



## Mapping Yeşilçam: A relational approach to the Turkish film industry

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### Abstract

Turkey's Yeşilçam film industry produced more than 5500 films during its 40-year lifetime. The industry had a unique narrative approach, shaped around its economic model, Turkey's ambivalent connection with modernization and the country's domestic culture. Yet, particular characteristic qualities of the industry remained rather limited until the last decade, in which vast databases emerged as a consequence of the digital turn. In this study, we develop a relational approach and conduct network analysis, with the aim to better understand the patterns of Yeşilçam's constitution. Our findings suggest that, rather than a homogenous industry, as often considered by film scholarship, Yeşilçam was divided into two main clusters with significantly different professional, narrative and financial dynamics.

**Keywords:** Turkish cinema; Yeşilçam; film industry; history of cinema; network analysis; digital humanities



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## Mapping Yeşilçam: A relational approach to the Turkish film industry

Serkan Savk, Burak Dogu

### Mapping Yeşilçam: A relational approach to the Turkish film industry

Turkey had an established, productive and standardized film industry known as Yeşilçam, which started in the 1950s and continued until the 1980s. During its lifetime of ca. 40 years, this industry produced a great number of films, making it a centre of attraction for film scholars. There is substantial literature on Yeşilçam's financial structure (Abisel 2005; Erkıılıç 2014; Erkıılıç and Ünal 2018; Gökmen 1973; Şener 1970), popular genres (Akbulut 2012; Demirhan and Scognamillo 2010; Kaya Mutlu 2010; Kesirli Unlu 2015; Sivas Gülçur 2014; Tunalı 2006), narrative properties (Arslan 2005; Erdoğan 1998a, 1998b, 2003; Gürata 2006), representation regimes (Balcı 2013; Sekmeç 2017; Yaşartürk 2012), and audience experiences (Akbulut 2014; Kaya 2017; Şanlıer Yüksel and Çam 2019). Additionally, there are references to the Yeşilçam era in significant studies on the historiography of Turkish cinema (Akser 2014; Kaya Mutlu 2007; Okumuş 2010; Özen 2009). As a result, there are various periodization attempts, which reflect the industry's historical evolution (Arslan 2011; Saydam 2020; Yıldırım 2016). In its extensive literature, Yeşilçam is often considered a homogeneous film industry, yet the industry in fact operated under diverging conditions throughout its history, with a network of dynamic

connections between particular players, offering a unique form identified with the character and the spirit of the industry.

In this study, we develop a data-driven relational approach and conduct network analysis to Yeşilçam, with the aim to better understand the exclusive dynamics of its constituents.<sup>1</sup> We reveal its predominant players and demonstrate the emerging similarities, as well as discrepancies, in their relational composition. Our findings suggest, at its peak, Yeşilçam consisted of two clusters that were built on different foundations. This clustering pretty much defined the mode of production and the narrative structure of films produced between the years 1960 and 1979. With the changing business structures and economic conditions, the relative weight of these clusters shifted, and the connections among the players helped Yeşilçam survive. Several approaches to film studies were introduced in recent years, particularly due to the advancements in digital humanities, the tools of which were also adopted by film scholars, facilitating a specialized analysis of films. Among these, the most common are geo-spatial mapping (Mapping Cinematographic Territories n.d.; Mapping Desmet 2015; Mapping Movies n.d.), visualizing film styles (About Cinematics n.d.; Brodbeck n.d.; Manovich 2013; Tsivian 2009), and network analysis. Particularly network analysis offers a significant addition to the digital humanities approaches in film studies. It has long been employed by several disciplines,

among which are anthropology, social psychology, geography, mathematical biology, sociology, political science and experimental psychology. However, its adaptation to film studies is fairly recent, yet rapidly growing. There are several papers conducting network analysis in the film studies literature, for a range of purposes, including exploring a film industry (Kim, Cho, and Hong 2014; Lorenzen and Täube 2008; Neuberger 2020), concentrating on individuals' role in a particular setting (Senekal 2014; Senekal and Stemmet 2014), examining gender inequality in film industries (Verhoeven et al. 2020), analyzing consumer choices (Yahav 2016), relating creativity to networks of social relationships (Cattani and Ferriani 2014), and showing funding structures of films (Miller 2011). However, we have identified only one paper using network analysis in the Turkish film literature, in which Beyhan and Erkılıç (2020) analyzed the spatial clustering of the Turkish film industry through network analysis, relating their findings to the life cycles of the industry. They suggest that the emergent life cycles of the Turkish movie cluster can be traced “in the volume and quality of the social interactions experienced between agents in the network” (Beyhan and Erkılıç 2020:210). Apart from this seminal research, social network analysis and its methods have not yet been applied to the history of Turkish cinema. By filling this gap in the Yeşilçam literature, this contribution has the potential to trigger further research.

