

# DEVELOPMENT OF ANIMATION IN TURKEY

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## ABSTRACT

*Many artists in Turkey, as in the world, have interested in Animation and particularly, caricaturists and cartoonists have performed works in this field. But in Turkish animation movie, desired institutionalization are not completed and successful films were not produced apart from several personal works. As the films produced with the contributions of TRT and Ministry of Culture are under standards, their allocations were lifted. The contributors to animation should think about the question that the work of Ateş Behice, a Turkish artist wishing to participate in animation festival, was not accepted with the justification about inexistence of animation tradition in Turkey.*

*Keywords: Animation, Animated Films, History of Turkish Animation*

## TÜRKİYE'DE ANİMASYONUN GELİŞİMİ

### ÖZET

*Tüm dünyada olduğu gibi Türkiye'de de canlandırma, sanatçıların ilgisini çekmiş ve özellikle, karikatürcülerle, çizgi romancılar bu alanda çalışmalar yapmışlardır. Ancak, Türk canlandırma sinemasında beklenen kurumsallaşma gerçekleşmemiş, birkaç bireysel çalışmanın dışında iyi filmler çıkmamıştır. TRT ve Kültür Bakanlığı'nun katkılarıyla gerçekleşen filmler, nitelsiz yapımlar olduklarından sonuçta ödenekleri kesilmiştir. Yugoslavya'daki bir canlandırma festivaline katılmak isteyen Türk sanatçısı Ateş Benice'nin yapıtının, Türkiye'de canlandırma geleneğinin bulunmaması gerekçesiyle geri çevrilmesi, Türk canlandırmacılarının düşünmesi gereken en önemli sorundur.*

*Anahtar Sözcükler: Canlandırma, Çizgi Film, Türk Canlandırma Tarihi*

### INTRODUCTION

So many people have interested in animation all over the world, having contribution to the development of cinema, which makes the dreams real primarily for children and then for adults. Even not having any considerable contribution to the developments in the world, the first animation examples can be identified in some work of arts performed by Turkish people. Despite the fact that Turkish animation film is without a recognized place in world animation film, very significant examples are present in Turkish animation film against many setbacks.

#### A. THE DEVELOPMENTS IN TURKEY RELATING IMAGE CONTINUITY

A shade of play, coming from Egypt in 16th Century, developed under the influence of Turkish artists and after having it conformed to Turkish culture, this time had an influence on Egyptian artists and similar plays were started being performed in similar forms. (And 1977: 293-251)

Karagöz and Hacivat are the main figures in Turkish shade of play. (Sevin 1968: 18-30) Karagöz and Hacivat's link with the subject, in shade of play form as theatre branch, is not due to their contribution to the general development of animation film or movie, but the artists like Yalçın Çetin who performed works in Tur-

kish animation film using the various forms of this branch.

In addition, the art of miniature progressed as result of illustration prohibition under Islam and the fact that their various examples were designed with a story having pictures were the proof for the need and even attempt by Turkish artists to display these images like motion. The best example to this are the miniatures made by Nakkaş Osman in a book named Surname-i Hümayun where a parade in the circumcision ceremony in 1582 was depicted. In these miniatures, Sultan Murat The Third standing without any change was placed at left upper corner and at lower sections, the parades of many artisans such as bakers, kebab cooks, boatmen, cloth sellers, florists were shown. (The Historical Research Foundation İstanbul Research Center 1988: 86-100) These pictures creates an impression of movie frames, when looked one after one.

#### B. THE BIRTH OF ANIMATION IN TURKEY AND THE CONTRIBUTORS

The entry of animation film into Turkey occurred with the films belonging to Disney and its contemporaries, started to be shown in Turkish cinema halls. Turkish artists watching these films, mostly caricaturists, had interest in animation films and started to work on this field. Firstly, cameraman İlhan Arakon expresses any of his childhood memory about an intro-

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## Development Of Animation in Turkey (30-34)

duction film relating Fertek Rakis displayed in İstanbul cinema halls. But not any document or information relating this subject is detected in addition to İlhan Arakon's witness. (Çeviker 1995a)

In 1942, Eflatun Nuri Erkoç prepared a film of 37 frames named Dolmuş ve Şoförü by directly drawing on film frames with india ink. (Çeviker 1995b: 104) This work is considered to be the oldest film frame of Turkish animation movie.

Vedat Ar studied on ceramics with an interest in animation film when he was studying on ceramic in Paris and later he provided a course on animation film and then filmed Zeybek Oyunu of 3 minutes with his 15 students in 1947. (Onaran 1994: 196) This film is the first animation film in Turkey.

