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Remembering and Forgetting

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The Russian Monument at *Ayastefanos* (San Stefano): Between Defeat and Revenge, Remembering and Forgetting

DILEK KAYA MUTLU

The essence of a nation is that all individuals have many things in common, and also that they have forgotten many things.

Ernest Renan¹

In November 1914, soon after the Ottoman Empire's entry into the First World War as Germany's ally, the *Ittihad ve Terakki* (Union and Progress) government staged a propaganda event to motivate public opinion. A Russian monument, erected at *Ayastefanos* (San Stefano, present-day Yeşilköy, Istanbul) in 1898 to commemorate Russian victory and the soldiers who had died in the 1877–78 Russo-Ottoman War, was blown up by Turkish troops. Recording a 'bad' memory of defeat and a source of 'shame' for years for the Turks, the monument's demolition was welcomed in the Ottoman press of the time as an act of 'national revenge'. The demolition could also be interpreted as the manifestation of a national desire to return to those ancient glorious days by effacing the memory of defeat, in other words, by forgetting.

Indeed, the monument was almost forgotten until the mid-1940s, the early Cold War years, when the first survey history of Turkish cinema was published. This history, authored by Rakım Çalapala, mentioned an early event during which a Turkish army officer, Fuat (Uzkinay) Bey, filmed the demolition of the Russian monument.² Beginning in the 1950s and throughout the 1960s, this brief note on Fuat Uzkinay became transformed in the hands of the Turkish film historians into a nationalist, heroic narrative of the beginning of Turkish cinema, with Uzkinay becoming 'the first Turkish film director' and his documentary footage, known today as *Ayastefanos'taki Rus Abidesi'nin Yıkılışı* (The Demolition of the Russian Monument at San Stefano, hereafter *Ayastefanos*), 'the first Turkish film'.

The recording of a monument being destroyed to be forgotten, captured on film, a medium of remembrance, already constitutes an enigmatic event, yet the enigma of *Ayastefanos* extends beyond this. Although there are some photographs picturing the demolition of the monument, the film has not survived, and it is uncertain whether it ever existed; some research suggests that the film might very well be Turkish cinema's myth of origin.³ However, unwilling to accept that *Ayastefanos* never existed, many theories and rumours have been produced to explain the absence of the film. The most popular one among these is that *Ayastefanos* was lost, like many other films,

during one of the archive or depot fires, or during the transfer of films from one place to another.⁴ Moreover, Nijat Özön, one of the major historians of Turkish cinema, remembers that, in 1962, he saw the Ottoman title of the film on a film stock list at the Army Photo-Film Centre.⁵ Nusret Eraslan, the director of the same institution for some 20 years, remarks that they had a film box under this title, but he adds that the film inside the box did not correspond to the alleged subject matter of the film.⁶ Unfortunately, and interestingly, today, both the film stock list and the film box are missing, like the film itself.⁷ Consequently, much of the evidence about *Ayastefanos* is anecdotal and relies on personal testimonies and memories.⁸ In a situation in which not only the film but all traces of it have disappeared, I would argue that *Ayastefanos* has become much more suitable for recreation than remembering. The suspicions surrounding *Ayastefanos*, however, have not prevented Turkish cinema historians as well as Turkish cinema circles from discursively monumentalizing the film as the beginning of Turkish cinema. 14 November, the assumed day of shooting the film, has been celebrated as Turkish cinema day since 1996. In 2004, the ninetieth year of Turkish cinema was celebrated, taking *Ayastefanos* as the beginning.

In this article I will attempt to reconstruct the very little known story of the Russian monument at San Stefano. Like many others, my encounter with it is due to my interest in the history of Turkish cinema. One of my principal aims is to explore how the monument, which for years had embodied the historical memory of defeat for the Ottomans, was in time reframed and embedded in a narrative of national (Turkish) heroism and the birth of a national (Turkish) cinema. Accordingly, the article begins with an exploration of the historical events surrounding the erection and the demolition of the monument, and the national reception of these events during the Ottoman Empire. This is followed by a discussion of the discursive re-emergence of the monument during the mid-1940s and the 1950s in Republican Turkey via the survey histories of Turkish cinema, and the evolution of the narrative of the beginning of Turkish cinema, which locates *Ayastefanos* as the first Turkish film.

For years the Russians represented the eternal and the cruellest enemy of the Turks in the Turkish national imagination as well as in Turkish history.⁹ In parallel to that, Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, an anti-communist Islamist Turkish poet, writer and publisher, argues that 'Moskof', already a hateful and offensive expression used instead of the word 'Russian' in vernacular Turkish, means to a Turk 'what a wolf with bloody teeth means to a lamb'.¹⁰ Accordingly, Kısakürek remarks, from the nineteenth century until the First World War, the targets used in military schools and the army comprised an image of a 'Moskof head'. This was, in Kısakürek's words, a 'peeled rotten potato-faced, empty-eyed head wearing a Slavic cap'.¹¹

