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Slow Spectatorship in Conversation: Reflections from Turkey

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Introduction

This roundtable convenes nine scholars from Turkey working across cinema, television, and media studies. It aims to open a conversation on *slow spectatorship* as an ethical, ecological, political, and pedagogical response to accelerated screen cultures. The urgency of this conversation is intensified in Turkey, where screen media production, especially local TV series, is extremely high (Selvi, 2025) and where social media permeates everyday temporalities of attention (Kemp, 2025). From this position, we aim to contribute a situated perspective on slow spectatorship not as an abstract ideal, but as a necessary and communal practice.

Much recent scholarship on digital media has focused on speed. Studies of algorithmically curated short videos describe endlessly refreshing feeds and the accelerated rhythms of attention they cultivate (Liang, 2022; Schellewald, 2022), while research on streaming platforms shows how on-demand infrastructures reorganise access and viewing protocols in ways that encourage binge-watching and time-compressed consumption (Lotz, 2017; Jenner, 2017, 2018). Across critical and media theory more broadly, questions of acceleration—from James Gleick's bemoaning of the world's becoming *Faster* (1999) to debates on accelerationist aesthetics (Shaviro, 2013) and multi-scholar debates on speed (Kendall, 2016)—have shaped how we understand contemporary spectatorship.

Work on slowness in media remains comparatively limited. Discussions of slow media tend to centre on art cinema (Zawadka, 2022), slow television (Irving, 2017), or manifestos that call for more mindful media use (Köhler et al., 2010). In this roundtable, we ask how slower, sustained forms of engagement may also emerge in popular culture, everyday, and in our classrooms.

We moderated a roundtable built around a shared set of questions, and emerging from two hour long online meetings held in September and October 2025. This roundtable is as part of Volkswagen Stiftung's Open Up Project 'Against Screen Extractivism: Slow Production and Spectatorship'. In the discussion we collectively reflect on how speed, attention, and sustainability are negotiated from the position of spectatorship. Rather than proposing a unified model, the roundtable foregrounds tensions, shared concerns, and open questions that arose through dialogue. As Belinda He (2021: 176) reminds us, the roundtable has long been central to cinephilic exchange and historiographic reflection across transnational scholar communities like ours. A roundtable is not a space for consensus, but a place from which we might stand up, depart, and reorient ourselves—an invitation to rethink our positions together.

Our conversation begins by reflecting on slow spectatorship as an analytical method and teaching practice. Feminist theory provides a lens through which slowness is debated. Participants reflect on how feminist film practices have historically challenged masculinist regimes of speed and performance by foregrounding duration and mundaneness. Television studies further complicate the discussion by tracing how multitasking and background viewing that was once associated with women's domestic labour, have become generalised modes of media consumption in digital cultures.

Discussions address classroom experiments such as collective screenings, scene-based analysis, repeat viewing, and phone-free sessions, to counter habits shaped by platform cultures and cultivate attentive engagement among students. Contributors ask whether slow spectatorship can be institutionalised within film and media education, and how digital platforms

themselves might be integrated into pedagogies that cultivate attention rather than distraction. Participants share dilemmas and experiments from the classroom while asking how slow spectatorship might be cultivated institutionally and communally.

The discussion inevitably turns to consumption practices, distinguishing between 'slow content' and 'slow viewing'. Rather than opposing 'slow cinema' to 'fast media', contributors distinguish between slow content and slow viewing, emphasising attention, context, and conditions of reception. Watching long films, art cinema, or older television series does not automatically produce slow spectatorship when viewing is fragmented, accelerated, or relegated to the background of daily life. Instead, participants emphasise how collectivity may engender slowness.

Collective viewing practices such as open-air screenings, campus cinemas, neighbourhood film events are discussed as community infrastructures where spectatorship becomes relational, dialogic, and sometimes therapeutic, enabling reflection and community formation beyond individualised consumption. Festivals, film clubs, and open-air screenings were discussed as infrastructures that foster collective reflection and dialogic spectatorship. Participants remain attentive to the risk that slow spectatorship might reproduce elitism or nostalgia if detached from everyday viewing practices or unequal access to cultural spaces.

The roundtable links spectatorship to broader debates on sustainability and care. Contributors explore whether slow viewing can foreground hidden labour conditions, exploitative production cycles, or environmental costs of content inflation. From this perspective, slow spectatorship becomes part of a wider critique of screen extractivism—the capture of attention, datafication of audiences, and acceleration of creative labour under platform capitalism.