In the following part of the paper we reflect on the Yeşilçam industry, tracing its history to provide background information, then elaborate on our methodology and findings. Later, in the conclusion part, we contemplate our findings, putting them in the broader field of cinema history.

### Tracking down Yeşilçam in history

Named after a street in Beyoğlu district of Istanbul where the majority of the production companies were located, Yeşilçam had significant international and transnational connections. However, the majority of the films were produced in Turkey, in Turkish, and for the national audience. The word Yeşilçam does not only refer to the name of this domestic film industry, but also identifies the films it produced, the films' narrative structure, and the related movie-going experiences of the audience (Akbulut 2012; Arslan 2011; Dönmez-Colin 2014; Erdoğan and Göktürk 2001; Kaya Mutlu 2010; Özön 2010; Refiğ 2009; Scognamillo 2003; Yıldırım 2016). As Akser claims the naming of Yeşilçam “was analogous to the naming of Hollywood” (Akser 2018:155) where the sacred color of “yeşil” (*green*) stands for “holly” and “çam” (*pine tree*) stands for “wood.” There is no consensus among film historians on the time span covering the Yeşilçam period. Erdoğan and Göktürk (2001:535) define Yeşilçam as a period from the mid-1960s and lasting until the mid-1970s, and Saydam (2020:401) similarly contends that the

Yeşilçam existed in the 1960s and in the first half of the 1970s. On the other hand, Arslan (2011) and Yıldırım (2016:24–26) define Yeşilçam as a period of ca. 40 years, from the late 1940s until the end of the 1980s. However, they break this period into sub-periods based on the internal dynamics of the industry. For instance, Arslan (2011) points out three sub-periods, a sequence of the early Yeşilçam period in the late 1940s, the high period in the 1960s and 70s, and the late period in the 1980s.

During a period of 40 years, Yeşilçam industry produced more than 5500 films.<sup>2</sup> That being said, Yeşilçam was not, in fact, a large-scale industry with strong income sources; on the contrary, the industry was only able to reach such production capacity thanks to its fast, highly standardized, and very practical mechanisms of finance and production. Popular idioms coined by the Yeşilçam professionals included “garment film” (TR konfeksiyon film) (Erdoğan 1998a:261; Özgüç 2012:20) and “one minibus, one film” (TR bir dolmuş bir film) (Şoray 2017:99) refer to this mode of production and finance mechanisms of the industry.<sup>3</sup>

Yeşilçam’s production mode and financial mechanism, which helped sustain the industry’s high production capacity (at least in quantity), needs to be elucidated. Firstly, there was a financial connection between the producers and the movie theatre managers (Abisel, 2005; Erkılıç and Ünal, 2018). The whole country was divided into six distribution regions, and the producers’ main financial income was the advance payment from the movie theaters in each region.

Accordingly, movie theatre managers met the producers every year to commission films to be produced in the upcoming season. Due to their advance payment, managers were entitled to participate in the decision making processes relating to the actors, subject, genre, plot, etc. of any particular film. This system, later named as “manager hegemony” (Abisel 2005:105), constituted the industry’s modus operandi. Secondly, a better understanding of Yeşilçam's productivity can be provided by an evaluation of the visual style and sound space of the films. Starting from the mid-1960s, Yeşilçam relied on the strategy of “speeding up production instead of increasing capacity” (Erdoğan 1998b:174). As part of this strategy, dubbing (post-synchronization) became the standard sound process, and filmmakers minimized the number of camera placements, particularly for dialogue scenes (Erdoğan 1998b:174–75). Thirdly, originality appears to be a significant issue in making sense of the industry’s production capacity. Only a limited portion of the films were based on original screenplays, which is a consequence of the high-speed production technique. The majority were either remakes and adaptations, or based on plagiarized plot lines. All agents involved, including producers, directors, screenwriters, and theatre managers, favored pre-tested and successful formulas (Erdoğan 2003; Gürata 2006). In addition to these circumstances, one should also note that the industry was working under highly institutionalized and strict censorship mechanisms (Kaya Mutlu 2013; Öztürk and Karadoğan 2020). Multiple stages of censorship approval combined with increasing demand from the

audience and movie theatre managers was the driving force behind this fast and practical approach.