Russia and the Ottoman Empire fought a series of 12 wars between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, which are known as the Russo-Turkish Wars or the Russo-Ottoman Wars. The last of these, the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78, sparked by the rebellions of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bulgaria against Ottoman rule and the support they received from Russia and Serbia, was perhaps also the most significant on the way towards the decline and eventual dissolution of

the Ottoman Empire. Defeating the Ottoman armies and crossing Adrianople (present-day Edirne), in February 1878 Russian armies reached San Stefano, a village at the outskirts of Constantinople (present-day Istanbul), the then Turkish capital. Anxious that Constantinople would be taken, the Ottoman Sultan, Abdulhamid II, asked for peace.¹² The war was brought to a conclusion with the Treaty of San Stefano (3 March 1878), which was, Henryk Batowski maintains, 'composed entirely according to the views of the victorious Russian diplomacy taking into account exclusively strategic interest of the Russian Empire, aiming at the supremacy of the Slavic populations (first of all the Bulgarians) in the Balkan peninsula and at the weakening of Turkey to extremity'.¹³ According to the terms of the treaty, the Ottoman Empire was to lose its control over the Balkans, recognizing the independence of Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, and the autonomy of a large Bulgarian principality. Moreover, the empire was to surrender such eastern areas as Kars, Ardahan and Batum to Russia as part of a large indemnity.¹⁴

These terms were not only too harsh for the Ottomans, but also unacceptable for the other European nations, most notably Great Britain and Austria-Hungary. Alarmed by the territorial gains of Russia and the expansion of Russian influence in the Balkans, European nations requested the revision of the Treaty of San Stefano, which resulted in a more moderate treaty, the Treaty of Berlin, signed at the Congress of Berlin (13 July 1878). The new treaty restored large areas to the Ottoman Empire, while reducing the territorial gains of Serbia, Montenegro and Bulgaria, along with the Russian role in the Balkans.¹⁵

The Treaty of San Stefano was one of the harshest treaties in the history of the Ottoman Empire. The same treaty also marks the beginning of the story of the Russian monument at San Stefano. Article 8 among the supplementary articles decreed the construction of a 'victory monument' at San Stefano,¹⁶ which the Ottoman authorities would rather have considered a 'monument of shame'.¹⁷ In his attempt to recount the pain he suffered when signing the treaty, Sadullah Bey, the then Turkish Ambassador to Berlin, who signed the treaty together with the Foreign Minister Safvet Pasha on behalf of the Ottoman state, remarks in his memoirs that the treaty not only marked the Russian victory over the Ottoman Empire, but also guaranteed Russians the right to build a monument which would 'scream every day at Ottoman faces their shameful defeat'.¹⁸ The Monument, according to Sadullah Bey, would also be 'the enemy's eyes staring at beautiful Istanbul'.¹⁹ He was so overwhelmed with such ideas that during the Congress of Berlin he even asked, in tears, the British representative Disraeli to help to remove supplementary Article 8 from the treaty text. Eventually, accepting that the construction of the monument was inevitable, Sadullah Bey contented himself by hoping for the appearance of 'brave heroes in future Turkish generations who would destroy the monument'.²⁰

Construction began in 1892 and was completed in 1898. The monument was built over the bones of thousands of Russian soldiers collected from various cemeteries. It also included a chapel and the overall architecture was strongly reminiscent of Orthodox churches.²¹ It was opened on 19 December 1898, the Day of St. Nicholas, with a consecration ceremony performed under the leadership of Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolayevich, who was also accompanied by a distinguished entourage and representatives of other Slavic nations in the Balkans such as Serbia, Montenegro, Romania and Bulgaria.²² The Sultan, who had been pursuing a policy of

rapprochement towards Russia, had guaranteed all the precautions required for the security of the opening ceremony.²³

The Ottoman reception of the erection and the opening of the Russian monument in the late nineteenth century took the form of anger mixed with a feeling of helplessness. The treaties of San Stefano and Berlin had saved Istanbul from Russian occupation physically, yet the erection of the monument still meant for some a symbolic occupation of the city. This also has a place in literary imagery. In a short story dated 1898, the year the monument was opened, an anonymous Ottoman author imagines the Istanbul of the future as a city under full Russian occupation and oppression. The story also mentions the opening ceremony of a 'huge statue', which is very reminiscent of the opening of the Russian monument at San Stefano, and voices the sufferings of the Ottomans in the face of this event.²⁴ This story can be considered a particular expression of how deep was the feeling of defeat symbolized by the Russian monument, and how the erection of the monument was received as almost equal to the fall of Istanbul. The personal accounts of various other figures of the time, from state authorities like Sadullah Bey to journalists, which I came across in secondary sources, suggest that although they were highly embarrassed by the erection of the Russian monument, and they were angry not only against the Russians, but also against the top Ottoman authorities, they felt, or were encouraged to believe, that there was nothing to do at that moment, for they were ordered by the Sultan to avoid annoying Russians and minorities in Istanbul. In this respect, the most common official advice given to the public was to be patient and wait for revenge until the Ottoman state regained its power and returned to its glorious days.²⁵

Some anecdotes I came across in the memoirs of the military figures of subsequent periods suggest that similar feelings and thoughts continued in the twentieth century, until the monument's eventual destruction in 1914. For example, Kazım Karabekir, in his memoir, recounts 'a visit of insult' he paid to the Russian monument around 1906 as a young officer, just before assuming his first military duties in the Third Army. He notes that while he went there to take an oath, to promise that he would struggle for the independence and the freedom of his country and nation, he could not stop himself from kicking and spitting at the monument. He even screamed: 'we will surely destroy you! Hopefully also the ones who erected you'.²⁶ Eventually the monument was destroyed in November 1914, following the Ottoman Empire's entry into the First World War. Below, I attempt to outline the events regarding the demolition of the monument based on the memoirs of domestic and foreign, military and political figures, and the newspapers of the time.