Slow spectatorship is discussed as a counter-position to the accelerationist logics of platform capitalism: logics that demand constant novelty, intensified productivity, and uninterrupted circulation. Here, 'screen extractivism' is used to name processes through which attention is captured, audiences are datafied, and viewing practices are increasingly instrumentalised. The group explores how content inflation and multiscreen, distracted viewing practices are mutually reinforcing, raising questions about spectators' agency and responsibility within these systems.

Cultural specificity is another central thread in the conversation. Drawing on examples such as the translation of the *Cittaslow* movement in Turkey as 'calm city' rather than 'slow city', the roundtable asks what kinds of translations, adaptations, or reframings are necessary for slowness to resonate locally. The discussion situates slow spectatorship within Turkey's specific cultural and political histories, where slowness often carries connotations of backwardness within narratives of modernisation. We debate how the concept might be translated locally without reproducing withdrawal, privilege, or depoliticisation, and how public initiatives, or collective organising might cultivate attentive viewing while addressing inequalities in access to media spaces.

Taken together, the roundtable frames slow spectatorship as an ongoing conversation linking pedagogy, sustainability, labour, care, and cultural politics, while remaining open to disagreement, adaptation, and future dialogue.



Slow Spectatorship as a Method and Pedagogy

İpek Çelik-Rappas: Welcome, and thank you so much for making time. Scholarship on sustainable media has largely centred on ecological practices in production. In this roundtable, we would like to extend the conversation to spectatorship. We ask what it might mean to conceptualise sustainability not only in terms of how screen media productions are made, but also in terms of how they are watched and lived with. How might slower, more attentive viewing practices reshape our understanding of media? And how might such practices resonate across different research traditions and methodological approaches? The roundtable invites your reflections on slow spectatorship as a sustainable media practice—and conceptual and methodological possibilities this might open for future research.

Aslı Ildır: In other words, has slow spectatorship emerged in your research or teaching, even in ways that only became apparent once the term was named?

Hasan Akbulut: Slow viewing has long been central to my scholarly practice and personal life. Rather than trying to consume everything quickly and voraciously, I have tended to stay with films that moved me deeply. My research agenda grew out of that inclination. My book, *Reading the Cinema of Nuri Bilge Ceylan* (2005), emerged from such a practice. I watched each film slowly, patiently, for hours at a time—taking notes on the associations they evoked. Slow viewing became a way of understanding, calmly and deeply, and I still practice it.

I often return to Laura Mulvey's (2006) suggestion that new technologies may foster a more contemplative viewer, one able to form deeper relationships with images and to respond through video essays or essay films. In our doctoral seminars, we have tried to take up this invitation through small but meaningful experiments in slow, reflective viewing. One student studied a film collective to ask whether a slower viewing experience outside the pace of daily media traffic might be possible; another examined a film through her parents' experiences as teachers, connecting lived experience with cinematic narrative. In a video-essay course our aim was to think slowly and deeply about films and to express reflection through audiovisual materials. We explored slow reading, slow thinking, and ways of forming relationships with films. Students often came with habits of rapid consumption and needed time to adapt. But by the end of the term, they produced thoughtful audiovisual pieces that reflected on their encounters with films. One of my doctoral students reached the following conclusion in her thesis on cinema pedagogy with children: slow viewing not only helps viewers grasp the meaning of a film, but also opens a space for haptic engagement with the image.

This insight resonates with my own advocacy for slow reading and slow thinking. The effort to understand and explain the world requires time: first to define the issue, then to describe the problem carefully. Approaching questions in this way inevitably slows us down. Today, many people are reluctant to take the time that such effort demands.

Olgu Yiğit: Building on our pedagogical discussions, I would like to emphasise the importance of early childhood experiences. My internship at the Youth Film Festival Antwerp (JEF), an international festival for children, led me to reflect on how deeply viewing habits are formed before students even reach university. Slow spectatorship should be conceptualised as a political and pedagogical project that begins in childhood, fostering social organisation and critical participation from an early age. These types of festivals offer a wide range of programmes from shorts to feature films, and from classics to new releases that expose children to diverse rhythms. I believe that any suggestions aimed at developing a culture of slow spectatorship should be extended to these formative years, with the goal of organically nurturing a habit of attentive watching and thinking rather than yielding to the acceleration pace of screen culture.