In 1951, the first long footage film project for Turkish animation movie, Evvel Zaman İçinde came to the agenda with efforts of Yüksel Ünsal. The film, of which production was undertaken by Turgut Demirağ, the owner of And Film, was to be an adaptation from Nasrettin Hoca, Gülderen Sultan and Keloğlan. (Onaran 1994: 196) This work was completed between 1951 and 1957 with an enormous labour and money and thereafter lost in United States of America to which they were sent for film developing purpose. This news had very negative implications in Turkish animation movie and impeded the development of other works. Relative to this subject, a reimbursement case was instituted and finalized in favour but even this fact did not lift infavourable ambiance. (Çeviker 1995a) Out of this film only a part filmed in black and white as 5 minutes trial is left including the images of a dancing woman.

### B.2 USE OF ANIMATION FOR ADVERTISEMENT PURPOSE AND AGENTS

During and after 1960's, Turkish animation movie started to work with advertising market. Many Advertising agents were founded in this period. The most considerable and permanent agents are the agents i.e Filmar, İstanbul Reklam, Kare Ajans, Karikatür Ajans, Radar Reklam, Stüdyo Çizgi, Canlı Karikatür, Ajans Bulu, Sinevizyon, Pasin Benice Animasyon, Arnet. They were founded to make money from advertisement and then to perform animation film with long and short footage using the these monies .

In 1959, Vedat Ar established Ar Filmat film company and had the works, mostly culture

and advertisement films, started. They produced the films firstly on cartoon animation and later on puppet animation. Yüksel Ünsal, Ayla Seyhan, Muhtar Erata are the major artists who produced films for Filmar.(Çeviker 1995b: 107)

In 1959, Süheyl Gürbaşkan established İstanbul Reklam Ajansı to produce advertisement films. İstanbul Reklam, with the cadre comprised of significant caricaturists i.e. Altan Erbulak, Oğuz Aral, Yalçın Çetin and which launched in primitive condition and then turned to a pretty well-equipped studio, started to produce advertisement films for the cinemas all over the Turkey.

The films are remarkable produced for Pirelli Lastikleri by İstanbul Reklam which produces advertisement films of 1 to 3 minutes for the major corporation and organizations in Turkey. The film produced by Erim Gözen in 1972 for Pe-Re-Ja Kolonyaları was accepted to be shown in Cannes Film Festival. In 1964, coloured films were firstly produced under the management of Nihat Bali. In this agent, also the artists i.e. Tunç İzberk, Orhan Büyükdogan, Mustafa Eremektar (Mıstık), Derviş Pasin, Ruhi Görüney, Emre Senan worked.

In 1962, Radar Advertising formed an animation studio in line with the demands from customers and sent Ayhan Başoğlu, cartoon artist, to Londra in order for management. In the mean time, an animator named Plat from Zagreb worked on the studio and produced a film. (Türün 1989: 10)

In 1960's, Yalçın Çetin came back to Turkey after an education in Germany on animation film and participated in Radar Reklam staff. Thanks to Yalçın Çetin who used different technics and educated the other artist work with, Turkish animation movie progressed significantly.

In 1962, an other studio was Karikatür Ajans which was founded by Bedri Koraman, Ali Ulvi Ersoy, Mustafa Eremektar (Mıstık) ve Yalçın Tüzecan and accomplished noticable works.

Canlı Karikatür Studio was founded by Oğuz and Tekin Aral kardeşler, Ferruh Doğan with Gino Kanelli in 1964. The studio, which firstly worked on advertisement films, produced short footage films on various subjects after obtaining sponsorship by several corporations. Among these films are Cihan Şampiyonları: Koca Yusuf, Bu Şehr-i Stanbulki, Direkler Arası, Ağustos Böceği ile Karınca. (Çeviker 1995b:

108)

After the disintegration of Karikatür Reklam, Ali Ulvi Ersoy, Tonguç Yaşar and Yalçın Çetin founded Stüdyo Çizgi in 1965. In this period, Evliya Çelebi produced by Yalçın Çetin is considered to be one of the principle works in Turkish animation movie. (refer to Appendix / Image 19). Eflatun Nuri, Orhan Enez, Meral Simer, Yıldız Cıbroğlu, Artun Yeres worked in this period under Stüdyo Çizgi.

Sinevizyon is an animation agent founded by a private bank in 1970's. Turkish animators, Yıldız Cıbroğlu and Derviş Pasin in addition to the animators from Italy produced significant advertising and cultural films.