Following the Ottoman Empire's proclamation of war against the Triple Entente (11 November 1914), on 14 November 1914 a number of public demonstrations took place in the streets of Istanbul. After the *Şeyh-ül-Islam's* (Chief Mufti) reading of a *fetwa* (order) at Fatih Mosque, which formally called the entire Muslim world to unite in a *jihad* (holy war) against Great Britain, France and Russia, the Empire's entry into the war on the side of the Central Powers was celebrated by crowds via demonstrations in front of the German and the Austrian embassies, along with a procession through the streets of Istanbul.²⁷ Mary Mills Patrick, the then president of Constantinople Woman's College, in her memoir, notes that it was Russia among the Entente Powers that 'inspired the greatest fear'. Remarking that the historical fear of Russia's ultimate conquest of Istanbul had become a fixed idea, Patrick

recounts: 'Many a time have I been in a caïque on the Bosphorus when the boatman would point a tragic finger toward the Black Sea and whisper with bated breath, "Some day the Russian wolf will come down and devour us"'.²⁸ In a different vein, however, Akdes Nimet Kurat remarks that the public strongly believed that Russia would be defeated by Germany and eventually by the Ottoman Empire. Along with this belief, Kurat observes, was also a strong public hatred against Russia, which culminated in demonstrations against Russia in Istanbul and other cities.²⁹

During the 14 November Istanbul demonstrations, several locations owned or run by French, British and Russian minorities were attacked.³⁰ Among these locations was the famous Tokatlıyan hotel and music hall owned by a Russian-Armenian subject. The next day, the attack was immediately condemned in *Tanin*, one of the major Ottoman newspapers under the heavy influence of the *Ittihad ve Terakki* regime. *Tanin* described the attack as an unfortunate event caused 'most probably by the incitement and provocation of some subjects related to the other states in war against Russia'.³¹ Again on 14 November another group moved to San Stefano, occupied and damaged the Russian monument, cooperating with a crowd from neighbouring villages.³² The next day, the Ottoman papers, even *Tanin*, which had totally disapproved of the smashing of the Tokatlıyan hotel, reported the public attack on the monument as a rightful act of 'national revenge'. Condemning the monument as a 'monument to cruelty and evil', thus deserving destruction, *Tanin* asserted that, 'for a nation who wanted to erase and forget the painful memories of the past forever', it was very understandable to desire revenge.³³ In a similar vein, *Tasfir-i Efkar*, another major paper, backed the demonstrations and the demolition as notable patriotic actions that should be registered with pride. Listing Russians among 'the strongest and the cruellest enemies of the Muslim world', and comparing the monument to a 'dagger in the heart of Islam', *Tasvir-i Efkar* argued that the demonstrators performed a 'religious duty' by destroying the monument. Any Muslim facing the Russian monument, the paper claimed, would surely burn for revenge, for they would feel 'the tragedy of Muslim people and innocent children who suffered under bloody Russian bayonets'. Consequently, the paper remarked, the monument had long deserved such an end and its demolition relieved everybody.³⁴

Although the Ottoman press attributed the demolition of the monument exclusively to the public, one learns from various memoirs that four days after the public destruction of the monument the military continued the demolition. On 18 November, Kazım Karabekir explains, the monument was blown up by a military division led by Navy Minister Cemal Pasha, following a speech he delivered to the army officers.³⁵ Touching on one of the most popular debates regarding the Ottoman Empire's entry into the First World War, in his speech Cemal Pasha argued that the Ottoman government was not tricked into war by the Germans; it entered the war of its own free will.³⁶ In this respect, the military attack on the Russian monument could be read as a performance or ceremony in which the army attempted to express its own will, pretending to attack Russia itself via the monument.

The moment of the explosion was photographed, reproduced in thousands, and sold to obtain revenue for *Donanma Cemiyeti* (the Ottoman Fleet Society),³⁷ yet the military operation led by Cemal Pasha was not mentioned at all in the Ottoman press of the time. The Russian monument did not appear in the Ottoman papers

either, except for a short note published on 20 November, which read that the bells of the Russian monument had been transferred to the Military Museum in Istanbul.³⁸ In late December, on the cover page of *Donanma* magazine, a photograph displaying the collapsed monument was published. The wreckage, a short note below the photograph reported, ‘symbolized the misery of the Russian armies defeated and crushed everywhere’.³⁹ The photograph and the note, like the military attack on the monument, underline not only the Ottomans’ treatment of the monument as a scapegoat in the early days of the war, but also the strength of the belief or desire that Russia would eventually be defeated by the Central Powers and the Ottoman Empire would return to its glorious days.

