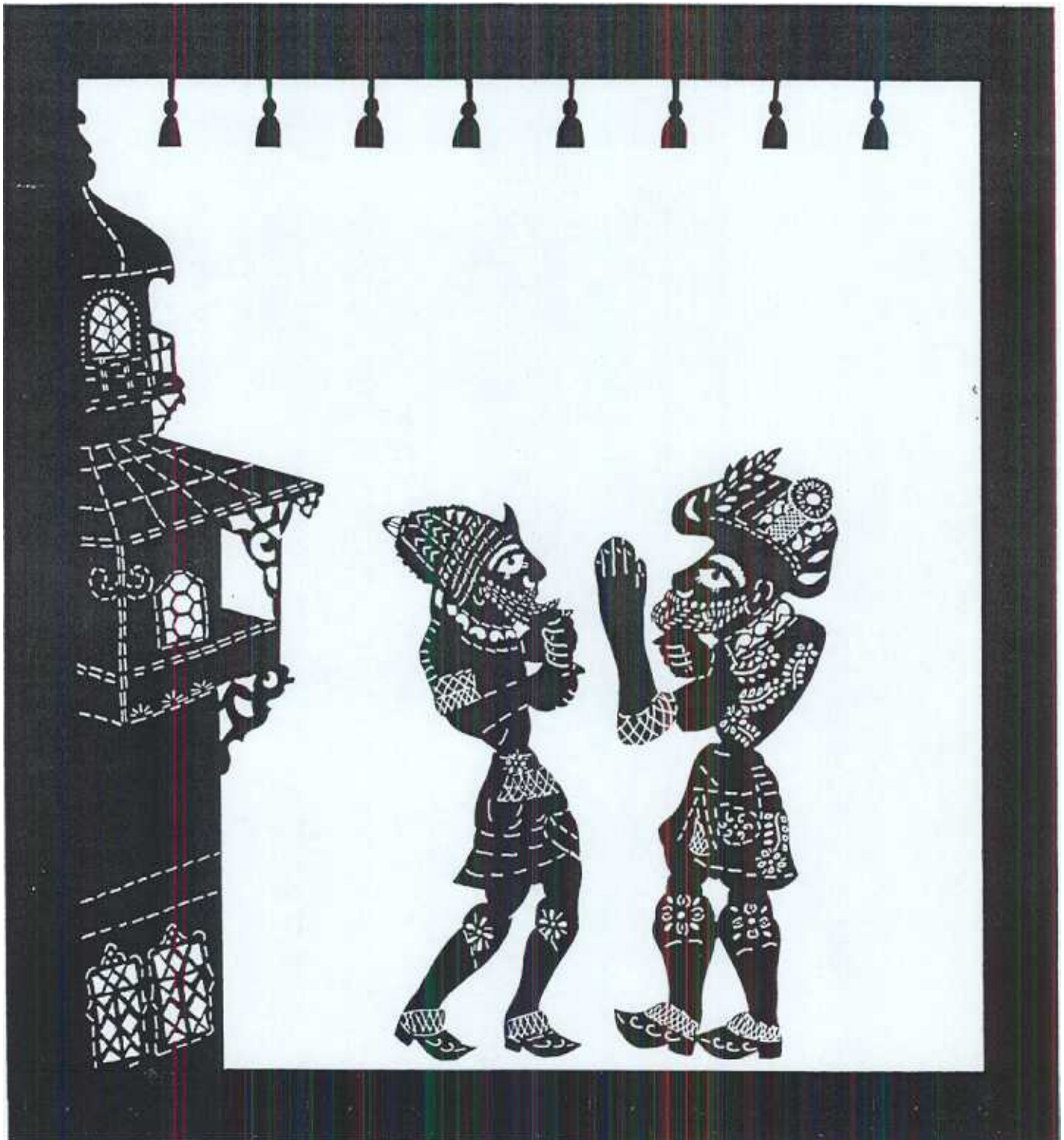

TURKISH SHADOW PUPPET THEATER:
A WINDOW ON TURKEY



A Curriculum Guide To Accompany
THE WITCHES and SHADOWS OF TURKEY

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PREFACE

The Curriculum:

