



Institutional Intervention in the Distribution and Exhibition of Hollywood Films in Turkey

Nezih Erdogan & Dilek Kaya

To cite this article: Nezih Erdogan & Dilek Kaya (2012) Institutional Intervention in the Distribution and Exhibition of Hollywood Films in Turkey, *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 22:1, 47-59, DOI: [10.1080/01439680220120282](https://doi.org/10.1080/01439680220120282)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01439680220120282>



Published online: 02 Aug 2010.



[Submit your article to this journal](#) 



Article views: 100



[View related articles](#) 



Citing articles: 3 [View citing articles](#) 

Institutional Intervention in the Distribution and Exhibition of Hollywood Films in Turkey

NEZİH ERDOĞAN, *Bahçeşehir University*

DILEK KAYA, *Bilkent University*

In 1946, the appearance of the US battleship *Missouri* in the straits of Istanbul heralded the coming of a new age marked by a strong bond between America and Turkey. The ship brought the body of Munir Ertegun, the late Turkish Ambassador, courtesy of the US government [1]. However, as is argued frequently, 'what the battleship *Missouri* brought to Turkey on 5 April 1946 was also a way of life' [2]. This also has a place in literary imagery. In Naim Tiralı's short story, *Yirmibeş Kuruşa Amerika/America for Twenty Five Piastres* he describes the Turkish commercial boats carrying curious and excited Turkish people to an American battleship [3]. A more recent work of fiction, *Savaş Gemisi Missouri/Battleship Missouri*, as its title suggests, places the ship as a pivotal figure at the center of its enigmatic narrative which investigates the socio-cultural implications of the encounter of America and Turkey [4]. In fact the arrival of the *Missouri* is a metaphor for the entrance of 'America' into the life of Turkey since the most crucial steps in the political and economic relations between Turkey and United States were taken right after its arrival.

Europe, which had represented the West to Turkey for two centuries, was now in ruins and could in no way serve as the same object of desire as before. Now, America not only championed the values attached to freedom but also it seemed more Western than any European country. The Turkish eye perceived America on two axes: America as opposed to the Soviet Union (the ideological axis) and America as opposed to Europe (the cultural axis). For two centuries the ongoing Westernization had meant solely Eurocentricism; by the end of the war Americanization was added to it to further cultural contradictions, a discrepancy which pro-Europeans hardly welcomed [5]. Westernization was one of the most important goals of the modernization movements of the early Turkish Republic in the 1920s and 1930s. Several revolutionary changes were made in fields such as clothing, the alphabet, law, art, education and the economy by the state in order to transform Turkey into a modern Western country. Westernization has always been considered as fundamental to Turkey's efforts for modernization, but it is more appropriate to characterize the years after 1945, especially the 1950s and 1960s with a more specific goal, namely, Americanization. During this time, along with a government which enthusiastically announced America as 'the major friend' of Turkey mainly for its economic and military aid, popular magazines introduced the American way of life to Turkish society. America was constructed as an

object of desire and the American way of life as the narrative of a social fantasy which has lasted to the present.

How did these developments echo in the reception of American films in Turkey? As a perfect machine of fantasy, how did Hollywood participate in the formation of this imagery of the 'American Way of Life'? This article explores some aspects of these issues with a special focus on the institutional powers which were, to a certain degree, involved in the distribution–exhibition of American films. Special emphasis is given to the operations of two institutions: (1) USIS (the United States Information Services), a branch of USIA (the United States Information Agency) which sought to control the construction of the American image in foreign countries which were somewhat under the threat of communism; and (2) the Turkish Censorship Board, which, through its prohibitive functions, operated under the governing principles of a certain national/cultural identity with strong nationalistic and statist traits. An account of this intervention will be given in a particular socio-historical context which can best be characterised as Americanization and fear of communism, or rather the expansionist policy of the USSR.

It was a time when social and political conflicts had begun to surface; a nationalist movement with a racist tendency, a religious fundamentalist movement with an anti-Western attitude, and a leftist movement with an anti-imperialist discourse together created a restlessness which urged the Western-oriented government to take immediate action. These forces had to be regulated by harsh methods in order not to upset the Western allies. The left was observed closely and silenced by merciless oppression. The path to be taken was not that of the communists but that of the free, liberal world. Paradoxically, however, the means of the state cannot be said to have been compatible with its ends.