Yeşilçam's mode of production was profitable and sustainable, yet it was also vulnerable, shown by the industry's multiple crises throughout its lifetime. One of these crises took place in the second half of the 1970s as a consequence of the contraction of public life, triggered by political unrest in the country, and the increasing popularity of television broadcasts. Yeşilçam turned to making erotic films, targeting male adolescent audience as a strategy to prevent the downsizing of the film market. This strategy resulted in dozens of films, which marked the "sex influx" (TR seks furyası), a period starting in the mid-1970s and ending with the 12 September 1980 coup d'état.<sup>4</sup> It is worth mentioning that not all players of the industry took part in the making of erotics, some preferred to stay out of the trend, becoming less active in their professional careers. Another crisis occurred by the end of the 1980s. After the short-term impact of the 1980 coup d'état, Yeşilçam revived to a certain extent around the mid-1980s, and maintained its business model until the end of the decade. However, the impact of the 1980 coup d'état on the industry's political economy meant that ownership of the distribution network and movie theatres shifted dramatically by the end of 1980s. In 1987, new legislation enabled foreign companies, such as the Warner Bros and United International Pictures, to establish their own distribution companies in Turkey (Çetin Erus 2007:9–10), a radical shift marking the end of Yeşilçam, a point of no



return. The domestic cinema in Turkey could barely revive in the mid-1990s, in the form of “new cinema,” rather than a continuation of Yeşilçam.

### Reflections of the digital turn on the Yeşilçam era

Yeşilçam had a profound role in Turkey’s popular culture, arts, and daily life practices. Despite its impact, many details about the industry remained relatively obscure. Neither the films themselves, nor their accurate credits information were fully accessible until the last decade. This unusual circumstance has changed thanks to two relatively recent developments. The first is the emergence of huge databases with extensive credits information focusing solely on the Turkish films, such as the Center for Turkish Cinema Studies (TSA) and Sinematürk. Additionally, the Internet Movie Database (IMDB) and Wikipedia started to cover the information on films from Turkey. The second development relates to open access to the films. Even though most of the Yeşilçam films are present and presumably preserved in different archives and collections, the largest one in Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University Film Archive has not been made accessible. Those broadcasted on mainstream television channels or distributed in commercial formats, such as VCD and DVD constitute only a small portion of the Yeşilçam collection. This issue has started to resolve itself during the last five years, when production and distribution companies began making their Yeşilçam holdings accessible on YouTube. As a result, more than 1000 of

these films are now available online, and the number is yet to increase. In this study, we greatly benefit from the first of these recent developments, the emergence of open and digital databases specialized in Turkish cinema.

Whenever a new digital database is introduced, initial admiration for the great efforts involved yield to a more routine appreciation, as the users discover the textual resources lying behind that database. In most cases these textual sources are created by researchers or collectors who have devoted their lives to the subject. The same story stands for the digital databases on Turkish cinema, since they rely to a great extent on two fundamental published resources: Agâh Özgüç's (2012) encyclopedic dictionary and İnanoğlu's (2004) collection of Turkish film posters. Agâh Özgüç's encyclopedic dictionary, first published in 1978 and revised in 2009, 2012 and 2014, resembles a catalogue featuring the credits information of hundreds of Turkish films, with a brief description of their subject and some random notes, while İnanoğlu's collection of Turkish film posters presents an archival work of the visual history of the Turkish film industry. Considering the absence of proper documentation, this collection is of vital importance in providing posters containing all the basic credits information of a film.

If the digital databases on Turkish cinema are created out of previously published materials, then should these online databases be considered simply digital versions of these publications? As

pointed out above, Yeşilçam film production was rushed in the heyday of the industry to meet the increasing demand from the audience. Given the context, producers sometimes released two versions of a film with different titles, re-released a previously made film with a new title to resemble a trending film, or made an unplanned film out of unused footage from another work. Moreover, inconsistencies between the available credits information obtained from different sources are prevalent.<sup>5</sup> In most cases, under these circumstances, it is very difficult to identify whether a film is new and original, or whether the available credits information is accurate. The digital databases developed various verification methods for distinguishing between different resources, for instance, both professional and non-professional users may provide data input to the IMDB, but the new contribution becomes available only after being “reviewed by a member of the data editing team” (IMDb Help 2021).

At this moment, four major databases provide credits information of the films in Turkish cinema. These databases, along with the number of the films they cover between 1950-1989, are listed below.

- IMDb, 5683 films [Advanced title search, Country: “Turkey”, Language: “Turkish”, “all titles included”, “adult titles included”] (IMDb Search 2021)
- Wikipedia, 2184 films (Lists of Turkish Films 2021)
- Sinematurk.com, 5693 films [Origin: “domestic”, Type: “movies”] (Sinematurk. n.d.)

- Center for Turkish Cinema Studies (TSA), 5595 films (Türk Sineması Araştırmaları n.d.)