İlke Şanlıer: It is helpful to approach spectatorship both as a cultural practice and as a lived, subjective experience. This duality remains consistent in my work. In cinema history projects I conducted with Aydın Çam, especially our local studies on cinema-going histories in Adana (Çam and Şanlıer, 2019, 2021), we try to understand spectatorship not as passive consumption but as a bodily and intellectual process that can enable deeper, slower engagement with narrative structures.

Similarly, in our work on migration and cinema within the *Reel Borders* project, together with Sylvia (Almenara-Niebla), we developed a methodology she called *cineforum*: essentially a kind of focus group conducted through collective film viewing (Almenara Niebla and Smets, 2025). Watching films together with migrants and non-migrants allowed us to observe how shared viewing experiences trigger emotions and reflections. In that sense, slow mode of viewing can be considered as collective as well as affective.

Özge Özyılmaz: The topic of affect takes me back to the cinema of Nuri Bilge Ceylan. In my work (2004), to understand his films, I draw on Walter Benjamin's (1968) account of modernity as a field structured by shocks. Many viewers find these films boring or difficult to enter, and I tried to think about this as a response shaped by audiences accustomed to shock-driven experiences. In a world habituated to shocks, these films invite a different mode of spectatorship—one that is not immediately inviting for viewers shaped by other habits. I drew on Benjamin's concept of *Erfahrung*, often translated as 'long experience', to suggest that such films invite spectators to fill narrative gaps through their sensory and emotional memories—to connect the film to their lived experience. This kind of spectatorship has clear parallels with 'slow spectatorship'. Rather than narratives that assault the viewer with shocks and absorb them completely, leaving no room for reflection, these films open a space in which the spectator is invited to be present as a thinking, feeling subject.

İrem İnceoğlu: This subjective experience is also connected to the mundane. When I first began thinking about slowness, it was in relation to feminist film production. A feminist film is one attentive to everyday life and mundaneness, to the slow rhythms of the mundane. If the emphasis on excitement, spectacle, and special effects can be associated with a masculinised cinematic language then feminist filmmaking often offers an alternative: slower, quieter, more attentive to the routines of daily life, even to boredom, revealing the details embedded in mundaneness.

The work that affected me profoundly was *Jeanne Dielman, 23, quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles* (dir. Chantal Akerman, BEL/FRA, 1975). I was struck by how a narrative could emerge from everyday repetition, and how a slow, restrained form could generate a powerful emotional current. From this perspective, slow production and slow viewing can be understood as alternatives to accelerated production logics: the constant urgency, the insistence on speed and intensity. Everyday life, in its mundaneness and slowness, also speaks; it carries meanings and values, even if these are not easily monetised. The mundane has a kind of slow-motion quality, because it does not produce excitement/anxiety, which is inherently fast.

Temporalities of Attention and Fragmented Viewing

Olgu Yiğit: Mundane could also be the opposite of slow. After an exhausting workday followed by hours of commuting, I watch many episodes of a series I would normally not watch. It was clearly an escape from the fast pace of daily life. So for me, it makes sense to discuss slow and fast viewing without idealising one over the other, recognising that both are part of lived experience.

Much of my viewing between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five involved binge-watching. That habit even shaped my social interactions, since it allowed me to participate in conversations within friend circles. 'Slow viewing' is often positioned against binge-watching, but this opposition might be insufficient. On platforms like TikTok, for example, people follow series through short clips or summaries and still participate in discussions about them. So the viewing experience feels broader to me, not limited to cinema and temporality alone.

İpek Çelik-Rappas: Indeed, spectatorship experiences are hard to classify. With Özge, we conducted a study with students who watch Turkish TV series. Young audiences are a demographic not especially associated with *dizis* that last nearly 150 minutes per episode (Özyilmaz and Çelik-Rappas, forthcoming). While watching these slow-burn and long-temporality narratives some students attended at higher speeds, but many watched in real time, especially if they appreciated the script and formed attachment with the characters. Slowness was not always a concern.