In 1948 Turkey signed an agreement of economic cooperation with the US in order to be included in the Marshall Plan, which was the result of the US decision to support the economic development of European countries whose economies were damaged during the war and who were under the threat of communist propaganda [6]. The Soviets' becoming a threat to the territorial integrity of Turkey and the United States' mission of saving the world from Soviet expansion and communism, which became the major antithesis of capitalism and Americanism in the aftermath of the World War Two, led to the first major US economic aid to Turkey. The headlines of the *New York Times* on 12 March 1947 read: 'Truman acts to save nations from red rule' and 'Asks 400 million to aid Greece and Turkey':

President Truman outlined a new foreign policy for the United States today. In a historic message to Congress, he proposed that this country intervene wherever necessary throughout the world to prevent the subjection of free peoples to Communist-inspired totalitarian regimes at the expense of their national integrity and importance. In a request for \$400,000,000 to bolster the hard-pressed Greek and Turkish governments against Communist pressure, the President said the constant coercion and intimidation of free peoples by political infiltration amid poverty and strife undermined the foundations of world peace and threatened the security of the United States. Although the President refrained from mentioning the Soviet Union by name, there could be no mistaking his identification of the Communist state as the source of much of the unrest throughout the world [7].

These developments took place during the last years of the Republican Party in Turkey. When the Democratic Party came to power in 1950, Turkey had already decided to take part on the side of the US in the aftermath of the Second World War. It was during the reign of the Democratic Party (1950–1960) that the Americanist foreign policy of Turkey reached its peak.

Parallel to the developments taking place in the political arena, ‘Americanism’ was becoming fashionable in the everyday life of Turkey, too. However, it could be argued that ‘the American dream’ or ‘the American way of life’ owes its impact among Turkish society of the 1950s to Turkish popular magazines and Hollywood movies more than any direct US economic or military aid. These were the main channels through which Turkish society was made familiar with the appeal of the American way of life.

Hollywood and its Turkish Spectators

When the war broke out, American films gradually dominated the market not only due to the European film industries being in crisis and having difficulties in distribution, but also because of its international character and populist appeal. Giovanni Scognamillo, a film historian, records that even though the Turkish audience was able to see German UFA productions, French Vichy films, and got acquainted with the Hungarian cinema and liked it, Hollywood soon began to rule in the film market. The real and long-standing favorites of the audience were the stars of Hollywood [8]. Again Scognamillo writes of the 40s: ‘Turkish viewers want Hollywood stars, want action, wealth, spectacularity and glamour, they want excitement and emotion. They want dreams and they pay to have their dreams.’ Some theatre owners would resist this, claiming that the melodramas of Amedeo Nazzari–Yvonne Sanson, the Arthur Rank productions, the comedies of Norman Wisdom and Toto made money too. ‘But it is American cinema after all’, Scognamillo, himself a *levanten*, insists, ‘which comes up with innovations—or they polish the old ones and present them as new—it dazzles, it fills the people with awe ... Marvellous are these American films, these Hollywood productions and they really add something to our view of the world, to our taste’ [9].

Twenty film magazines appeared in the years 1943–1947. Although many of them were short-lived, the figures indicate an increasing demand for a particular discourse on Hollywood produced by these magazines. A number of them even had ‘Hollywood’ added to their titles [10]. Here is an explanation by the editor of a magazine justifying publication:

Masses line up in front of the movie theatres just as they do in front of bakeries. Children play ‘cowboys’ in the streets. The best children’s games borrow their themes from the silver screen. Once, Paris was the pioneer of fashion. Now fashion is by and large influenced by the silver screen, particularly by Hollywood. Why all this? This is why we are publishing this magazine—to answer this question [11].

The magazines were mostly devoted to Hollywood: publicity materials, gossip columns, glamor photos, reviews, interviews, letters—they all participated in the construction of Hollywood and an image of the ‘American way of life’. ‘Hollywood creates vogue’, ‘Stars learning languages’, ‘Waists get thinner’, ‘Tips from stars’ are representative titles, and love, sex, marriage, consumption, success, etc. were common subjects. The sources were public relations departments of Hollywood film companies,

American film magazines and Turkish journalists who then lived in America [12]. These magazines gave little room to European cinema. When a reader asked for some information about what was going on in German cinema, the editor of *Hollywood Dunyasi/The World of Hollywood* answered that they were not able to receive anything even from Switzerland, which never entered the war, let alone Germany ('You would not want us to make up stories, would you?'). Obviously, European cinema was not able to exercise its power of publicity efficiently and was eventually defeated by the competitive marketing machinery of Hollywood [13].

American movies became dominant in the Turkish film market during the Cold War. The weakening of European film industries by war conditions and the Turkish Board of Censorship's ban on the screening of Russian and Eastern European movies in Turkey were among the major factors which opened the Turkish film market to the dominance of Hollywood [14]. As a result, the majority of the movies in the screening lists announced by Turkish film importers at the beginning of each cinema season in the 1950s were American movies [15].