In the end, however, as Ulrich Trumppener remarks, the participation of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War as an ally to the Central Powers ‘cost Turks dearly and ultimately destroyed their empire’.⁴⁰ Defeated on many fronts except at a few like Gallipoli, the Ottoman Empire capitulated and signed the Armistice of Mudros with the Allied Powers on 30 October 1918, which indeed marked the end of the Ottoman Empire.⁴¹ The armistice, which opened large Ottoman territories to the occupation of the Allies, and eventually caused the development of a ‘Turkish national resistance movement’ under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal,⁴² can also be considered the first step towards the foundation of the new Turkish Republic. Following the War of Independence (1919–22), the abolition of the sultanate (1922), and the Treaty of Lausanne (24 July 1923), which gave Turkey full independence, the New Republic of Turkey was proclaimed on 29 October 1923, with Mustafa Kemal as its first president.⁴³

Among the principal goals of the founders of the Turkish Republic was to create a new national identity and a new national memory along with the construction of a nation-state. Accordingly, during the 1920s and the 1930s, many fields from official institutions to everyday life, education to art underwent a series of reforms within the framework of the modernization project of the newly founded Republic.⁴⁴ Taken as a whole, the reforms entailed a serious rupture with the past; more specifically, as Heinz Kramer remarks, they meant the distancing of the country from its Ottoman, Islamic and Eastern past and tradition while bringing it closer to contemporary Western societies.⁴⁵ Moreover, believing that a coherent national identity required as much forgetting as remembering, the Republican ruling elite, with their reforms, intended not only a new modern Turkish identity, but also a new national memory, which is perhaps most powerfully expressed in the replacement of the Arabic script by the Latin alphabet in written Turkish in 1928.

As an element of its Ottoman Past, the Russian monument at San Stefano seems to have been forgotten in Republican Turkey; at least until the mid-1940s, the early Cold War years, during which Turkey sided with the United States against the Soviets and communism.⁴⁶ As has been noted, the monument discursively reappears suddenly in Çalapala’s 1946 survey of Turkish filmmaking, published in a catalogue introducing the newly founded Turkish Film Producers Association. The 1940s were the years when Turkish film producers were seriously in need of the recognition and approval of the state and the public as the leaders of a national cinema industry. Indeed, the catalogue that comprised Çalapala’s survey bore a clear mission: to

convince the state authorities about the existence of a national film industry in need of protection and support in the face of foreign cinemas; it was an important national matter. Accordingly, Çalapala, in his survey, introduced many 'firsts' of Turkish cinema, including Fuat Uzkınay and his filming of the demolition of the Russian monument, as if he was attempting to convince the readers that the roots of Turkish cinema went back to a distant past. However, it is remarkable that contrary to more recent claims, Çalapala did not introduce Uzkınay's shooting as the first Turkish film, nor did he introduce Uzkınay as the first Turkish filmmaker. Instead, he briefly noted that Uzkınay was 'the first Turk to learn how to project film' and the 'first Turkish film operator [cameraman]', and added that Uzkınay's first film, as a cameraman, was a documentary footage depicting the demolition of the Russian monument; in Çalapala's words, 'a memory of the painful days when Russians arrived at San Stefano'.⁴⁷ It would take another article to discuss fully how this brief information was transformed into a patriotic, heroic narrative of the beginning of Turkish cinema locating *Ayastefanos* as the first Turkish film, which I do elsewhere.⁴⁸ Therefore, in what follows, I present just a sketch of this transformation.

The demolition of the monument and the corresponding documentary footage are later mentioned in 1950, in an anonymous note in *Yeni Tarih Dünyası*, a history journal. The note reads: 'An Austrian company wanted to film this event [the demolition]. However, being answered that only a Turk could shoot it, the representative of the film company, Mordo, had the film shot by someone called Fuad Bey.'⁴⁹ Although, this note, like that of Çalapala, positions Uzkınay as the Turk who filmed the demolition, it is not possible to conclude that what Uzkınay shot was a Turkish film. It is not possible to claim that the filming was arranged and led by the military or the government, either. A search through such Internet resources as the Imperial War Museum newsreel database reveals that there were already some documentary films made in Turkey in the 1910s, especially by German and British companies. Therefore, it is possible that a foreign film company wanted to shoot the demolition independently of the Turkish government, as is also implied by the note in *Yeni Tarih Dünyası*. In this context, the following question emerges: even if *Ayastefanos* existed, may it in fact have been not a Turkish film, but a foreign film appropriated to Turkish cinema as its founding myth or its myth of origin?

The memories of Lieutenant Bahri Doğanay, published in 1950, suggest that the demolition occurred spontaneously, based on the personal initiative of a Turkish major, who was burning for 'revenge', without the knowledge of the government and despite the efforts of the chief of police of the time, and the forces attached to the War Minister Enver Pasha, to stop it. Doğanay, who introduces himself as the hero-soldier who detonated the dynamite used in the demolition of the monument, refers to the existence of many photographers in the area, but does not mention any filming activity.⁵⁰ As in Doğanay's account, the lack of any reference to any filming in the memoirs I referred to above also creates doubts about the occurrence of any government-arranged filming during the demolition.

It is Nurullah Tilgen who raised *Ayastefanos* to the status of the first Turkish film, and ascribed it entirely to the Turkish army, pushing the Austrian film company to a secondary role. As Tilgen revised the narrative of *Ayastefanos* in several essays published between 1953 and 1956, the filming became more and more a national

matter.⁵¹ In 1956, in a manner that is very reminiscent of the nationalist, heroic discourse of Turkish high school history books, Tilgen wrote:

Although the shooting was assigned to the Austrian film company [Sacha Film], during the demolition preparations, some people opposed the idea of letting this important national event be shot by a foreigner. In the end, the Austrian crew applied to Fuad Bey, who used to show films to students at a high school in Istanbul. They let him shoot a few trial films and he succeeded. Then on 14 November 1914 while the military forces demolished the monument, Fuat Bey filmed it from a 150-metre distance.⁵²

Tilgen's narrative is full of contradictions: although the Austrian company is pushed into a passive role – not even being allowed to shoot the film – it is again that company which assumes the duty of finding 'the Turk' to shoot the film. To put it differently, Tilgen's narrative is marked by a strong ambivalence about who really wanted to shoot the film; whose project it was.