Each database has different advantages and shortcomings based on their data input and verification methods. For instance, one can observe faulty categorization of entries on Wikipedia, because categorization fully depends on the user providing the input, such as in the case of the film *L'immortelle* (Robbe-Grillet 1963). This mystery film, shot in Istanbul with a significant orientalist gaze, is mistakenly listed in the “List of Turkish films of the 1960s”.<sup>6</sup> Even though set in Istanbul, and featuring Turkish actors in supporting roles, it is highly controversial to define *L'immortelle* as a Turkish film, since there is no individual or institutional involvement from Turkey in the creative or the financial aspects of the film. Similar faulty data are even more likely to be found on Sinematurk.com, where many foreign films are marked as “domestic”.<sup>7</sup>

Among these databases, we find the TSA as the most reliable source regarding the accuracy of data covering the Yeşilçam period. The database project of the TSA started to be developed in 2013 and its outcomes were released online in 2014. Data on this database were generated solely by researchers, without user-generated content or crowdsourcing. Their methods utilize higher levels of verification, providing a systematic data creation protocol and cross-checking mechanisms among different sources (Saydam 2021). This not only eliminates faulty data, frequently found in other databases, but also minimizes the number of misleading inputs, as in such cases where two different releases are given for a single film.

## Methodology

In this exploratory study, we present an unconventional methodological approach to the broader area of film studies, while contributing particularly to the Yeşilçam literature with our findings from macro-level relational analysis. Here, we applied network analysis in order to examine the interconnections of various players in the Yeşilçam film industry, and to reveal the patterns of their relations. We aimed to identify how the whole film industry presented itself, using a network map based on data from the Center for Turkish Cinema Studies (TSA) database, to which we gained access through a bilateral agreement.

We began with scraping the film credits information from the TSA servers, which came in JSON format, and then converted these data to CSV format and merged them into a spreadsheet. The data covered extensive information on the films, including their metadata, along with additional elements, such as directors, screenwriters, producers, actors, production companies, and advertising agencies. For this research, our scope was limited to identifying the relations between the directors, screenwriters and producers. We ran a pilot study to test the outcome from a variety of maps covering four different sections in the Yeşilçam history. After sorting the data for standardization, we decided to filter the data for the specific period between 1960 and 1979, considered as the heydays of the Yeşilçam industry and defined as the High Yeşilçam Period (Arslan 2011).

We employed Gephi for the visualization of the networks. Using the Force Atlas 2 layout algorithm, we generated two undirected bipartite maps, which demonstrate films and players as separate groups of nodes. In the first map, based on modularity, we mainly focused on the relations between the players, and considered films as intermediary entities around which these players revolve. Here, we wanted to illustrate the key players, their positioning, and clusters in the network representing the whole Yeşilçam industry. The second map, which focuses on the professions, shows each one of the professional roles as a separate node; each profession is color-coded to reveal their distribution across the map. In the cases where a single player took on more than one profession, we disjoined them into two or three separate nodes in order to highlight each profession of the same player independently. For example, a player who both directed and produced either the same or different films between 1960 and 1979 acquired two separate nodes on the map. For this reason, we did not include name tags on this map, rather, concentrated specifically on the distribution of professions.

Moreover, we created stacked area and radar charts derived from the statistical data that were the basis for the maps, in order to better interpret the networks. We listed the most prominent players and their professions based on weighted degree, and examined these roles with regards to the

industry's dynamics, showing the apportionment of players' roles in directing, producing, and screenwriting.

### A bifold industry

The network maps generated using the abovementioned methodology and the distribution of roles in these networks reveal two main findings. The first derives from the positioning of players in the network. As clearly seen in Figure 1, based on the modularity of players, the industry consists of two distinct subnetworks: A type and B type. The map reveals, regardless of profession, all the players of the Yeşilçam industry who undertook at least one directing, producing or screenwriting role in the making of 3834 films between 1960 and 1979. Thus, the map shows the whole scheme of the industry's relations with a particular focus on the clustering of players. 4361 nodes were identified in this network, including the films, connected by 8546 edges. The graph density is low, as expected, indicating a rather loose-knit network; however, the average path length is 5.144, which makes short distance connections possible.