Although the Cold War years in Turkey were marked by the rise of Americanism, the negative comments of the film critics on the dominance of the Turkish film market by American movies suggest that this was not the case among intellectuals. Turkish film critics, especially in their writings in political journals of the period, severely criticized the excess of American movies and the scarcity of European movies on the screening lists. They favored European movies over American movies because of their artistic quality and the social values they represented [16]. The main reason for the appeal of American movies to Turkish film importers was considered to be the belief that 'the worst American movies' would bring more economic profit than 'the best European movies' [17]. Although the film critics were critical of film importers for being concerned only with economic profit, they accepted the economic success of American movies. In this context a critic argues that Turkish film importers

were not totally wrong because a few European movies, which managed to enter the lists, could not reach an admirable point in terms of profit. In order to increase the cultural standards of the country, the film importer cannot be forced to import good films and exhibit more European and Japanese movies, which are products of intelligence ... However the establishment of a balance between trade and culture is something which should not be neglected as well. The creation of a wayward and irresponsible youth brought up on absurd comedies, musicals, stereotyped cowboy and gangster movies is very likely [18].

The same critic also considered 'bad' American movies as a threat to the national film industry since 'the worst' American movies could easily be screened in the most luxurious movie theaters in Turkey, whereas domestic movies found no place for exhibition. He did not claim that Turkish movies were better than American movies, but that American movies were 'as bad as' Turkish movies.

USIA's Control over Hollywood in Turkey

The domination of the Turkish film market by American movies was considered to be a threat to the development of a domestic film industry by Turkish film producers

as well. A report prepared by *Türk Film Dostları Derneği* (Turkish Film Comrades Association) in early 1955 advocated reducing the importing of foreign films as the main solution for the development of the domestic film industry [19]. Although this was never directly done, the constant devaluation of the Turkish lira indirectly led to a severe reduction of foreign film import starting in the mid-1950s. Since Turkish film importers were not able to pay their accumulated debts to American distributors, American production companies looked elsewhere to get their money. In the summer of 1955 the president of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America came to Turkey and signed a contract with the Turkish Ministry of Economy and Trade; Turkey was to pay its debt in monthly installments of US \$50,000. If Turkey could not afford to pay its debt by 1957, it would not be able to import American movies any longer [20].

The money invested by Turkish film importers remained in Turkish Lira (TL) as their debt to American film companies had not been transferred since 1954 because of the scarcity of US dollars in Turkey [21]. This made Turkey an unfavorable country for America in terms of film export. Since American movies were a powerful tool of propaganda abroad, the American government sought a solution in order not to lose the Turkish film market. As a result, in 1956 Turkey was included in the Information Media Guaranty (IMG) Program with the initiative of the United States Information Agency (USIA). According to the IMG, Turkish film importers would be able to pay their debts in Turkish Lira. The American government would then convert a part of this debt into US dollars and the remaining debt would be transferred by the Turkish government in US dollars. Each year the contract would be renewed and a new amount of convertible debt would be determined. The amount to be returned in 1956 was determined as US\$600,000 [22].

The economic crisis in Turkey worsened, threatening the import of foreign films. In 1958 Turkey devalued its currency from 2.82 to 9 Lira per US dollar, tripling of the debt of Turkish film importers [23]. They had to cancel their contracts and give up on the American films that they were planning to buy. A film critic mentions that the movie theatres did not have any choice other than screening Tarzan films, cowboy serials and cheap imitations of films made between 1934 and 1948 [24]. In September, 1958, the Middle East director of the Motion Picture Export Association (MPEA), Leo Hochstetter, came to Turkey to discuss Turkey's debt to American film companies, which had tripled as a result of the devaluation. Hochstetter managed to guarantee a US \$500,000 fund to be spent on the importing of American films; but he and Turkish officials could not agree on the exchange rate according to which the previous debts would be fixed [25]. A film critic wrote that Hochstetter's visit disillusioned Turkish film importers because while they were expecting the news of a more affordable payment plan from the United States, Hochstetter had mostly talked about the problems faced by American film companies—increasing production costs and taxes—and then said that American film companies would turn towards markets which were more profitable [26]. Although the dramatic fall in the number of imported American films worried Turkish movie theatre owners and cinema audiences, it was good news for Turkish film producers who were preparing to take the opportunity to fill the now empty movie theatres with indigenous films [27].

In order to solve the problems caused by the 1958 devaluation in Turkey, USIA signed a new contract with Turkey; the debt would now be paid over 12 years, the amount of installments to be determined at the end of every 3 months [28]. The

inclusion of Turkey in the IMG program, however, meant that only those American films which were approved by USIA and its branch in Turkey, that is the United States Information Service (USIS), could be imported into Turkey. USIA director, George V. Allen explained in 1959 that ‘since the purpose of USIA was to present a favourable impression of America, the IMG conveyance of dollars was withheld on films not considered worthy examples of American life and character’ [29]. In 1959, USIA provided the Congress with a blacklist of 82 films, preventing their exhibition in 12 countries including Turkey. The list included many popular films, such as: *All the King’s Men*, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, *The James Dean Story*, *Somebody Up There Likes Me*, *The Strange One*, *The Sweet Smell of Success*, *Baby Doll*, *Rebel Without a Cause*, *The Defiant Ones*, *The Last Hurrah*, *I Want to Live*, and *A Hatful of Rain* [30]. Little is known about how USIS/USIA arrived at its list of banned films. According to Professor Nick Cull of the University of Leicester, who has carried out extensive research on USIA, the core archives of the USIA Motion Picture division have not survived either in the National Archives or at the National Records Centre, Suitland [31].