In all the narratives summarized so far is an obsession with Uzkinay's Turkishness. In this respect, it must be noted that even if the filming of the demolition of the Russian monument occurred during the Ottoman era, its history was written in the Republican period, which was marked with the creation of a new Turkish identity detached from that of the Ottomans. Today, it is well known that before *Ayastefanos* there had already been several documentary films made within the borders of the Ottoman Empire.⁵³ Most of these films have been excluded from Turkish cinema history, either because the identity of the filmmakers was unknown, or because they were not Muslim Turks.⁵⁴ In this respect, the 1911 documentary footage displaying Sultan Mehmed V (Reshad)'s visit to Monastir and Salonika, taken by the Yanaki and Milton Manaki brothers,⁵⁵ has recently created serious debates about the date of the birth of Turkish cinema. It has been argued that historians did not find this film appropriate as the beginning of Turkish cinema because the filmmakers were non-Muslim Ottoman citizens of Greek origin.⁵⁶

The narrative of *Ayastefanos*, which had changed considerably from Çalalpa to Tilgen, was recycled for the new generations by Nijat Özön.⁵⁷ Citing Çalalpa and Tilgen's works as his sources, Özön narrates a very similar story of national will and pride, yet he makes several alterations and additions, trivializing the filming event while rendering Uzkinay a much braver and more talented Turk.⁵⁸ Moreover, Özön not only endowed the film for the first time with the official title used today,⁵⁹ but also, and more importantly, he legitimized it, including it in his 1968 milestone book *Türk Sineması Kronolojisi (1895–1966)* (Turkish Cinema Chronology (1895–1966)) as the first Turkish film. Writing the credits of the film for the first time in this book, Özön legitimized *Ayastefanos* as a 150-metre Turkish documentary film, Uzkinay as the director and the director of photography, and the army as the producer.⁶⁰ Thus, a filming event surrounded by many uncertainties in the beginning is transformed into a fully national product and placed at the origin of Turkish cinema.

In this article, I have attempted to expose how the Russian Monument at San Stefano became a site of a clash between contesting national memories. Today, every published

survey history of Turkish cinema, including the most recent, begins by referring briefly to the destruction of the Russian monument as the historical event that prompted the birth of Turkish cinema. Knowing that sources mentioning the actual monument are very rare and not as easily available as the Turkish cinema histories, I would argue that if the military destroyed the Russian monument along with the national memory attached to it, historians of Turkish cinema discursively reconstructed it, but in a new form: the monument, within the framework of the discourse of cinema historians, no longer registered the memory of defeat, but the 'glorious' beginning of Turkish cinema. Moreover, this tale of beginning, like any other one, is far from being innocent, for, as has been briefly pointed out, it implies as much forgetting/excluding (e.g. the Manaki Brothers) as it does remembering/including.

Notes

1. 'What is a Nation?' (1882), trans. M. Thom, in H. Bhabha (ed.), *Nation and Narration* (London: Routledge, 1990), p.11.
2. Rakım Çalalpa, 'Türkiyede Filmcilik' [Filmmaking in Turkey], in *Filmlerimiz* [Our Films] (Istanbul: Yerli Film Yapanlar Cemiyeti, 1946), pp.6–17.
3. Sami Şekeroğlu, formerly the director of the Turkish Film Archive and currently the director of Mimar Sinan University Cinema-TV Centre, points out that they searched extensively in Turkey and abroad, but could not find the film, or even a single document proving the occurrence of the shooting. No researcher has been able to locate the film in the archives. No information has been found in the Ottoman press of the time concerning the shooting of the film or its exhibition. See N. Özön, *İlk Türk Sinemacısı Fuat Uzkınay* [Fuat Uzkınay, the First Turkish Filmmaker] (Istanbul: Türk Sinematek Derneği, 1970), p.10; B. Evren, *Sigmund Weinberg: Türkiye'ye Sinemayı Getiren Adam* [Sigmund Weinberg: The Man Who Brought Cinema to Turkey] (Istanbul: Milliyet Yayınları, 1995), p.68; İ. Türk, 'Türk Sineması Ne Zaman Başladı?' [When did Turkish Cinema Begin?], *Altyazı*, No.2 (2001), pp.76–9; A. Özyayar, *Sinemanın Osmanlıca Serüveni* [The Adventure of Cinema in Ottoman Turkish] (Ankara: Öteki Yayınevi, 1995), pp.125–31.
4. Some of the more intriguing theories/rumours are as follows: a) The film was sent abroad for development and forgotten there; b) like many other films kept at Yıldız Palace, it was thrown into the sea as a protection against fire; c) It was stolen from the Army Photo-Film Centre, where the films were kept after Yıldız Palace; d) Uzkınay could not have made it, for he had never used a movie camera before. The army put the failed film in a box and preserved it for a while. Later, it was destroyed because, it was thought, someday it might harm Uzkınay's reputation. For an overview of these theories/rumours, see Türk, 'Türk Sineması Ne Zaman Başladı?' pp.78–9 and Özyayar, *Sinemanın Osmanlıca Serüveni*, p.130.
5. Özön, *İlk Türk Sinemacısı Fuat Uzkınay*, p.10.
6. Quoted in Özyayar, *Sinemanın Osmanlıca Serüveni*, p.129. However, even Nijat Özön, who had also seen the box, claims that it was fake. Interview with Özön, 16 June 2004.
7. See 'Nusret Eraslan'la Söyleşi' [Interview with Eraslan], in Özyayar, *Sinemanın Osmanlıca Serüveni*, pp.129–31.
8. Among other 'evidence' are the following: Giovanni Scognomillo, another major Turkish cinema historian, refers to the testimony of his friend, a 90-year-old retired prosecutor, that he saw *Ayastefanos*. Scognomillo also talks about a letter he received from Uzkınay's daughters, where they mention that their father once talked to them about a difficult shooting concerning the demolition of a monument without giving any title. Finally, Burçak Evren, a famous Turkish cinema researcher, refers to a handwritten note by Gafuri Akçakın, one of the founders of the Army Foto-Film Centre. This note was jotted on one of the pages of Nijat Özön's book about Uzkınay. Quoted by Burçak Evren, the note reads: 'when this film entered the Army Foto-Film Centre it was 150-metres. I showed it to the commanders a couple of times. This film was mixed with other films when it was transferred to Ankara in 1941'. For a summary of these claims, see Türk, 'Türk Sineması Ne Zaman Başladı?' pp.77–9.