This curriculum package is designed to serve as a vehicle for learning or teaching about Turkey through an introduction to traditional Turkish shadow puppet theater. It is intended for the following audiences:

- ▶▶ elementary students (art, drama, music, social studies, global education)
- ▶▶ secondary students (art, drama, music, social studies and history)
- ▶▶ university students (art, drama, music, history)
- ▶▶ adults (for entertainment or intellectual interests)

The full package consists of the following three parts:

- ▶▶ **A Window on Turkey** (a curriculum guide)
- ▶▶ **Shadows of Turkey and The Witches** (a two-part videocassette program),
- ▶▶ *A Window on Turkey* (an audiocassette)

A Window on Turkey (the Curriculum Guide) contains helpful information about the Turks, Turkey, and global education. You can select from activities that include puppet-making, a folk song and dance, a game, a language lesson, maps, and a wealth of further suggestions for teachers to use in their classrooms. You can apply many of these ideas to other cultures besides Turkey. A script of the play **The Witches** is included.

Shadows of Turkey and The Witches (on the videocassette) is a two-part program that should give you a fertile starting point for a unit on Turkey. **Shadows of Turkey** (15 minutes) is a fast-paced documentary introducing some basic facts about Turkey through the medium of the shadow puppet theater. **The Witches** (30 minutes) is a reproduction of a traditional shadow puppet play in English. You may use these programs together or independently.

A Window on Turkey (the audiocassette) supplements the curriculum guide. It consists of:

- ▶▶instrumental and vocal versions of Fatmali (a Turkish folk song) and the spoken lyrics and clapping rhythm
- ▶▶audio material to accompany the brief Turkish language lesson found in this guide
- ▶▶the music and sound effects that introduce certain characters as they enter the shadow puppet stage

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CREDITS

Project Coordinators

Walter G. Andrews--Professor, Near Eastern Languages and Civilization, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

Karen L. Murphy--Doctoral Candidate, Educational Communication and Technology, University of Washington, Seattle, WA; Distance Learning Coordinator, Division of Continuing Education, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS

Authors

Walter G. Andrews

Deborah L. Hammond--M.F.A., Drama, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

Irene Markoff--Assistant Professor, Ethnomusicology, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

Karen L. Murphy

Contributors

Melih Boydak--Associate Professor of Forestry, Istanbul University, Istanbul (Turkish folk dance)

Muazzez Eren, Ph.D., Seattle, WA (Game "Beş Taş")

Deborah L. Hammond (Illustrations)

Orhan Kurt--Karagöz puppeteer, Istanbul (Turkish shadow puppet theater)

Mehmet Kalpaklı--Instructional Assistant, Mimar Sinan University, Istanbul and the University of Washington, Seattle, WA (Turkish lesson audio)

Yeşim Kalpaklı--Student, University of Washington, Seattle, WA (Turkish lesson audio)

Design and Production

April Richardson--Graphic Designer and Illustrator, Seattle, WA

Special Assistance

Charlotte Albright, Ph.D.--Coordinator, Middle East Outreach Center, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

Barbara Walker--Curator, Archive of Turkish Oral Narrative, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX

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Purchase and Rental Information

Copies of this curriculum guide and the audiocassette are available either separately or in conjunction with the rental or purchase of **Shadows of Turkey** and **The Witches** from:

Instructional Media Services
University of Washington
354 Kane Hall, DG-10
Seattle, WA 98195
Tel. (206) 543-9909

The entire package may also be borrowed from:

Middle East Resource Center
University of Washington, DR-05
Seattle, WA 98195
Tel. (206) 543-4227

Desktop publishing was used to create the layout and design of the curriculum guide. The **IBM PS 2 Computer** and **HP Laserjet II Printer**, with the **PC-Write** word processing program, were used in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization.