But they also often multitasked, doing other things especially housework simultaneously. Going back to feminist theory, earlier research on Janice Radway's (1991) work on consumption of romance novels by women showed that they often read these novels precisely to avoid domestic work, to carve out time for themselves. Radway's work was a feminist reinterpretation of a popular genre not usually seen as feminist. Today, however, many of us observe that media texts do not necessarily help us avoid work but sometimes push us to do more: to multitask, to keep working while watching as well as entertain us after a long day of work, as Olgu suggests. So when considering slowness or speed, context and content matters deeply.

İrem İnceoğlu: Indeed, space and content matters. Fast viewing is something we encounter more through mobile devices. I think about this through my own experience. When I take public transport, I am usually standing—it is almost impossible to find a seat in Istanbul. So instead of reading, I turn to content produced for mobile phones—podcasts, videos, and so on. There is something about how this kind of consumption has adapted to everyday urban life. I see fast watching, listening, and consumption as extensions of fast city life.

There are also news programmes I do not want to devote time to watching at home, but I don't want to disconnect from them either, so I listen on YouTube while commuting. Under normal circumstances I might find them tedious, but on public transport I listen at 1.5× speed. My goal is to get a quick sense of the day's events—to 'wrap up' the headlines. Otherwise, it is impossible to keep up with the news in Turkey. When I try to watch these programmes on Turkish politics, I cannot tolerate the slower pace.

Our practices are changing with the affordances of technology, and we begin to structure our daily lives around them. Festival films, for instance, have no commercial breaks, and for years I preferred festivals precisely because I could not tolerate advertisements. Now, however, when watching at home, it is easy to pause a film, do something else, and return. Digital access allows us to watch while doing other tasks, and watch a three-hour film in segments. Questions of speed, slowness, patience, and our capacity to stay with what is on the screen are deeply affected by these transformations.

Ece Vitrinel: Two years ago, a student wrote a paper that really excited me: a study of spectatorship on TikTok—the fragmented viewing of films and series through clips. Based on new research and her own fieldwork, the student argued that such viewing resembles television more than cinema: a more relaxed, less intentional experience, where one does not have to commit to 'watching a film', but can drift along a flow.

Even films like *The Substance* (dir. Coralie Fargeat, UK/US/FRA, 2024) are said to be framed with centred compositions so they can be more easily viewed on vertical screens such as Instagram or TikTok. The idea that long series or films are watched in fragments on such

platforms requires further research. In my own work, fragmented viewing rather than binge-watching has become increasingly important, since our lives themselves are now lived across divided screens. When I say, 'I cannot watch *Kızılcık Şerbeti* (Show TV, 2022- [a popular Turkish TV series])—it's too long', they reply, 'Professor, I just watch it on the metro at double speed to see what happened this week'. They do not think, 'I don't have two hours, so I won't start'. They watch in segments, half an hour at home, then continue on their phones.

Roger Odin (2012) notes that no one criticises a reader for not finishing a novel in one sitting, yet films are still expected to be consumed in a single stretch. He distinguishes between homochronic and heterochronic media. Traditionally, film was homochronic, its reception mode defined by its production, but today films are increasingly used like heterochronic media, more like novels. I find this distinction important. Anne Friedberg's (1993, 2006) work on navigating between screens, and Nanna Verhoeff's (2012) research on screen technologies, also show how media technologies fragment not only space but also time—past, future, online time, and present experience overlap.

Aslı Ildır: In some way we also have to address the question of 'watching a lot', because it was among our questions too. If the 'normal' of spectatorship becomes very fast and very easy, then anything else begins to require extra effort. It requires mental effort regardless of content. In my research there was also a prejudice on part of the spectators: that the content would be 'too intellectual', an art film, a festival film, too slow (Ildir, 2024). But overall, the issue is having to watch in one sitting with serious concentration. That creates fear both about the viewing mode and about the content, and it begins to be perceived as labour. Because fast watching is easier. I often thought about this: festivals are associated with long effort. Could slow watching be turned into something more pleasurable? You watch slow films with friends and it becomes more pleasurable.

Space, Community and Collective Experience

Özge Özyılmaz: All these ideas about slow watching become more visible when viewing turns into an event. There is Rick Altman's (2004) notion of cinema as an event, coming out of exhibition history, and I think it still applies today. When viewing takes on an event-like quality, audiences seem more open to slow watching. It does not have to be a festival or a screening with a live orchestra. It can be something as simple as me sitting here and Ece in another apartment, both watching *Kızılcık Şerbeti* at the same time and gossiping about it on WhatsApp. That, too, creates a shared viewing space—because we are interacting in real time.