9. See, for example, N.F. Kısakürek, *Tarihimizde Moskof* [*Moskof in Our History*] (Istanbul: Toker Yayınları, 1973), pp.7–9; S. Nazif, *Batarya ile Ateş* [Fire with Battery] (Istanbul: Tercüman, 1978), p.15; Y. Okçu, *Türk-Rus Mücadelesi Tarihi* [The History of the Turko-Russian Struggle] (Ankara: Doğu Matbaası, 1953), pp.3–7; O. Conker, *Türk-Rus Savaşları* [Turko-Russian Wars] (Ankara: Sümer Basımevi, 1942), pp.5–6; K. Misiroğlu, *Moskof Mezalimi* [*Moskof Cruelty*] (Istanbul: Sebül Yayınevi, 1976).
10. Kısakürek, *Tarihimizde Moskof*, p.7.
11. *Ibid.*, pp.8–9.
12. S. Kocabaş, *Kuzey'den Gelen Tehdit: Tarihte Türk-Rus Mücadelesi* [The Threat From the North: The Turko-Russian Struggle in History] (Istanbul: Vatan Yayınları, 1989), p.340.
13. H. Batowski, 'A Centenary: Two Partitions of European Turkey. San Stefano and Berlin – A Comparison', *Balkan Studies*, Vol.19, No.2 (1978), p.231.
14. Kocabaş, *Kuzey'den Gelen Tehdit*, pp.340–1 and F. Armaoğlu, *19. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1789–1914)* [Nineteenth Century Political History (1789–1914)] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1997), pp.521–2.
15. Batowski, 'A Centenary', p.234; Kocabaş, *Kuzey'den Gelen Tehdit*, pp.343–4; and Armaoğlu, *19. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi*, pp.523–7. However, the Treaty of Berlin did not solve the problems in the Balkans, which is also proven by the emergence of future crises that culminated in the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913. By the end of the First Balkan War, the Ottoman Empire had lost almost all its European territories.
16. C. Kutay, 'O meş' um Utanç Anıtı nasıl dikilmiş, nasıl yıkılmıştı?' [How Was That Inauspicious Monument of Shame Erected and Destroyed], in *Örtülü Tarihimiz* [Our Veiled History] (Istanbul: Hilal Matbaası, 1975), p.396.
17. Some sources claim that Russians insisted the monument should also bear the inscription, 'to the victory of the Russian soldiers over the imperial army'. However, on the refusal of Abdulhamid II who also applied to the Tsar Alexander II, the Russians agreed to the erection of the monument without such an inscription. See 'Kal-i Esas-ı Resmî' [Official Destruction], *Tanin*, 15 Nov. 1914, p.6; R.E. Koçu, 'Ayastefanos Rus Abidesi' [Russian Monument at Ayastefanos], in *Istanbul Ansiklopedisi* [Istanbul Encyclopedia] (Istanbul: İstanbul Ansiklopedisi ve Neşriyat Kollektif Şirketi, 1960), p.1500; and P. Tuğlacı, 'The Russian Monument at St. Stefano', in *The Role of the Dadian Family in Ottoman Social, Economic, and Political Life* (Istanbul: Pars, 1993), p.145. It is also explained that the Sultan agreed to the erection of the monument on the condition that it would in addition serve as a charity building. See Koçu, 'Ayastefanos Rus Abidesi', p.1500.
18. Quoted in Kutay, 'O meş' um Utanç Anıtı nasıl dikilmiş, nasıl yıkılmıştı?', p.286.
19. Quoted in *ibid.*, pp.299–300. In fact, the monument would include six large binoculars at the top, which would all point to St. Sophie, one of the most important works of Byzantine art and the famous Christian church that fell under Muslim rule after the Ottoman conquest of Istanbul. See *ibid.*, pp.328–9.
20. Quoted in *ibid.*, p.324.
21. *Ibid.*, pp.328–9, and Tuğlacı, 'The Russian Monument at St. Stefano', p.145.
22. S.M. Kaludjerovic, 'The Russian Monument at San Stefano' [1899], *Serb World U.S.A.*, Vol.17, No.3 (Jan.–Feb. 2001), p.37.
23. Kutay, 'O meş' um Utanç Anıtı nasıl dikilmiş, nasıl yıkılmıştı?', p.330. For a more detailed description of the opening ceremony, see Kaludjerovic, 'The Russian Monument at San Stefano', p.37 and *L'Illustration*, 31 Dec. 1898. A full text of the *L'Illustration* article in Turkish is also available in Kutay, 'O meş' um Utanç Anıtı nasıl dikilmiş, nasıl yıkılmıştı?', pp.331–3.
24. See 'Neler Olacak' [What Will Happen], in M.K. Özgül, *Türk Edebiyatında Siyasi Rüyalarda* [Political Dreams in Turkish Literature] (Ankara: Akçağ, 1989), pp.90–3.
25. See Kutay, 'O meş' um Utanç Anıtı nasıl dikilmiş, nasıl yıkılmıştı?', pp.401–4.
26. K. Karabekir, *Hayatım* [My Life] (Istanbul: Emre Yayınları, 1995), p.343.
27. G. Hagen, 'German Heralds of Holy War: Orientalists and Applied Oriental Studies', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, Vol.24, No.2 (2004), p.145, and U. Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire 1914–1918* (Delmar, NY: Caravan Books, 1968), pp.117–18. Mary Mills Patrick describes the procession as 'a grand procession on horseback ... in imitation of the time of the prophet Mohammed'. The procession, she observes, included also two women impersonating Aisha, Mohammed's wife, and her attendant. M.M. Patrick, *Under Five Sultans* (New York and London: The Century Co., 1929), p.289. Also quoted in Hagen, 'German Heralds of Holy War', p.145.