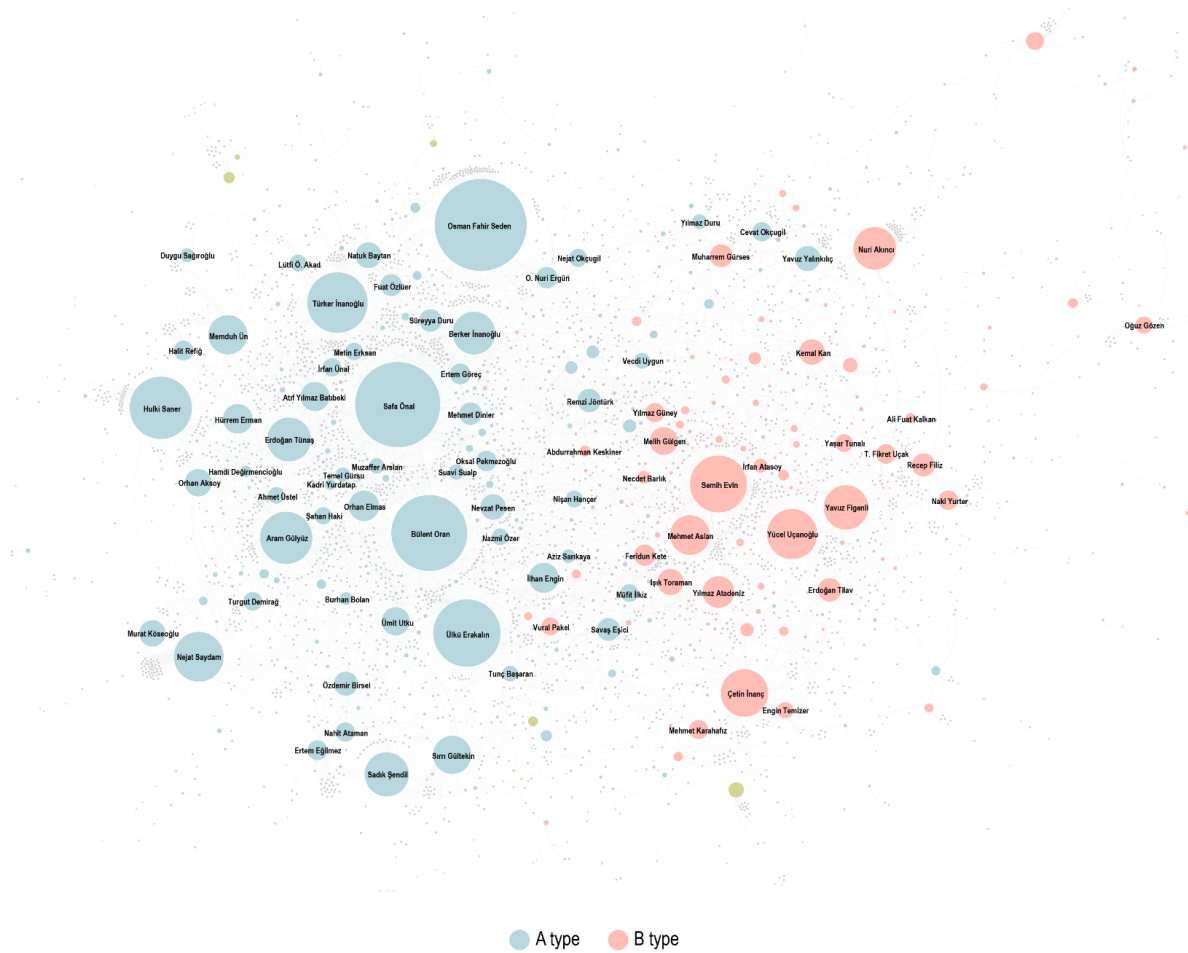


Figure 1. Players of the Yeşilçam film industry and their subnetworks (1960-1979). Colored nodes represent the players, while grays are the films, and edges indicate relations between players and films. Node size is proportional to weighted degree. Modularity with resolution: 3.086.

Several differences are evident between these two subnetworks. Firstly, A type players constitute a larger portion on the map in terms of both the weight of the nodes and the number of edges between these nodes. The number of films, represented as the nodes in grey, are also significantly higher in this subnetwork. In terms of their weighted degrees, four names are the most prominent in the A type subnetwork: Osman Fahir Seden (306), Safa Önal (283), Bülent Oran (252), and Ülkü Erakalın (223). In the B type subnetwork, however, the intensity of



relationships is much lower, and there are no players with a central role similar to these four names. Thus, this subnetwork occupies a more limited and non-dominant area in the overall map. To better interpret this distinction, we need to examine the prominent players in detail. In the A type, attention is immediately drawn to players taking part in the production of the popular mainstream films. The common point of the players here is that they made relatively more popular films with higher budgets and star actors, and which resulted in commercial success. So much so that these movies are still frequently broadcasted on mainstream television channels, as well as on on-demand platforms. However, we should also point out the great diversity of this cluster, which must not be taken as a homogeneous set.

In the type A subnetwork, the producers of the most popular films are players, such as Türker İnanoğlu, Berker İnanoğlu, Hürrem Erman, and Hulki Saner. Yeşilçam's top screenwriters are Bülent Oran, Safa Önal, Erdoğan Tünaş, and Sadık Şendil, who between them wrote a total of 863 screenplays between 1950-1989. Osman Fahir Seden made dozens of films, as a screenwriter, producer and director. Lütfi Akad and Metin Erksan, on the other hand, made relatively fewer films, but attracted great attention with their distinctive styles in Turkish cinema history (Abisel et al. 2005; Kanbur 2005; Kayalı 2004; Masdar Kara 2017). Halit Refiğ, who has a similar importance, is the founder of the national cinema movement (Refiğ 2009). Holding similar status, Duygu Sağıroğlu is one of the foremost names of the social realist movement. Atif