So whenever there is a social, interactive dimension, viewers seem more receptive to slower, more attentive watching. When people are alone, they sometimes feel a stronger urge to 'consume' the content quickly—to get through it, to understand it right away. As İpek mentioned, we also spoke with students who prepare tea and snacks in their dorm rooms and watch their favourite series live, turning solitary viewing into a pleasurable ritual. Bringing a social element into the experience seems to open up the possibility of slow watching. Turning spectatorship into a shared practice is important.

This also connects to pedagogy. I used to screen films in class and ask students to present them; their presentations often became very conventional. This year, I am considering something different: asking them to present just one scene. They would show a single scene, analyse it in relation to the topic, and discuss it with the class. Because of time constraints, maybe focusing on scenes would slow things down, watching the same scene again and again, noticing how it changes with each viewing. Perhaps on the second viewing, we could mute the sound or try other variations. I have been thinking about trying out approaches like this.

İlke Şanlıer: I taught at a summer school in Marburg, Germany, on human rights and cinema—discussing human rights through film and asking whether cinema can function as a tool of advocacy. It was a two-week course with an international group of students from Egypt, China, the United States, Canada, Spain, and elsewhere. I shared a syllabus beforehand so they could watch films in advance, but they hadn't. So we adjusted the format: one day of screening, one day of discussion. They were genuinely moved, saying things like, 'We had never watched such long films before', or 'These films were so striking—documentaries like *Honeyland* (dir. Tamara Kotevska and Ljubomir Stefanov, MKD, 2019), for example. We had no idea such things were happening in the world'. So pedagogically, it is still important to provide space for collective viewing and discussion experiences.

When we speak of spectatorship—specifically in relation to film—spatial context shapes how students watch and engage with it. When you watch a film outdoors, everyone remains absorbed, eyes wide open. Or in our faculty's cinema hall, far fewer students check their phones than in a classroom. Some still do, but not in the same way; they seem able, one way or another, to give their attention to the film. For that reason, I think slow viewing also has a spatial dimension.

Aslı Ildır: We should also explore digital spaces of spectatorship. There the number of works people watch does not change very much. The population may increase, but broadly, the number of works people actually watch remains similar. And this is also where institutions like Netflix have started to hit a wall. Capital has reached saturation: too many competitors. For instance, Prime and similar platforms no longer release an entire season at once; they release episodes gradually, because they have started to lose profits. They operate through constant investment; in fact, they are heavily in debt. Yet someone still has to keep selecting. Could selection mechanisms take forms that contribute to slow watching? Could festivals play a role here? We know a familiar phenomenon: festivals sell out, but when the same film is released theatrically, no one goes—it plays to an empty theatre.

Ece Vitrinel: People really want to feel that they belong to a community and that they are valued. And that is not only about content; it is also about space and environment. At a festival, the same film plays to a full hall; people see each other, run into each other in ticket lines. Then the same film later plays to an empty theatre. In one sense, it is not hard to understand.

Özge Özyılmaz: Festival spectatorship both builds community and creates a meta-event. But when *Game of Thrones* (HBO, 2011-2019) was airing, everyone talked about it the next Monday morning; it became a way of communicating with friends or being part of digital communities. So

both festivals and platform series can be community-forming and socially meaningful in different ways.

All these discussions also make me think about degrowth. As you know, there is a debate in economics about reducing resource use, producing less, and shrinking the economy as a more ecologically sustainable solution. Could we propose something similar for cinema? Perhaps it is possible on the audience side, but how open would producers be to this? That raises a much larger question.

There's a community in Istanbul that tries to eat locally and seasonally, organising around slow-eating practices. I wonder how their ethics translate into viewing practices. What are their viewing habits? It would be fascinating to ask them. Do they maintain the same ethical commitments in their viewing practices?

Sustainability, Labour, Ecology

Sezen Kayhan: When we talk about slow spectatorship, we immediately think of festivals and art-house films, as if slow viewing requires a certain kind of effort. But I think this is partly about art-house film content. Yet in our current discussions we imagine slow spectatorship beyond art-house cinema.

Festivals devote most of their programmes to new films—world premieres, international premieres. If a film was made two years ago, it's expired. As someone who has made films, I experience this on platforms too. MUBI shows older films, but usually only cult classics; it won't pick up a Turkish film from three years ago. It says, 'Your film is already old'.