28. Patrick, *Under Five Sultans*, p.275.
29. A.N. Kurat, *Türkiye ve Rusya: XVIII. Yüzyıl Sonundan Kurtuluş Savaşına Kadar Türk-Rus İlişkileri (1798–1919)* [Turkey and Russia: Turko-Russian Relations From the Eighteenth Century to the War of Independence (1798–1919)] (Ankara: Dil ve Tarih – Coğrafya Fakültesi Yayınları, 1970), p.249.
30. H. Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1918), pp.169–70; L.V. Sanders, *Türkiye'de 5 Yıl [5 Years in Turkey]* (Istanbul: Burçak Yayınevi, 1968), p.52; K. Karabekir, *Birinci Cihan Harbine Nasıl Girdik?* [How Did We Enter the First World War?] (Istanbul: Emre, 1994), p.395; and Hagen, 'German Heralds of Holy War', p.145.
31. 'Dünkü vaka' [The Event Yesterday], *Tanin*, 15 Nov. 1914, p.8.
32. Around the same time, a similar demolition occurred elsewhere. Edwin A. Grosvenor writes about a Russian obelisk erected in 1833 at Selvi Bournou, which bore the following inscription: 'This plain for a brief season gave hospitality to the Russian army. May this monumental stone preserve the remembrance. May the alliance of the two courts be equally firm and solid. May this event be celebrated forever in the annals of friendship': E.A. Grosvenor, *Constantinople* (Boston: Robert Brothers, 1900), p.215. This is also confirmed by Akdes Nimet Kurat, who also adds that the inscription was a quatrain by Pertev Efendi. However, Kurat points out that, according to the account of an elder from that region, the obelisk was destroyed by the local people at the beginning of the First World War. See Kurat, *Türkiye ve Rusya: XVIII*, p.63.
33. 'Kal-i Esas-ı Resmi' [Official Destruction], *Tanin*, 15 Nov. 1914, p.6.
34. 'Rus Abide-i Melanetinin Hedmi' [The Destruction of the Cursed Russian Monument], *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 15 Nov. 1914, p.3. For an account of the same event from a totally opposite perspective, which describes Turks as 'savages' disrespectful to the dead, see A. Kevork, *Kızıl Kayzer/Le Kaiser Rouge [The Red Kaiser]*, ed. Pars Tuğlacı (Istanbul: Belge Yayınları, 2003); also quoted in B. Evren, *Türk Sinemasının Doğumünü* [The Birthday of Turkish Cinema] (Istanbul: Anrakt Yayınları, 2004), pp.30–1. Abdullah Kevork was one of Abdullah Brothers/Abdullah Frères, the non-Muslim Ottoman photographers of the Yıldız Palace.
35. Karabekir, *Birinci Cihan Harbine Nasıl Girdik?*, pp.383, 395. This information is also confirmed by other military and political figures of the time such as Ali Fuad Erden, who served in the same headquarters as Cemal Pasha (see A.F. Erden, *Paris'ten Tih Sahrasına* [From Paris to the Tih Desert] (Ankara: Ulus Basımevi, 1949), pp.27–8) and E. Kuşçubaşı, one of the principal leaders of *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* (the Secret Organization of the Committee of Union and Progress) (see P.H. Stoddard, *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* [The Secret Organization] (Istanbul: Arba Yayınları, 1993), pp.29–30).
36. Cemal Pasha was implicitly referring to the attack of the warships Goeben (*Yavuz*) and Breslau (*Midilli*), led by the German admiral Souchon in the name of the Ottoman navy, on the Russian fleet in the Black Sea in late October. This event had been one of the most influential factors on the Ottoman Empire's entry into the war, and produced rumours that the Empire was pushed into the war simply through a German trick. The two German warships, which had been permitted to enter the Dardanelles and thus escape British pursuit in August 1914, were transferred to the Ottoman navy under the names of *Yavuz* and *Midilli*.
37. Kutay, 'O meş' um Utanç Anıtı nasıl dikilmiş, nasıl yıkılmıştı?', p.405. Years before Russians had reproduced a photograph displaying the Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolayevich and his entourage during the opening ceremony of the monument to be sold in all Orthodox churches. See *ibid.*, pp.400–1.
38. See 'Rus Abidesindeki Çanlar' [The Bells of The Russian Monument], *İkdam*, 20 Nov. 1914; 'Moskof Çanları Müze-i Askeriyede' [*Moskof* Bells at the Military Museum], *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 20 Nov. 1914; 'Moskof Abidesindeki Çanlar Müze-i Askeriyede' [*Moskof* Monument's Bells at the Military Museum], *Tanin*, 20 Nov. 1914.
39. 'Abide-i Sernigün' [Destroyed Monument], *Donanma*, 27 Dec. 1914, p.1.
40. Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire 1914–1918*, p.369.
41. The armistice included such provisions as demobilization and disarmament of the Ottoman army, the occupation of the straits and any place in the Ottoman Empire by the Allies. See E.J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1993), p.138.
42. *Ibid.*, p.163.
43. For a detailed discussion of these key events in the history of Turkey, see *ibid.*, pp.138–74 and B. Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp.239–62.