INTRODUCTION:

The Turks, Turkey, and Global Education

Why would a teacher or class want to learn something about Turkey? One might, for example, realize that Turkey sits on the physical border between Asia and Europe, and on the cultural border between East and West, between Islam and the West. Modern day Turkey is not too vastly different from our experience, and not too like it. In its historical past it was the center of a vast empire that, until early in this century, had a profound influence on the Near or Middle East, North Africa, and Eastern Europe. Moreover, Turkic peoples and Turkic languages are found over an even larger area stretching from Eastern Europe through the Middle East and across Soviet Central Asia to China and Siberia. There are a lot of very interesting things about the Turks that should be far better known than they are.

Nonetheless, the fact that we know little about an area does not always mean that we will find the time to learn more. Most people go all the way through college without learning anything about Turkey or the Ottoman Empire. Perhaps the best argument for learning about Turkey is that it provides an excellent entry into the process of learning about other peoples and other cultures. And through this process--which some call global education--we not only learn to understand and accept people who are different from us, but we learn to look with new understanding on our own behaviors and culture.

Turkey makes an interesting topic in global education for a number of reasons. In general, it is an area that itself provides a large number of interesting starting points for both teachers and students. It is the home of several ancient civilizations from pre-historic villages to the Hittites, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Armenians, etc. Under the Ottoman Empire it was a large, powerful, multi-ethnic entity with a vast outpouring of art, music, dance, and crafts, that are still reflected in everything from carpets to food in many parts of the world. The Turkish language belongs to its own special family of languages and is now written in a modified roman alphabet (the one we use), which makes it possible for students, even at the elementary level, to learn a bit of Turkish without much trouble. Modern Turkey is a secular, Westernized state with very deep roots in traditional Islam, which makes it a productive subject for comparisons and contrasts. Turkey is also accessible. It is a friend of the U.S., a NATO ally and increasingly a destination for tourism. Every community will have a core of people who have been in Turkey or are of Turkish origin.

The Videotapes

The purpose of the two videotapes, **The Witches** and **Shadows of Turkey**, is to give teachers a fertile starting point for a unit on Turkey. **The Witches** is a reproduction of a traditional Turkish shadow puppet play, while **Shadows of Turkey** is a short documentary introducing some basic facts about Turkey through the medium of the shadow puppet theater. In producing these materials, a prime focus was on creating doors and windows onto topics of general interest: for example, folklore, music, puppetry, political satire, history, myth, cross-cultural communication. An important secondary focus was on themes that would foster comparisons with our own culture. Although this curriculum guide suggests some particular uses of the videotapes, it should be noted that there are other useful collections of material on Turkey, any of which could be used with the tapes. These references are included in a list at the end of the guide.

KARAGÖZ

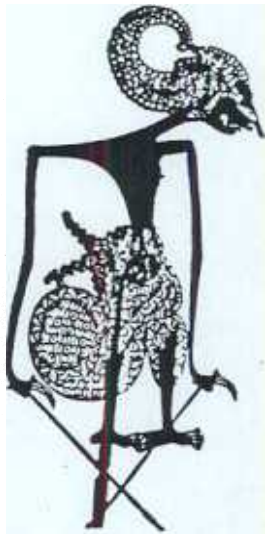
TRKISH SHADOW PUPPETS

1. Introduction

The flickering light of an oil lamp against a taut white screen illuminates a world where characters fashioned from the hide of a camel or donkey entertain an audience with a humorous, satirical view of Turkish culture and society. This is the puppet world of Karagöz (car-ah-gerz, meaning "dark-eye"), the Turkish shadow puppet theater which is named for its main character, Karagöz.

Many stories have been told regarding the origin of the character Karagöz. The most popular tale centers around the construction of a mosque in Bursa during the 14th century in the reign of the Ottoman Turkish Sultan Orhan. This tale is told in the accompanying video documentary **Shadows of Turkey**.

