

an actor and director of the Turkish theater, tried his hand at film making and made two films called Mürrebbiye (The Nurse) (1919) and Binnaz (1919). Another man of the theater, Şadi Karagözoğlu, produced several films involving a character called Bican efendi, a comic series resembling the early Chaplin films.

The end of this first period is marked by two documentaries concerned with the victorious conclusion of the War of Independence. These were Victory of Izmir, 1922 and War of Independence, both produced in 1922.

This first period of Turkish cinema shows a very strong influence of the contemporary Turkish theater. Five feature films produced out of a total of six were direct adaptations from the stage.

The second period of the Turkish cinema roughly covers a period of seventeen years during the first period of the republic. During the years 1922-39, the Turkish cinema was dominated by the Chief Director of the Turkish Municipal Theater (Darülbedayi), Muhsin Ertuğrul. The two existing film companies looked upon Ertuğrul as the ultimate authority. Nearly all of the cinema actors and script-writers of this period came from the company of Ertuğrul's theater. Of course, no matter what his artistic style, Muhsin Ertuğrul was in fact the most powerful personality in the world of performing arts in Turkey. His contributions to the Turkish theater have been immense and innovating. But his contribution to the Turkish cinema is quite limited and represents a series of clichés borrowed from the European and Russian cinema. He had extensive contacts on the continent and he was also allowed to make films in German and Russian studios. He personally acted in many films after the fashion of Emil Jannings or Werner Krauss. He completed twenty-nine films in this period. Thirteen of them were direct adaptations from the stage. The rest were mostly adaptations from other screen stories. The Way of All Flesh was made into Şehvet Kurbanları (1939), and Victor Sjöström's Tösen från Stormtorpet (Girl of the Marshes) was made into Aysel, Bataklı Damın Kızı (1934-35). Up until 1953, when he ended his activities in the cinema, he produced only eight films that were based on original Turkish stories and texts.

This period in the Turkish cinema has one negative influence: it established a film language dominated by the movements and expressions of the stage actor. The scenario, camera and montage were more at the service of actors and fixed scenes than part of a primary dynamic film style. And, unfortunately, this influence has continued on to the present day, counter-balanced only by another group of young film directors who did not have a theatrical background.

In the meantime a film public had been born in Turkey conditioned to see films of the "Darülbedayi" or Egyptian style. (During the war 1939-45 an avalanche of Egyptian films appeared on the Turkish market. Strangely enough, the Egyptian cinema was also started by someone from the Turkish theater, Vedat Örfi Bengü. As one might expect, this Egyptian cinema turned out to be overly melodramatic and full of staged and exaggerated scenes.)

The period after 1950 in Turkey is recognized as the period of film directors. The tax deductions which were granted in 1948 for Turkish films brought about a boom in studios and film production. Atıf Yılmaz, Memduh Ün, Lütfü Akad, Metin Erksan and Halit Refiğ emerged with a new approach, each developing his own personal style of film-making. Akad used legends like Tahir ile Zühre (1951-52), Arzu ile Kamber (1951-52) and a series of Metropolitan mystery films. After 1960 he revived and refreshed his style with films like Hudutların Kanunu (1967) and Vesikalı Yarım (1968). The latter film, which became a great success, dealt with a love story between a grocer and a prostitute. It was a very sincere and dignified presentation of an authentic love story.

This fairly young generation is still trying to make better films based on original film-scripts and struggling with the very difficult conditions of the Turkish film market. There has been much criticism to the effect that this new generation of film directors has exhausted its creative energies. However, there seems to be no reason to lose hope, for these directors, many of them now in their middle years, are showing flashes of genius in occasional films involving a different approach.

Lately, since 1966, a group of young cinema enthusiasts have attempted to make 16 mm films completely independent of