The withdrawal of the film entitled *Blackboard Jungle* (1955) from the list of the MGM distributor in Turkey in the 1956–1957 cinema season is accepted as the commencement of USIA’s operations [32]. The control of USIA and USIS over American films to be distributed in Turkey, which continued until 1962, was termed by Turkish film writers ‘American Censorship in Turkey’ [33]. They had already been struggling with the Turkish Board of Censorship for decades and now they had to tackle the prohibitive acts of USIS/USIA. They were as hard on USIS/USIA as they were on the Board. A critic, Semih Tuğrul, considered it to be a more serious issue than Turkish censorship posed and argued that USIA’s control over American films was in conflict with the importance America seemed to attach to private entrepreneurship and democracy. Tuğrul also argued that Edward Murrow, the then director of USIA, was probably unaware of USIA’s machinations; otherwise such a man ‘who had fought against American censorship in the past as a journalist and documentary filmmaker and who had expressed his respect and love for Turks whom he got to know when he was a war reporter in Korea, would of course prevent such deeds before anyone else’ [34]. Film writers were upset about USIA and USIS’ intolerance even for films which praised America, and the role they played in depriving the Turkish spectators of the pleasures of watching the best American movies for years [35]. Some of them also criticized America’s consideration of Turkey in the same category with countries such as South Vietnam, Yugoslavia, and Poland, which were subjected to the same ‘American censorship’ [36]. Nijat Özön, one of the major Turkish film critics and historians, argued that USIA and USIS’ control over American films in Turkey had reached to such a point that even American film companies complained about it. As an example he referred to a Mr Auerbacher, European and Middle Eastern Sales Director of United Artists, who came to Turkey in 1962 and explained that only one film out of 30 films submitted to the examination of USIA in 1962 had managed to get permission for distribution overseas [37]. In a similar vein, Semih Tuğrul stated that it was quite a surprise for a Turkish import company to learn that 23 out of 24 films it wanted to buy from United Artists were banned by USIS in 1961. The only film that was passed by USIS was ‘a cowboy film’ entitled *Alamo* [38]. Nijat Özön, looking back from the 1970s, wrote: ‘Bearing in mind that American films filled 90% of movie theatres and American censorship banned mostly the best films, one can understand how gruesome a brainwashing the Turkish spectator has been subjected to’ [39].

TABLE 1. American films banned by USIS/USIA[40].

1956–1957	<i>The Garment Jungle</i> (Columbia Pictures, 1957) <i>The Blackboard Jungle</i> (MGM, 1955) <i>The Big Knife</i> (United Artists, 1955)
1957–1958	<i>Written on the Wind</i> (Universal Pictures, 1956) <i>Around the World in 80 Days</i> (United Artists, 1956) <i>Something of Value</i> (MGM, 1957) <i>The Eternal Sea</i> (Republic Pictures, 1955)
1959–1960	<i>The Defiant Ones</i> (United Artists, 1958) <i>All the King's Men</i> (Columbia Pictures, 1949) <i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i> (Universal Pictures, 1930) <i>The James Dean Story</i> (Warner Bros, 1957) <i>Somebody Up There Likes Me</i> (MGM, 1956) <i>The Strange One</i> (Columbia Pictures, 1957) <i>The Sweet Smell of Success</i> (United Artists, 1957) <i>Baby Doll</i> (Warner Bros, 1956) <i>Rebel Without a Cause</i> (Warner Bros, 1955) <i>The Last Hurrah</i> (Columbia Pictures, 1958) <i>I Want to Live</i> (United Artists, 1958) <i>A Hatful of Rain</i> (20th Century Fox, 1957)
1960–1961	<i>Elmer Gantry</i> (United Artists, 1960) <i>The Fugitive Kind</i> (United Artists, 1959)
1961–1962	<i>Inherit the Wind</i> (United Artists, 1960) <i>Walk on the Wild Side</i> (Columbia Pictures, 1962) <i>The Facts of Life</i> (United Artists, 1960) <i>Pepe</i> (Columbia Pictures, 1960) <i>The Devil at 4 O'clock</i> (Columbia Pictures, 1961) <i>There Was a Crooked Man</i> (Warner Bros, 1970) <i>Judgement at Nuremberg</i> (United Artists, 1961) <i>Town Without Pity</i> (United Artists, 1961) <i>The Young Savages</i> (United Artists, 1961) <i>The Hoodlum Priest</i> (United Artists, 1961) <i>A Cold Wind in August</i> (Aidart, 1961)

The IMG program was abolished in 1962. A 1963 advertisement announced the films to be screened that year; nine were previously banned by USIS/USIA [41]. As Atilla Dorsay, a well-known critic, wrote in 1967: ‘When, this unnecessary intruder was finally eliminated and many of these films were exhibited, it was realized that almost all of them were the most interesting and successful works of American cinema in the recent years. As a matter of fact, everyone knew that there was a race issue in America before they saw *The Defiant Ones* ...’ [42].