So both festivals and platforms follow the logic of fast production. Even if their selections are meaningful, in terms of content and production they don't take a radically different stance. There is always novelty, always the new film. Films are approached as products with a two- or three-year shelf life. Younger directors feel this acutely.

Ece Vitrinel: Recently, there has been writings about nostalgia—re-watching older series and films. So there is a need to return—to go back to the past. Beyond the financial cost there is also a mental cost of trying to keep up with what is popular all the time which connects to the exhausted condition İrem mentioned. We are all exhausted. We constantly have to choose what to watch. There are so many options that we start asking: Is what's in front of us really worth it? Is it worth devoting our limited time and attention? So we turn to safer choices, older series, older films.

At the same time, as Byung-Chul Han (2020) also noted, there is a need for collectivity and rituals. Festivals have these function as well as 'gatekeeping'. Someone curates for us: 'I chose this for you; you don't have to think anymore. Come, sit comfortably, calmly, and watch'. In that space, an identity is formed. You feel you belong to a community; you feel valued. You find the content more valuable because it is curated. You didn't pick it yourself at home. I think the increase in festivals and events is partly related to this.

There is a definition of the cinema hall I really like as 'a parenthesis in time and space'. It offers a frame that allows a cognitively calmer experience. I also want to connect this to the

ecological and ethical dimension. In a discussion on ecological production and green sets one of the questions that followed was: 'What if we didn't produce?' Not 'How can we produce more sustainably?' but 'Do we actually have to shoot everything? Do all our ideas have to become films?'

I've been thinking through similar debates in galleries and museums around 'slow exhibition practices'. Major institutions can mount exhibitions that last for months, but galleries move very fast—two weeks, three at most. Some argue: 'Let's work more carefully and give audiences more time'. But then another problem arises: there are so many artists. If we adopt slow exhibition practices, are there enough galleries? Would artists become unemployed?

Cinema is similar. So many people enter the sector. Whether they can remain in it is another matter. But there is a strong desire to produce. How do we curb that? Who am I to say one person should not produce while another should? Something I remember from years ago, a professor in France described French cinema as 'zombie cinema': a cinema disconnected from audiences, sustained by funding. When I first heard this, it sounded like a luxurious critique for Turkey's context, but there is some truth to it. So less production and how this becomes politically and ideologically possible seems important to me.

Sezen Kayhan: When İpek and I first began thinking about 'slow spectatorship', what felt new in our approach was linking this question to sustainability and responsible spectatorship. Ethical issues are often discussed separately in relation to production and spectatorship, and much of the existing literature focuses on binge-watching. Attention is certainly an important issue for students, but there is another, less discussed dimension: the political one.

This concerns the content being produced and circulated. Platforms like Netflix initially appeared as spaces of freedom—suggesting that we no longer needed programmers, gatekeepers, or established writers, and that digital media would open up creative possibilities. What is less discussed is the environmental cost of this endless stream of content, as well as the forms of labour exploitation it can entail. Netflix now outsources much of its global production through subcontractors, and because production companies operate under local legal frameworks, there have even been deaths on sets linked to Netflix productions in Turkey. The idea that this 'freedom' depends on constant production—on the assumption that we need infinite content—has serious consequences for both labour and the environment.

So when we ask: 'Why slow spectatorship?', especially in pedagogical contexts, we need to explain these connections to students. Many people had never considered that binge-watching could have environmental consequences, or that production might carry such costs. The environmental and human costs of production still are unfamiliar, even in academic circles.

Politics and Economics of Acceleration

Hasan Akbulut: Why is slowness important? Countries like ours experience change very quickly, without time to digest it. I had a brief experience abroad where I again saw the value of slowness in my life: taking longer walks, passing through a park, watching birds, listening to water. It may sound romantic, but focusing on one thing clears the mind and is deeply restful. At its core,

slowness is about trying to understand and explain the world. It requires adjustments in our everyday ways of living. Another dimension concerns ethics and ecology. We know fast consumption harms our health. There is a limit to what we can process; when we exceed it, problems emerge, attention disorders, hyperactivity. Watching everything, knowing everything, consuming quickly: these are demands of 24/7 capitalism. People in media industries work long hours to meet this speed; I have witnessed this. One of my sisters-in-law is a cinematographer; her nails literally fell off from exhaustion. Another colleague suffered a brain hemorrhage due to overwork and poor nutrition and even lost his life. Is this really necessary? On one hand, we do not need this pace; on the other, is human life so disposable? From this perspective, the political and ideological dimension becomes clear. Slow viewing is not only about appreciating 'high culture' more carefully; it also contains an element of resistance to liberal capitalism. Slowness and conscious consumption are practices of resistance.