Yılmaz is an iconic director of both popular, commercially successful dramas, melodramas and comedies, as well as more critical, political films associated with arthouse cinema (Arslan 2007; Özyazıcı 2006). Orhan Aksoy, Orhan Elmas, and Nejat Saydam are the directors identified with the melodrama genre, whereas Natuk Baytan focused more on directing historical adventures.<sup>8</sup>

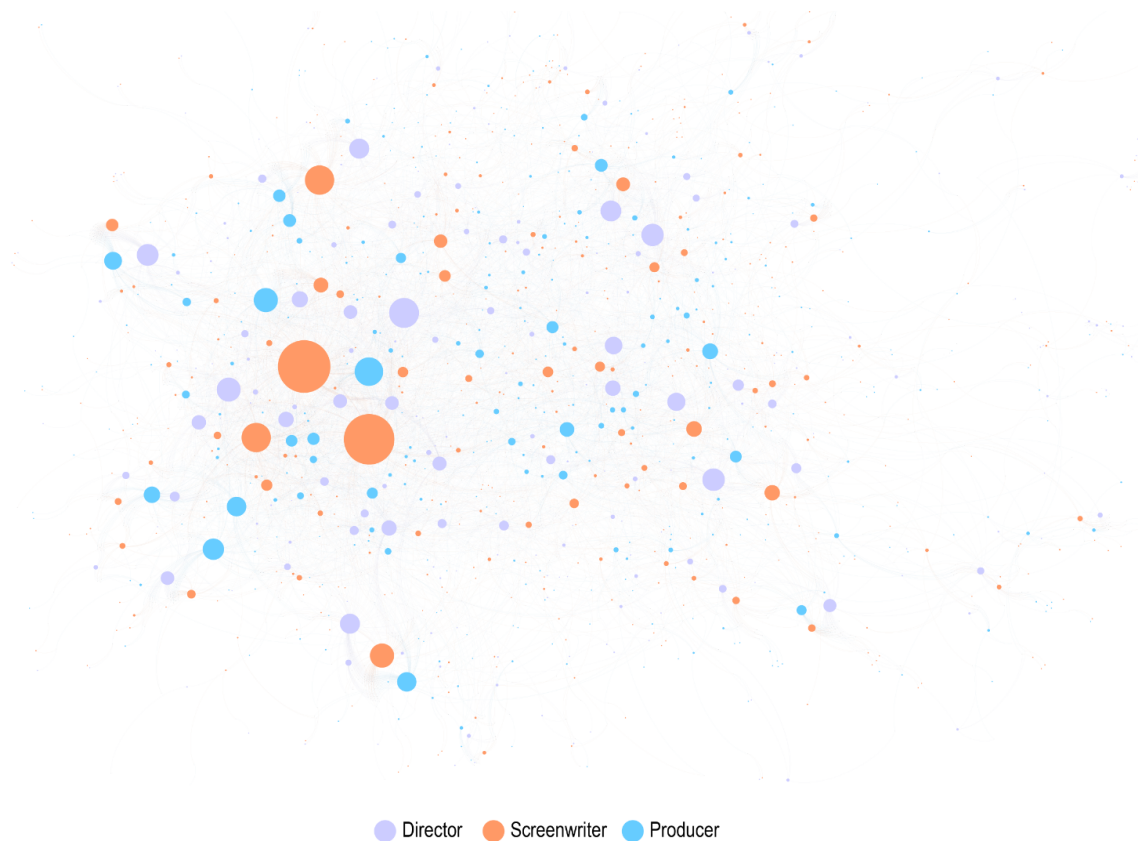
The work of those in the B type subnetwork generally involved relatively lower budgets compared to the A type, and with fewer star players. As a result, their box office income was limited. Their films are characterised by the continual, rapid, and practical line of production identified with the Yeşilçam. Remakes, remixes, and exploitations were common in this set of films (Erdoğan 2003; Gürata 2006). These films mainly targeted a comparatively smaller and more peripheral audience, identified with the broader B movie notion in the cinema literature (Saydam 2019). The dominant tendencies in this subnetwork are seen in the work of Yılmaz Atadeniz, Çetin İnanç, Semih Evin, and Nuri Akıncı. For most of their careers, these filmmakers' productions fitted the B movie concept, among which are fantastic movies, superhero stories, comic book adaptations, adventure and action films with plenty of fighting,, and films about subnetworks, singers. All popular tendencies were adapted rather quickly in this cluster, such as Işıl Toraman and Erdoğan Tilav's work, particularly their adventure and action films. Although it is not easy to make a genre-oriented distinction between the two subnetworks, science fiction, fantasy, western and gangster movies are clearly the more dominant in the type B subnetwork.