### B.3 COMPETITIONS WITH PRIZE AND ORIGINAL WORKS IN ANIMATION

Competitions with Prize leded to significant works in Turkish animation movie and original films apart from advertisement. These competitions are as follows :

1. TRT Culture and Art Science Prize, Short Footage Film Competition
2. Altın Koza Film Festival (1972)
3. Hisar and BÜSK (Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Cinema Club) Short Footage Movie Competition (1967-1977)
4. Akşehir Nasreddin Hoca Animation Film Competition (1975)
5. Balkan Film Festival National Short Footage Film Competition (1978)
6. Ministry of Culture, Cartoon Animation Competition on Nasrettin Hoca (1978)

Mehmet Celal Ülken who participated in one of above mentined competitions, Hisar Short Footage Film Competition, in 1967 with the film named Kibritler ve Bücü produced the first original Turkish animation films. In 1970, Meral Ülgen participated in again Hisar Short Footage Film Competition. with her film named Bir Gün (One Day).

In 1970, Tonguç Yaşar won the grand prize in Altalya Film Festival with his film named Amentü Gemisi Nasıl Yürüdü. The theme of Amentü Gemisi Nasıl Yürüdü film was provided by Sezer Tansuğ, Art Historian and it is a principle work produced from the impressions of Turkish calligraphic art. Amentü Gemisi Nasıl Yürüdü was selected as the best animation film ever made in Turkey as a result of the evaluation relating 100th year of cinema. (refer to Apendix / Image 20). Following this film, in 1972, Meral Simer worked on the film named Bahar Nasıl Tamam Oldu as trio, of which the-

me was provided again by Sezer Tansuk, but the third one of these films was never produced.

Caricaturist Tan Oral won the prize of being first place with the film named Sansür using collage, an experimental method, in TRT Culture and Art Science Prizes, Short Footage Competition and in 1975, the grand prize in Akşehir Nasrettin Hoca Animation Film Competition. Later on, a book in which the story of this film was featured, was published by Tan Oral. (Oral 1979: 1-5)

Animation artists worked on the films apart from competitions. Cemal Erez filmed 65 Kv (1970), Ateş Benice Koridor (1972), Stereo (1975), Sentez (1983) and Midas'ın Kulakları (1994) filmlerini yapmışlardır. Emre Senan Gergeadam (1975), Hayatında Eğri Çizgiyi İlk Kez Keşfeden Adam ve Tabanca (1976), Kısa-sa Kısas (1979), Ev (1995). Meral and Cemal Erez completed the films of Il Gatto (Cat) and Cordes (Ropes) in Italy.

As all these developments occur, some various studies were made to fill the gap of education in the field of animation movie in Turkey and these studies are still being made.

Firstly, animation courses were started with Vedat Ar in Güzel Sanatlar Akademisi (Fine Arts Academy) in 1947 and thereafter, in the same institution, of which name was changed as Mimar Sinan Üniversitesi, Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi (Mimar Sinan University, Faculty of Fine Arts) the lessons on cartoon animation films was provided. Furthermore, the lessons on animation were provided at Ege Üniversitesi Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi, Samsun Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi, İstanbul Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi. But most noticable development in this field is Animation Branch under Anadolu Üniversitesi, Fine Arts. (Oral 1991: 13)

### B.4 ENTRY OF TRT INTO ANIMATION AS A PROCUDER AND THE INTERESTS OF GOVERMENTAL BODIES

In the middle of 1970's, TRT (Turkish Radio Television Institution) firstly used some animation examples as generic examples and in between the programs. Again toward the end of 1970s, the animation films produced in Turkey were performed only for TV watchers using video technology, starting from the periods when television broadcasting stole the people getting out for cinema.

Pasin and Benice Studios were founded to produce films within TRT and in this studio, many

## Development Of Animation in Turkey (30-34)

films were produced i.e. Tomurcuk, Süper Civciv, Evliya Çelebi, Karınca Ailesi, Ece ile Yüce. Boğaç Han, one of Dede Korkut tales, which was produced in this period is the first long footage (50 min.) Turkish film. Midas'ın Kulakları, an other long footage Turkish film (50 min.), has not been presented to the public up till now.

The supports given to such kind of programs were lifted by reason of a corruption taken place in 1990 at TRT and Turkish animation movie considerably struck by this event. Animation production studios, "after TRT left this area, lost their substitutive economic power" (Dinçer 1996: 303) and closed.