44. The abolition of the Caliphate, of traditional religious schools and the establishment of a secular system of education, the outlawing of *fez* and its substitution by the Western hat, encouragement of Western clothing for men and women, adoption of Western (Gregorian) calendar and alphabet, declaration of a secular state, adoption of civil, commercial and penal codes based on European models, and the endowment of women with the vote and the right to hold office were among the major Kemalist reforms. For an overview of these reforms, see H.C. Metz, *Turkey: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1996), p.37, and O. Tekelioğlu, 'Modernizing Reforms and Turkish Music in the 1930s', *Turkish Studies*, Vol.2, No.1 (Spring 2001), p.93.
45. H. Kramer, *A Changing Turkey: The Challenge to Europe and the United States* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), pp.3–4.
46. For a discussion of Turkey's attitude in the face of the dichotomy of Americanism vs. communism during the Cold War years, see N. Erdoğan and D. Kaya, 'Institutional Intervention in the Distribution and Exhibition of Hollywood Films in Turkey', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, Vol.22, No.1 (2002), pp.47–59.
47. Çalapala, 'Türkiye'de Filmcilik', p.8.
48. See D.K. Mutlu, '(Re)Constructing Ayastefanos: The Origination of Turkish Cinema', paper presented at the conference Continuity/Rupture: Perspectives on the Past, the Present and Change, Bilkent University, Programme in Cultures, Civilizations and Ideas, Ankara, Turkey, 5–6 March 2004.
49. 'Ayastefanos Abidesi Nasıl Yıkılmıştı?' [How Was the Ayastefanos Monument Destroyed?] *Yeni Tarih Dünyası*, No.4 (1950), p.141.
50. B. Doğanay, 'Ayastefanostaki Rus Abidesi nasıl yıkıldı' [How the Russian Monument at Ayastefanos Was Destroyed], *Yeni Tarih Dünyası*, No.6 (1950), pp.245–7, 260.
51. See 'Türk Filmciliği Düünden Bugüne 1914–1953' [Turkish Filmmaking from Yesterday to the Present 1914–1953], *Yıldız*, No.30 (1953), pp.16–17 and 'Bugüne Kadar Filmciliğimiz' [Our Filmmaking So Far], *Yeni Yıldız*, No.36 (1956), pp.12–13.
52. 'Bugüne Kadar Filmciliğimiz', pp.12–13.
53. See Evren, *Türk Sinemasının Doğumünü*, pp.49–52.
54. For a discussion of how Muslimhood was considered essential to achieving Turkishness in the early Turkish Republic, see M. Yeğen, 'Citizenship and Ethnicity in Turkey', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.40, No.6 (Nov. 2004), pp.57–8.
55. The film is available at Macedonia Film Archive. It was also screened in Turkey a couple of times.
56. See Evren, *Türk Sinemasının Doğumünü*, pp.52–5.
57. See *Türk Sineması Tarihi Düünden Bugüne (1896–1960)* [The History of Turkish Cinema From Yesterday to the Present (1896–1960)] (Istanbul: Artist Reklam Ortaklığı Yayınları, 1962); *Türk Sineması Kronolojisi 1895–1966* [The Chronology of Turkish Cinema] (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1968); and *İlk Türk Sinemacısı Fuat Uzkınay* [Fuat Uzkınay, The First Turkish Filmmaker] (Istanbul: Türk Sinematek Derneği, 1970).
58. For example, Özön reduces the length of the film from 300 metres to 150, and the shooting distance from 150 metres to a just a few. Moreover, he states that Uzkınay learned how to use the camera on the spot in a few hours, whereas according to Tilgen this took several months including the making of some trial films.
59. Before Özön, the film was known only by its subject matter.
60. See *Türk Sineması Kronolojisi*, pp.43, 242.