Speaking of genre, we should also reflect on the erotic films. As we mentioned above, Yeşilçam turned to making erotic films in the second half of the 1970s as a response to the downsizing of the market, a trend referred to as the sex influx. During the sex influx, some players were more actively engaged with the trend than others in their professional careers. For instance, directors, such as Ülkü Erakalın, Aram Gülyüz, Yücel Uçanoğlu, Naki Yurter, Yavuz Figenli, and Oksal Pekmezoğlu were particularly devoted to these films. B type players more readily adapted to the sex influx than the A type players, so that their overall weight in the industry increased during this period. However, a closer look at Figure 1 reveals that erotic films do not correspond to an absolute distinction between A and B types.

Some of the leading players of the sex influx names, such as Yücel Uçanoğlu, Yavuz Figenli, Çetin İnanç, and Erdoğan Tilav appear in the B type, and others, such as Aram Gülyüz and Ülkü Erakalın, in the A type. Yet, some players in the B type, such as Semih Evin, took no part in the sex influx, quitting his career at the second half of the 1970s. That is to say, the sex influx appears to overlap at the intersection of the A and B types only because its repercussion was limited to the second half of the 1970s.

Our second finding relates to the distribution of professions. As clearly seen in Figure 2, the three major professions, namely directing, producing, and screenwriting, have a certain prevalence in the network. However, a clustering similar to that in Figure 1 is also present, yet

again A type and B type films are positioned around the same sections in both maps. The nodes representing screenwriters are predominant, mainly on the left section of the map, where the A type films reside. Two in particular, with the highest degree centrality in the entire map, form the center of the A type subnetwork. These two nodes, Safa Önal and Bülent Oran, are also evident in Figure 1, however, this time we notice the line of work in their contribution to the Yeşilçam industry. Again, in the same subnetwork, the total weight of producers is noticeable. Most of these producers are also directors, examples of the case in which a single player has more than one role. Overall, these two professions are collocated, i.e., side-by-side when it comes to the realization of filmmaking. In the B type subnetwork, there are no such central or large nodes, and directing appears more likely to be the leading role in this subnetwork rather than screenwriting or producing.



*Figure 2.* Professions in the Yeşilçam film industry (1960-1979). Colored nodes represent the professions, while grays are the films, and edges indicate relations between professions and films. Node size is proportional to weighted degree.

The most prominent players and their professions are listed comparatively in Figure 3 and Figure 4 in order to clarify our second finding. A sharp contrast is clearly visible between the two subnetworks in terms of the professions of the most prominent players.

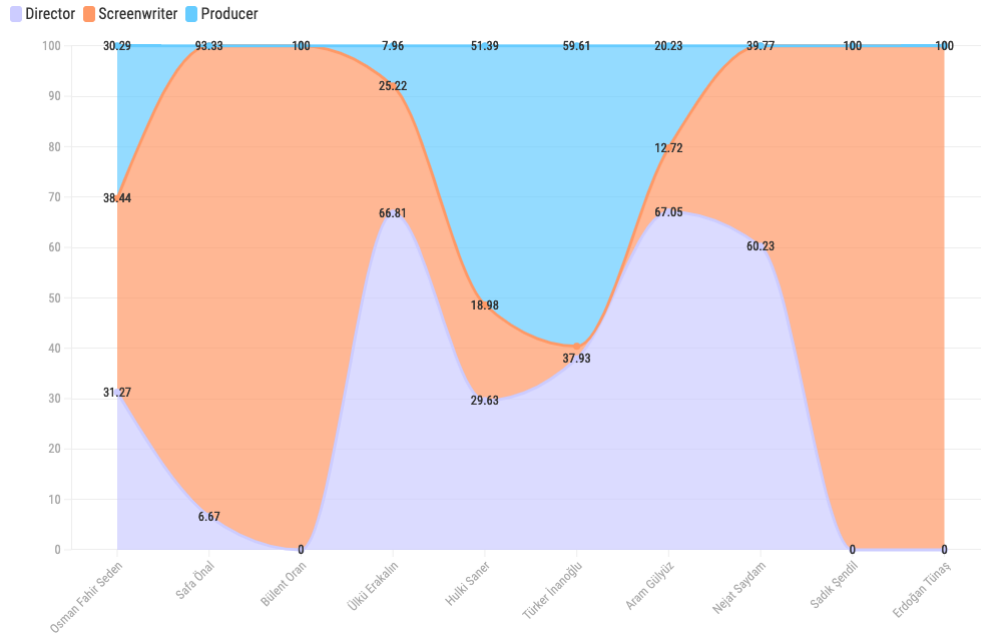


Figure 3. Percent stacked area charts showing the most prominent players and their professions based on weighted degree (1960-1979). A type.