In an explanation about the films made for broadcasting on TRT, Tunç İzberk said "33 Nasrettin Hoca films were sold to the countries i.e. Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Ireland, Jordan. As TRT received the amounts for this films many times more, not any copy right was paid to us" (Gönülleroğlu 1991: 14) and attracted attention to the inappropriate TRT policies applied in this area and therefore stressed that artist had not been supported sufficiently.

In the second half of 1980's, many studios i.e. Çizgi Reklam, Tunç İzberk Stüdyosu, Tele Çizgi, Ajans Bulu, produced informative animation films for various public institutions. The themes such as traffic, protection of forests, damages of cigarette, family were addressed by many studios.

### **B.5. INCLUSION OF THE VIEW OF TURKISH-ISLAM SYNTHESIS TO ANIMATION**

Islamic capital emerging as a new power in this period, made an invested on animation as well. The major companies making investment on this field include Tele, Çizgi founded by Hasip Mengi, Göreme Animasyon founded by Fatih Özel, Denge Animation founded by Bahattin Akkoç, (Alper 1991: 4) Elif Video, Ella Prodüksiyon.

In the investment on animation, islamic capital planned to be an alternative to the animation films of Japan and American origine being dominant in TVs. In this respect, the films on the subject of Turk-Islam synthesis were produced with the support of Ministry of Culture, but the films produced were with full reflection of inexperience and lack of knowledge, being not worth to broadcast with respect to their problems. One of the remarkable films made in this field is Hay of 85 min. produced by Haşım Vantandaş adapted from the novel named Hay Bin

Yakzan of İbn-i Tufeyl, an Arabian writer, and long footage examples on the subject of Istanbul's fall by Fatih Sultan Mehmet pulled attention.

### **B.6 COMMERCIAL TV'S AND ANIMATION**

Commercial TV's started to broadcast illegally in Turkey, and this brought a large legal gap. Thereupon, The Act On The Foundation and Broadcasting of Radio and Television No. 3984 (Akgüner, İlal ve Öngören 1995) entered into practice on the date of 16.04.1994 and as anticipated, the said act excluded a quota about animation films and therefore the commercial televisions founded pursuant to this act did not take care of animation films sufficiently.

As this negligence prevailed in commercial TVs, several serials were produced thanks to the personal efforts of various animation artists. The most noticable of these are Plastip Show by Cihat Hazerdağlı, Bizim City and Sizin Kiler by Salih Memecan and İnsanlar by Pi-yale Madra. Particularly, the serial by Salih Memecan named Bizim City has been daily broadcasted as parts of 30 seconds on ATV main news bulletin since 1993 and their content carries the quality of political caricature.

Two televisions are present in the year of 2000, broadcasting Turkish animation films within cable broadcasting. One of them is Niklodeon and the other one is Maxi TV. The third one is under preparation. But this channels broadcast the animation films of foreign origine which implies infavourable implications in terms of Turkish animation films.

### **B.7 ENTRANCE OF THE APPLICATION OF 3-D COMPUTER ANIMATIONS INTO TURKEY AND ANIMATION AGAIN IN ADVERTISEMENT**

3-D computer animation applications made the processes easier particularly in advertisement. Highly successful advertisement films were achieved with the animation of the products as in real formats by means of modelling and then adding them to real films. Chokella ( Karaali 1999: 52-53) ilms performed by successful artist Lamia Karaali and margarine and detergent films ordered by various companies as well as generics and advertisement films comprising of writing motions pulled attention in this period.

The program named Zirvedeki On was produced by Kanal D using 3-D animation method where virtual speaker Rüya is utilized and a real public name is invited, exhibiting a good e-

xample for quick adaptation of new applications in Turkey. However, the return of film made and sent to Film Festival in Zagreb by Ateş Benice in 1980 with the justification that "we do not accept any film from a country without cartoon animation film tradition" (Gönüllüoğlu 1991: 18) is an unpleasant but significant fact of Turkish animation.

Cartoon Animation Film Association (Alsaç 1994: 51) was founded in 1982 to ensure the organization and working together of animation artists, but this association has not been efficient.

## CONCLUSION

Many artists in Turkey, as in the world, have interested in Animation and particularly, caricaturists and cartoonists have performed works in this field. But in Turkish animation movie, desired institutionalization are not completed and successful films were not produced apart from several personal works. As the films produced with the contributions of TRT and Ministry of Culture are under standards, their allocations were lifted. The contributors to animation should think about the question that the work of Ateş Behice, a Turkish artist wishing to participate in animation festival, was not accepted with the justification about inexistence of animation tradition in Turkey.

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