Turkish Board of Censorship

Although ‘The American Way of Life’ was the path to be taken, Hollywood, which was expected to represent it in the best way, was not exempt from Turkish censorship. Censorship in Turkey has been a matter of policing from the very beginning and it has been one of the major ways in which the state has intervened in the distribution and exhibition of films. There was no law regulating the film business until 1932; however,

the city governors of Ministry of Interior were accepted as fully authorised to oversee the matter. In 1934, ‘The Regulation about the Control of Films and Film Screenplays’ was formulated as part of the ‘Police Duty and Authorisation Law’ and executed with minor revisions until 1977. The Board of Censors consisted of five main members, one from the Ministry of Interior, one from the General Staff of the Army, one from the Ministry of Tourism, one from the Ministry of Education, and one from the Police. Depending on the content of the film, there might be other members coming from the Ministry of Commerce, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, etc. joining the Board, although temporarily. The Board examined the screenplay prior to the production of the film and announced the result within a certain period of time (this included also foreign films to be produced in Turkey). The films which were allowed to be shot were re-examined by the Board after the completion of the shooting.

Censorship was formulated in the 7th Article of the 1934 Regulation. It consisted of 10 criteria, which required that a film should avoid

- (1) the political propaganda of a state;
- (2) degrading an ethnic community or race;
- (3) hurting the sentiments of fellow states and nations;
- (4) propagating religion;
- (5) propagating political, economic and social ideologies which contradict the national regime;
- (6) contradicting our national and moral values;
- (7) opposing the military forces and reducing the dignity and honor of the military forces;
- (8) being harmful to the discipline and security of the country;
- (9) provoking crime; and
- (10) attacking the state [43].

In addition to that, the 28th Article of the Regulation authorized the Ministry of Interior Affairs to ban a film ‘if found harmful’ even if it was previously passed by the Board of Censorship. This was defined as the duty of the City Governor who reported to the Ministry.

Foreign films were controlled according to the same regulation. However, unlike domestic films, they were subjected to a two-step control mechanism. Foreign films were first viewed by the Film Control Committees in Ankara or in Istanbul depending on the customs office to which they were submitted. In case of any objection to the decision of the City Film Control Committee or if no decision was reached, the film could be submitted for a second examination to the Central Film Control Committee in Ankara, superior to both City Control Committees [44]. The decision of the Central Film Control Committee was considered as the final word. However, if the importer of the film had any objection, he could apply to the Supreme Council for a revision [45].

Censorship remained untouched until 1985. This prevented filmmakers from presenting challenging ideas or developing an explicit social and political critique. The history of censorship is one of interference, interruptions and incidents of paranoia. 1985 marks a return to a greater democracy which guaranteed ‘freedom of speech’ as a given.

What follows is a table which provides a list of the American films that were examined by the Board and a summary of the reports it produced. It would take another essay to present a thorough analysis of the content of the reports. The scope of

this article, however, allows only a couple of remarks hinting at the Board's approach to examining Hollywood films. These reports do not only betray a vigilance for the elements, both in cinematic and in narrative terms, which appear as a threat to 'Turkishness', but also a certain conception of spectatorship with respect to what cinema is capable of in representing 'reality'.

By intervening in the distribution and exhibition of films, the Board represented the ways in which a nation-state dictates a national/cultural identity. What is crucial to the understanding of the ways in which it exercises its power is that the act of dictating comes prior to what is dictated, for the very 'Turkishness' of this national/cultural identity is primarily conceived of as being at the disposal of the institutions of the ruling nation-state. It is true that the Board has always been stricter about films coming from former communist countries than to films coming from non-communist countries; it did not even tolerate any appearance of writings in Cyrillic on the screen, nor any notion of solidarity, let alone communality.

The reports also suggest that the Board's criteria are built on the understanding that the spectator may mistake fiction for reality. Identification is not conceived of as a process of 'putting oneself temporarily in the place of another' but rather a process which suggests the possibility of a permanent psychic situation, in that the spectator assimilates the identity of the film characters. This is not irrelevant to the fact that the film characters are taken by the Board not as specific constructs in their specific cultural/historical context, but as universal types which have the full capacity of serving as role models. An American army officer is not simply an army officer but someone who embodies the idea of the 'Army'. In this respect, an insult might be read as addressed to the Turkish army. When an American officer has to confront a Turkish army officer, he simply becomes the other. This is perhaps why members of the Board demanded on a few occasions that the fictitiousness of the narrated events be underscored (for example, by adding a written statement or voiceover or both).

