinema in Turkey, albeit with a focus primarily on later periods and relying mainly on secondary resources from the early era.
  16. See Serna, *Making Cinelandia: Stamp, Movie-Struck Girls*.
  17. See Kafadar, 'How Dark is the History of the Night', 243-69.
  18. Brummett, 'Gender and Empire', 287.
  19. Ibid.
  20. Ibid., 287-88.
  21. See Charrière and Ringer, 'Ottoman Project'.
  22. Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 1-27.
  23. Brummett, 'Gender and Empire', 287-88.
  24. Randolph, 'Ficto-Facto'.
  25. See Oktay, 'Historicising Alevism'; Oktay, 'Alevi-Bektashi Literature'; Oktay-Uslu, 'Alevism as Islam'.
  26. Verifying the Alevi-Bektashi origins of someone officially proves challenging due to the historical tendency of Alevi-Bektashis to conceal their identities in response to widespread persecution both in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic. For the Alevi-Bektashi and Islamic mystical origins of various Karagöz masters see Bozkurt, *Suret Perdesi*.
  27. Charrière and Ringer, 'Ottoman Project', 8-9.
  28. Ibid.
  29. For a scholarly analysis of Manaki Brothers films see Grgic, *Balkans*.
  30. Denning, 'Beaches of the Mind', 5-6.
  31. Ibid.
  32. Ibid.
  33. Ibid.
  34. See Goktulga, 'Menikelli'; Safa, *Sözde Kızlar*; Safa, *Fatih-Harbiye*; Safa (Server Bedii, pseud.), *Sinema Delisi Kız*; Adivar, *Sinekli Bakka*; Gürpınar, *Mezarından Kalkan*; Uşaklıgil, *Ask-i Memnu*; Uşaklıgil, *Saray ve Ötesi*; Rauf, *Genc Kız Kalbi*.

35. See Gürbilek, *Kör Ayna*; Gürbilek, *Mağdurun Dili*; Gürbilek, 'Dandies and Originals'.
36. See Silverman, *World Spectators*.
37. See Wishnitzer, *Reading Clocks*.
38. Ibid., 159.