Similar legends have been told about the development of shadow plays in Asia, where magicians and priests summoned the spirits of the deceased to ease the grief of loved ones. Eventually



JAVANESE PUPPET
(Arjuna)

these shadow presentations became intimately connected with each country, reflecting all aspects of their culture--from history and social structure to literature and folklore.

Shadow theater traveled westward from India, China, and Indonesia to the Middle East and Europe and developed a flavor quite different from its Far Eastern counterparts.

Karagöz evolved from a mixture of traditions stemming from Turkish folk, popular, and court theater. It became a mirror of the society that grew out of the many diverse peoples that lived in the Ottoman Empire.

The colorful shadow puppet figures had little of the intricate cut-out designs of the Asian puppets, and the plays were no longer based on religious epics or historical events. The Turkish puppets were bolder, coarser figures with lively comic movement. Their stories, while drawing from social traditions and moral values of the culture, told tales of everyday life.

Karagöz is a pug-nosed, black-bearded, slightly hunchbacked rogue. He wears an oversized hat, which, when knocked off, exposes a large bald head.



TRKISH PUPPET
(Karagöz)

He has a long, loose arm (with which he hits everyone), swinging legs and a moveable waist, which allow for a great deal of action. Karagöz is an energetic character who speaks the language of the common people and ridicules pretentious behavior. He is always misbehaving, but he always comes out on top in these outrageous situations.

Hacivat (the "c" in Turkish is pronounced like the "j" in "judge," therefore the name is pronounced "hadjivat") is Karagöz's scholarly friend who has a considerable but superficial knowledge of the arts, sciences, and social graces. He is recognized by his pointy, turned-up beard and his elegant speech. His actions are reserved in comparison to Karagöz's boisterousness. He is good natured and helps various characters in the neighborhood with their business.

The shadow world of Karagöz takes an audience to a neighborhood in old Istanbul. There we find a variety of religious and ethnic groups: Jews, Greeks, Armenians, Arabs, Bulgarians, Hungarians and other Europeans as Turks. Each group is reduced to a stock character who reflects the group through dialect, costume, or perhaps an associated trade.

In the adventures of Karagöz and Hacivat, one also encounters a variety of odd characters: dwarves, witches, dragons, dandies, courtesans, gypsies, wrestlers, and opium smokers. The Turks from various regions are shown in their native costumes and speak their native dialects.

2. The Play

The shadow play is divided into three parts: the prologue (*mukaddime*), a section of dialogue (*muhavere*), with an interlude (*ara muhaveresi*) and the main plot (*fasıl*).

An introductory shadow picture (*göstermelik*) adorns the shadow screen before the play begins. The picture may be of a garden, some mythological animal, or a group of musicians. The sound of a kazoo-like instrument signals the beginning of the play, and a hand from above grasps the *göstermelik* and floats it away from the screen.



Göstermelik (Showpiece)

A. Prologue

A love song is played as Hacivat enters the stage. He offers a prayer and recites a poem that speaks of a play that mirrors the world and teaches much. He also makes known his desire for an erudite companion such as he fancies himself. Karagöz, bored with his neighbor's pretentious airs, jumps out of the house and lands on top of Hacivat. The two argue and fight until Karagöz is left flat on the ground, bemoaning his harsh treatment. Hacivat returns and a second battle ends when he is knocked from the screen.

B. Dialogue

The second part of the play often has nothing to do with the main plot. In it the puppeteer stages a battle of wits between Karagöz and Hacivat. This part contrasts the distinct styles of these two characters. The dialogues include jokes, riddles, and puns that lead to misunderstandings and the inevitable battle. Sometimes Karagöz relates a dream as if it had really happened. The dialogue leads to a fight and Hacivat is once again knocked off stage.

Between the battle of wits and the main plot there sometimes appears an interlude or comic skit. Hacivat speaks with another character while Karagöz indirectly comments on their conversation.

C. Main Plot

The third part of the play contains the main plot and involves other characters in the neighborhood. Here one can learn a great deal about Turkish traditions and social customs. We might see a play about a wedding, a birth, a circumcision, a sporting event or a poetry contest. Some of the plays deal with supernatural beliefs. Others show how one can survive in a multi-ethnic culture. In some performances there is an emphasis on social parody and political satire, which is tolerated when presented through the medium of puppetry.