The *Missouri* was 'our' battleship returning our corpse to us. If 'any presentation is always already a representation', then America was not and could never be America. What the Turkish audience saw in the movie theatres was not only a representation of a representation, but also a dream appropriated into the consciousness of those who failed to see the other as other.

TABLE 2. American films examined by the Turkish Board of Censorship.

Year of examination	Title of the film	Decision
1950	<i>The Miracle of the Bells</i> (RKO Radio Pictures, 1948)	Rejected on the grounds of propagating religion.
1951	<i>Macbeth</i> (Republic Pictures, 1948)	Rejected on the grounds that image quality was poor.
1951	<i>Francis</i> (Universal Pictures, 1950)	Subjected to the 28th article.
1952	<i>The Men</i> (United Artists, 1950)	Rejected on the grounds of opposing the military forces and reducing the dignity and honor of military forces.
1953	<i>King of Kings</i> (MGM, 1927)	Rejected on the grounds of propagating religion.
1954	<i>The Long Voyage Home</i> (United Artists, 1940)	Rejected on the grounds that image quality was poor.
1955	<i>Gentleman's Agreement</i> (20th Century Fox, 1947)	Rejected on the grounds of making political propaganda for a state and propagating religion.

TABLE 2. *Continued.*

Year of examination	Title of the film	Decision
1955	<i>Riot in the Cell Block II</i> (Allied Artists, 1954)	Rejected on the grounds of being harmful to the discipline and security of the country.
1955	<i>Attack</i> (United Artists, 1956)	Rejected on the grounds of opposing the military forces and reducing the dignity and honor of military forces.
1956	<i>Silver Chalice</i> (Warner Bros, 1954)	Rejected on the grounds of propagating religion.
1958	<i>Istanbul</i> (Universal Pictures, 1957)	Rejected on the grounds of criticising the state of Turkey.
1958	<i>Crisis</i> (MGM, 1950)	Rejected on the grounds of being harmful to the discipline and security of the country.
1962	<i>The Journey</i> (MGM, 1959)	Accepted on the condition that the lines 'Russians are nice' be omitted and 'men are pigs but they become irresistible after 10 o'clock' not be translated in Turkish dubbing and subtitles.
1963	<i>The Angel Wore Red</i> (MGM, 1960)	Rejected on the grounds of propagating religion and political, economic and social ideologies which contradict the national regime.
1963	<i>Escape to Berlin</i> (Stun Film, 1960)	Accepted on the condition that the expressions 'comrade', 'full collaboration for peace', 'Heil Hitler'; the lines 'you saved yourself with a three-day imprisonment'; and the names 'Adenauer' and 'Walter Ulbricht' be omitted.
1963	<i>Ben-Hur</i> (MGM, 1959)	Accepted because the Board did not see in the film 'any evidence of representing Christianity as superior to Islam' and 'propaganda of religion'.
1964	<i>The Ten Commandments</i> (Paramount Pictures, 1956)	Rejected on the grounds of propagating religion. The representative of the Ministry of Education voted for the film stating that it was not in the least a propaganda film but a 'realization of historical and mythical events'.
1964	<i>Barabbas</i> (Columbia Pictures, 1962)	Rejected on the grounds of propagating religion.
1965	<i>Exodus</i> (United Artists, 1960)	Subjected to the 28th Article.
1965	'Greek Patriarch Athenagoras Meets Pope Paul in Jerusalem' (newsreel)	Rejected on the grounds of propagating religion. It was indicated that the film suggested unification of the two churches and the gathering of the Christian world under an all embracing religion union.
1965	<i>Topkapi</i> (United Artists, 1964)	Accepted.
1966	<i>El Cid</i> (Allied Artists, 1961)	First accepted on the condition that the scene where the Spanish army before striking the Arabs was blessed with a cross and the scene where King Ferdinand died in the church be omitted. The Board also wanted to see the film either subtitled or dubbed. Since the importing company made it clear that it could not fulfill the Board's demands, the film was rejected on the grounds of hurting the sentiments of fellow states and nations and propagating religion.
1969	<i>Cast a Giant Shadow</i> (United Artists, 1966)	Rejected on the grounds of hurting the sentiments of Arab friends.