İpek Çelik-Rappas: Indeed, when we speak about producing more slowly, we are not suggesting that there should be fewer jobs in media production. We are also not framing slowness as a crisis response but asking instead how production can be organised more ethically. That means including the people being represented in the process and making sure that workers are not pushed to exhaustion, but can work under fairer, safer, and more sustainable conditions. Production processes are constantly 'given momentum' in the world, especially visible in Turkey with TV series production. Production, spectatorship, consumption and the content are intertwined, so our project thinks about them together. We want to evaluate both 'less' and 'more ethical': producing more slowly, offering better conditions for workers, creating a system where they can pause, slow down and not have to work twelve hours a day. This is also something we also experience in academia: the pace at which we can write, the pace at which we can work.

İlke Şanlıer: I would like to sketch a macro-level framework by bringing together some of the points raised. We often try to understand speed through measurable indicators: how quickly a film or series is watched, the rhythm of scenes, how many episodes a viewer consumes in a sitting. But the more significant issue may be that the entire production–consumption chain is constantly accelerating.

Drawing on Hartmut Rosa's (2013) discussion of social acceleration, as well as ideas about social media 'exhilaration', platforms' obligation to release new content every month, the continuous updating of algorithms, and the push for audiences to consume more quickly all demonstrate that in modern societies not only work but life itself is accelerating. We increasingly feel compelled to keep speeding up.

This acceleration is directly tied to labour exploitation. Platforms must constantly produce more content to remain competitive, which forces crew members, actors, and directors to work more intensively—producing more in less time. It is not speed itself but the institutionalisation of acceleration that places labour under pressure. At the same time, this acceleration has also surfaced in union activity, reflected in resistant contexts such as writers' and actors' strikes in Hollywood. Counter-positioning itself becomes a field of resistance.

So when I think about what slow watching corresponds to in this context, I see it as a stance not only against speed, but against the pressure to consume everything immediately. Slow watching encourages viewers to become aware of the rhythms of production and makes the

value of labour more visible. It also includes social dimensions such as community-building and being together with peers. In this sense, slow watching is not only an aesthetic preference but also an ethical and political position.

İrem İnceoğlu: What you are describing is like trying to catch a departing train—a metaphor frequently used in Turkish modernisation discourse to describe the anxiety of 'catching up' with the West (Ahıska, 2003). You may move at the same speed, yet you can never quite catch the train; you always have to go faster. When this is framed within a perspective that prioritises quantity over quality, it reminds me of development indicators—measuring litres of milk per child without asking about quality, antibiotics, and so on. Our perception is shaped by the logic imposed by the economic order.

In our geography, slowness is often associated with backwardness. The question of slowness can even be read as a kind of de-modernisation project. When I think about it, examples such as the Slow Food movement in Italy resisting McDonald's come to mind. The aim there is to consider every stage of production together with the consumer: where the vegetables come from, the relationship with the producer and seller, and the cultivation of conscious awareness about these processes. This approach has spread into areas such as 'slow academia' and slow cinema.

I have followed how this largely Eurocentric movement became ideologised in places like California and later entered Turkey. Through a doctoral dissertation I learned that the case of Seferihisar [a town near the Aegean region in Turkey] application to become the first *Cittaslow* town in Turkey was particularly striking (Dokur, 2012). The mayor chose the term 'calm city' instead of 'slow city', because in Turkish 'slow' might have been associated with backwardness. This shows we need to read slowness carefully within the Turkish context.

This line of thought also reminds me of the long-standing connection between speed and modernisation. There is a widespread belief that the more acceleration you achieve, the more 'developed' you become. Yet in less-developed regions, catching up with this acceleration is often structurally impossible. Thinking through this helps clarify the political dimensions of speed, consumption, and the economic order. Speed and acceleration shape both economic-political context and individual viewing experiences, and repetition makes the need for slow watching and conscious consumption more visible.

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