3. Themes and Performances--Past and Present

Near the end of the 19th century, new plays were added to the Karagöz repertory. The stories came from adaptations or parodies of Turkish novels. Today the content of the plays is still changing. The economy, politics, or other current news items might become topics of the plays' satire and humor.

The Turkish shadow puppets are operated by one male puppeteer, sometimes accompanied by an assistant who does sound effects, sings songs, introduces the characters, and assists with the puppets.

The puppeteer is a skilled master. He can produce a variety of voices and is knowledgeable in the arts and sciences, in history and politics. He is witty and able to improvise freely. He understands the make-up of his audience and knows how to vary the play to entertain different groups of people. In the past he also had to have an excellent memory, as he was required to know at least 28 plays--one for each night of the Muslim month of fasting (known as Ramazan or Ramadan).

In Ottoman times, the Karagöz plays were an important form of entertainment during the Islamic month of Ramazan when people went all day without eating or drinking and then held festive suppers after sunset. During each night of the month, one could find Karagöz plays being performed in homes and coffee houses.

Only a few puppeteers are performing the stories of Karagöz today. A Turkish audience might have an opportunity to see a play at a festival or cultural arts event, through a university presentation or at a seminar. Puppeteers still perform for private events such as circumcisions, birthdays, and in schools or nursing homes.

During Ramazan, four-minute Karagöz plays are broadcast several times a day on Turkish television. Television and videos have become the most popular form of entertainment in Turkey today and even the theater and cinema are having difficulty surviving. Karagöz is being kept alive only through the efforts of a few dedicated puppeteers and individuals interested in preserving the traditional arts of Turkey.

GLOBAL LEARNING

Hacivat, when inviting the audience to view his shadow entertainment, describes the play as a mirror to the world and a source of wisdom.

For the student, the Karagöz shadow theater can be an excellent tool for learning about other cultures as well as about our own.

Expression of Culture

- ▶ It illustrates how people express culture through their arts and social customs. Students might explore how some of our popular arts tell things about us: for example, newspaper comics, television programs, cartoons, games.

Expression of Humor

- ▶ It demonstrates the similarities and uniqueness of humor. What kinds of humor in Karagöz seem most natural to us, what kinds seem strange [for example, the word plays, the animals]? What are some of the things that we find funny? Students might make a list and see how many they find in Karagöz. Consider riddles, satire, parody, puns, cliches, verbal duels, slapstick, physical humor, "bathroom" humor.

Interaction with Others

- ▶ It examines people and the way they interact, their foibles and prejudices, their misunderstandings, the stereotypes they create. Like Ottoman Turkey, the United States is a country made up of many different ethnic groups. What is good about this, what problems does it create, how do we deal with those problems, how do we get along together? What misunderstandings, stereotypes, prejudices do we see in our culture? Are these reflected in our humor?

Cultural Change and Influence

- ▶ It shows how cultures change over time and how where we live influences how we talk, dress, eat, and amuse ourselves. Can we think of folk arts and customs that have died out in our country? If we were going to think up a character to represent each of the major regions of our country, how would these characters dress and talk, what jobs would they have, how would they act?

Turkey

- ▶ It gives a glimpse of the history of a country, its history, society, and politics. The Ottoman Empire was one of the greatest empires of the modern world and the Near East was the cradle of much of our religious and cultural heritage. Yet we know very little about this region and the people that live there.

Karagöz

- ▶ It teaches us about a delightful form of theater that opens a window on a very interesting land and people.

Suggestions for classroom projects are found in the **Suggestions for Classroom Projects** section below.