1969	<i>Three Green Dogs</i>	Rejected on the grounds of contradicting Turkey's national and moral values and being harmful to the discipline and security of the country.
1970	<i>That Splendid November</i> (United Artists, 1968)	Accepted on the condition that Nino and Cettina who were presented as nephew and aunt in the film be identified as lesser relatives and the lines 'was that what you wanted, I will see you again', which Nino says to Cettina after marrying someone else, be omitted. The representative of the Ministry of Interior voted against the film on the grounds that the film contradicted Turkey's national and moral values.
1970	<i>Zorba the Greek</i> (20th Century Fox, 1964)	Accepted. The representatives of the General Staff and the General Directory of the Press and Publication indicated that the film should be accepted on the condition that the scenes where the woman was stabbed and the widow's house was plundered be omitted.
1970	<i>The Five Man Army</i> (MGM, 1970)	Rejected on the grounds of dealing with the Mexican Revolution and hence propagating political, economic and social ideologies which contradict the national regime; opposing the military forces and reducing the dignity and honor of the military forces; and being harmful to the discipline and security of the country. The representatives of the Ministry of Interior and Chief of Police voted for the film on the condition that the indication that the events took place in 1900 and that the film was fictitious be made, and the scene where soldiers were killed be omitted.
1970	<i>Candy</i> (Cinerama, 1968)	Rejected on the grounds that it illustrates a young girl's life, which reduced the dignity of society, members of various professions from poets to generals, the military and the police, institutions such as the family, various religious beliefs and hence contradicting Turkey's national and moral values, opposing the military forces and reducing the dignity and honor of military forces; and being harmful to the discipline and security of the country. The representatives of the Ministry of Interior and the Chief of Police voted for the film on the condition that obscenities be removed.
1970	<i>Guns of the Magnificent Seven</i> (United Artists, 1969)	Accepted. The representatives of the General Staff and General Directory of the Press and Publication voted against the film on the grounds that the film dealt with the Mexican Revolution and propagated political, economic and social ideologies which contradict the national regime; opposed the military forces and reduced the dignity and honor of military forces; was harmful to the discipline and security of the country.
1970-71	<i>The Fixer</i> (MGM, 1968)	Accepted on the condition that the scene which shows the totally naked man and the scene where a huge prisoner molested Yakop be omitted. The representative of the General Staff voted against the film.

TABLE 2. *Continued.*

Year of examination	Title of the film	Decision
1971	<i>100 Rifles</i> (20th Century Fox, 1969)	Accepted on the condition that the scene where the young girl's breasts were exposed in the hotel room be omitted. The representatives of the General Staff and Ministry of Education voted against the film on the grounds that the film represented the members of the military as cruel people, dealt with public revolt and represented it as legitimate and hence propagated political, economic and social ideologies which contradict the national regime; opposed the military forces and reduced the dignity and honor of the military forces; was harmful to the discipline and security of the country.
1971	<i>Love Story</i> (Paramount Pictures, 1970)	Accepted on the condition that obscenities be removed. The representative of the General Staff voted against the film on the grounds that the film was harmful to institutions such as the family and hence contradicted Turkey's national and moral values.
1971	<i>Making It</i> (20th Century Fox, 1971)	Rejected on the grounds of containing lots of obscenities, which were negative and harmful for audiences of various ages and cultural backgrounds, and hence contradicting Turkey's national and moral values.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to Şuayip Kanaat, Nick Cull and Michael Shields for their valuable help.

Correspondence: Dilek Kaya, Graphic Design Department, Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture, Bilkent University 06533, Ankara, Turkey. Fax: +90 312 266 4136; E-mail: kdilek@bilkent.edu.tr; Neziğ Erdoğan, Faculty of Communications, Bahçeşehir University, Bahçeşehir, İstanbul, Turkey; E-mail: neziğ2@hotmail.com

NOTES

- [1] David J. Alvarez, *Bureaucracy and Cold War Diplomacy: the United States and Turkey 1943–1946* (Thessaloniki, 1980), p. 110.
- [2] Ahmet Oktay, *Türkiye'de Popüler Kültür* (İstanbul, 1993), p. 73.
- [3] Yirmibeş Kuruşa Amerika (İstanbul, 1989), pp. 21–25.
- [4] Tanju Akerson, *Savaş, Gemisi Missouri* (İstanbul, 1991).
- [5] Murat Belge and Türkiye'de Günlük Hayat, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türk Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul, 1995), p. 863.
- [6] Fahir Armaoğlu, *Belgelerle Türk Amerikan Münasebetleri* (Ankara, 1991), pp. 165–168.
- [7] Felix Belair Jr, *New York Times*, 12 March 1947, p. 1.
- [8] Giovanni Scognamillo, *Cadde-i Kebir'de Sinema* (İstanbul, 1991), pp. 67–77.
- [9] Yeşilçam'dan Önce Yeşilçam'dan Sonra (İstanbul, 1996), p. 27.
- [10] Burçak Evren, *Başlangıcından Günümüze Sinema Dergileri* (İstanbul, 1993).
- [11] *Sinema Alemi*, 1 (1944), p. 3.