TRADITIONAL TURKISH SHADOW PUPPETS

Turkish shadow puppets are brightly colored, translucent figures made from the hide of a camel or donkey. The skin was first soaked in a special solution to remove the oil and make it pliable. It was stretched and dried in the sun and treated for translucency. The outline of a character was drawn onto the hide and cut out with a small curved knife. Bits of leather were carved to outline or embellish a pattern of clothing and to open up the eye, ear, and brow-line. The puppets were then stained with various vegetable dyes creating lovely patterns of blue, green, yellow, purple, and brown.

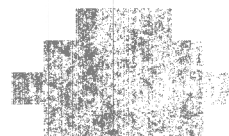
The Turkish puppets are designed in profile. The head is a bit large in proportion to the rest of the body, which itself is a bit long for the legs and feet.

The action required for a particular character dictates the number and placement of joints. The head moves to accentuate speech. A long, loose arm is good for hitting. Karagöz, for example, bows, swings his legs, does somersaults.

For costume changes, a separate figure would be made. In the story of **The Witches**, however, some figures have two heads that swivel in the middle of the neck. With a quick flip of the rod, a human head turns into a donkey or a goose. Some one-piece figures and groups of figures can be controlled by one rod.

Arms, legs, and torsos are all cut separately and then attached with a piece of gut threaded through the joint and knotted on both sides.

A hole pierced through the back or middle of the body and reinforced with a leather socket houses the control rod, which sits horizontally at right angles to the puppet. The control rod is made of beechwood so that the end of the rod, when moistened with saliva and inserted in the socket, will not fall out.



CREATING YOUR OWN SHADOW FIGURES

Drawing an outline so that it readily identifies a character is the critical aspect in making shadow figures.

The complexity of the puppet depends on what action the puppet is required to do and the visual effects desired. It can be a simple, flat figure attached to a rod, or a multi-jointed one that bends, bows and flips.

Sketches of the Karagöz and Hacivat figures from **The Witches** are included with this material and may be altered as desired to create original designs. [See drawings 1-10 in **Appendix A.**]

The figures provided are intended to be used with a larger sized screen made for puppets approximately twelve inches high. To obtain a puppet more appropriate to the size of your stage, the patterns may be reduced by varying percentages on a copy machine.

Below are steps that students might follow to make their own puppets.

Opaque Figure (*Approximate time = 2 hrs.*)

1. Transfer the Karagöz puppet designs to a light weight cardboard that can be easily cut with scissors (i.e. railroad, poster, or tagboard).

Hints:

- ▶ Cut out several of the Hacivat and Karagöz patterns on lightweight board and have the students trace their own puppets from these figures.
- ▶ Photocopy or print the patterns on a heavyweight card.
- ▶ Transfer the design onto the lightweight board using carbon paper or ditto the designs directly onto the tagboard.

2. The outlines of eyes, ears, and brow can be cut out with a sharp knife (exacto-knife)—being careful not to cut too much and weaken the figure.
3. Assemble the pieces using a large-eye needle and heavy-duty button carpet thread. (Fig. 1) Tie a large knot on both sides of the joint. It is a good idea to reinforce the joint area by gluing a hole-punched circle of poster board or cardboard over the area before attaching the thread. (Fig. 2) Beads and sequins may also be used on either side of the joints. The thread should be loose enough to allow the joints to swing freely. Karagöz's hat is attached in the same way. The hat should fit loosely enough on the head so that it swings freely, flipping back to expose a bald head. (Fig. 3)

Figure 1

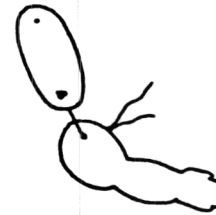


Figure 2

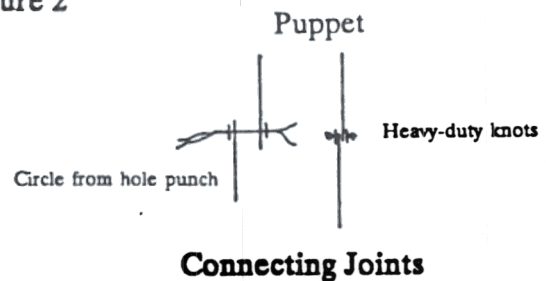


Figure 3