- [12] Apparently some of them were university students who posed as professional journalists.
- [13] Giovanni Scognamillo, *Cadde-i Kebir'de Sinema* (İstanbul, 1991), pp. 68–77.
- [14] Ali Gevgilili, Hollywood'un Dünya Egemenliği ve Getirdiği Sonuçlar, 25. *Kare*, 10 (1995), p. 27.
- [15] It is stated that over 90% of yearly film imports to Turkey were American movies. *Akis*, 229 (1958), p. 32.
- [16] See *Akis*, 122 (1956), pp. 28–29; 131 (1956), p. 29; 161 (1957), p. 30; 266 (1959), p. 30.
- [17] *Akis*, 161 (1957), p. 30.
- [18] *Ibid.*
- [19] *Akis*, 233 (1958), p. 31.
- [20] *Akis*, 94 (1956), p. 25.
- [21] *Akis*, 229 (1958), p. 32.
- [22] Nijat Özön, Türkiye'de Amerikan Sansürü, *Yön*, 18 (1962), p. 18.
- [23] *Ibid.*
- [24] *Kim*, 20 (1958), p. 28.
- [25] *Ibid.*
- [26] *Akis*, 229 (1958), p. 32.
- [27] See *Kim*, 21 (1958), p. 29; 23 (1958), p. 30; 29 (1958), p. 27.
- [28] Nijat Özön, Türkiye'de Amerikan Sansürü, *Yön*, 18 (1962), p. 18.
- [29] Quoted in Kerry Segrave, *American Films Abroad: Hollywood's domination of the world's movie screens from the 1890s to the present* (Jefferson, NC, 1997), p. 204.
- [30] *Ibid.*, p. 204; U.S. lists movies it limits abroad, *New York Times*, 24 May 1959, p. 46.
- [31] Cull to authors, 29 May, 2001.
- [32] *Akis*, 182 (1957), p. 32.
- [33] See Nijat Özön, Türkiye'de Amerikan Sansürü, *Yön*, 18 (1962), p. 18; Semih Tuğrul, Türkiye'de Amerikan Sansürü, *Hür Vatan*, 10 May 1962, p. 3.
- [34] Türkiye'de Amerikan Sansürü, *Hür Vatan*, 10 May 1962, p. 3.
- [35] See Nijat Özön, Türkiye'de Amerikan Sansürü, *Yön*, 18 (1962), p. 18; Semih Tuğrul, Türkiye'de Amerikan Sansürü, *Hür Vatan*, 10 May 1962, p. 3; Nijat Özön, Türkiye'de Yasaklanan Filmler Üzerine Bazı Notlar, *Yeni Sinema*, 30 (1970), p. 62; Ali Gevgilili, Hollywood'un Dünya Egemenliği ve Getirdiği Sonuçlar, 25. *Kare*, 10 (1995), p. 27; Atilla Dorsay, Özgürlüğün Sinirlerini Sansür Kısıtlıyor, *Cumhuriyet*, 22 July 1967, p. 6; *Kim*, 3 (1958), p. 41.
- [36] See Nijat Özön, Türkiye'de Amerikan Sansürü, *Yön*, 18 (1962), p. 18; Semih Tuğrul, Türkiye'de Amerikan Sansürü, *Hür Vatan*, 10 May 1962, p. 3.
- [37] Nijat Özön, Türkiye'de Amerikan Sansürü, *Yön*, 18 (1962), p. 18.
- [38] Semih Tuğrul, Türkiye'de Amerikan Sansürü, *Hür Vatan*, 10 May 1962, p. 3.
- [39] Özön, *Karagözden Sinemaya*, Vol. 2 (Ankara, 1995), p. 320.
- [40] Nijat Özön, *Karagözden Sinemaya*, Vol. 2 (Ankara, 1995), pp. 320–321. All the information obtained solely from printed sources.
- [41] *Sinema Postasi*, 79 (25, October 1963), p. 1.
- [42] Özgürlüğün Sinirlerini Sansür Kısıtlıyor, *Cumhuriyet* (22 July 1967), p. 6.
- [43] Filmlerin ve Film Senaryolarının Kontrolüne Dair Nizamname, *Resmi Gazete*, 4272 (31 July 1939), pp. 12375–12377. *Resmi Gazete* is the official paper which announces acts approved by the legislature.
- [44] Domestic films were controlled solely by the Central Film Control Commission.
- [45] Nijat Özön, Türkiye'de Yasaklanan Filmler Üzerine Bazı Notlar, *Yeni Sinema*, 30 (1970), p. 54.

Nezih Erdoğan teaches film theory and screenwriting at Bahçeşehir University, Istanbul. He has written about Turkish popular cinema, and has forthcoming chapters on Turkish trash from Hampton, and on the reception of Hollywood in Turkey from BFI. He has also co-authored a chapter on Turkish Cinema in Companion to Middle Eastern and North African Cinemas from Routledge.

Dilek Kaya is currently pursuing a PhD in audience research and teaches animation and screenwriting at Bilkent University, Ankara. She has published essays on American culture in Turkey and Turkish popular cinema.