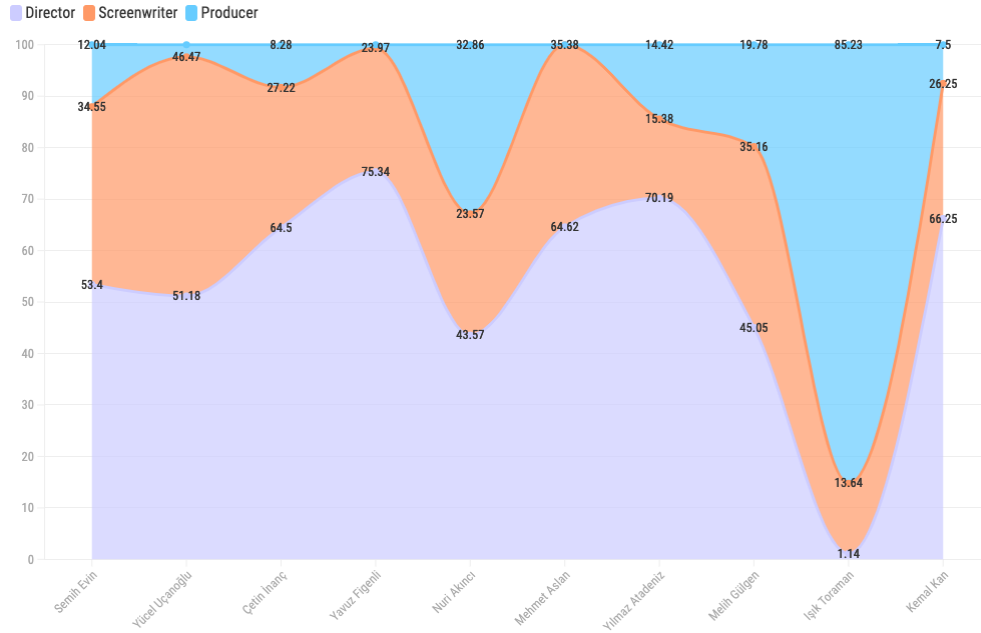


Figure 4. Percent stacked area charts showing the most prominent players and their professions based on weighted degree (1960-1979). B type.

In the A type, four players are solely involved in screenwriting, with the exception of Safa Önal, who has also directed 19 films. Five actors with multiple roles in the A type still have a primary profession, three directing, and two producing. Among the players with multiple roles, the distribution of work is distinct, except for Osman Fahir Seden, who evenly contributed to the three professions. Almost all B type players, however, have multiple professions and are mainly directors. Of the ten, nine are directors and one is a producer, namely Işık Toraman. Another contrast between the two types is observed in the distribution of secondary roles. Out of the six players with multiple roles in the A type, three are directors, two are screenwriters, and one is

involved in production as the second role. In the B type, for nine players, the secondary role is screenwriting, and for one only, producing.

An overall view of professions in the Yeşilçam industry also supports our second finding (Figure 5). The quantitatively larger and more productive impression of the A type, which manifests itself in Figure 1 and Figure 2, reflects as well on the distribution of roles in both subnetworks.

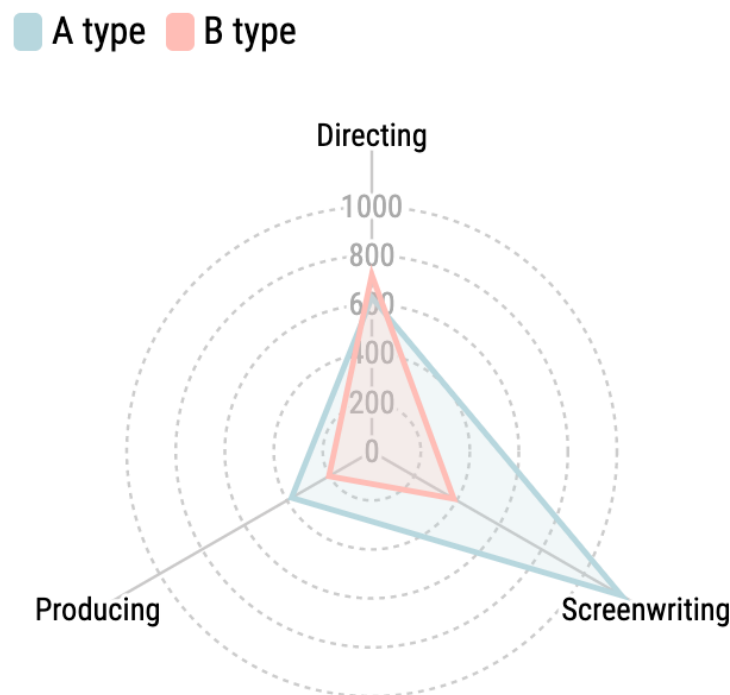


Figure 5. Overall view of professions by type in the Yeşilçam industry (1960-1979).

A total of 2182 professional activities were undertaken in the A type compared to 1309 in the B type. Yet, there is a remarkable difference between the two. Among all professions performed in the A type, screenwriting has the largest share with 54%, followed by directing, with 29%. In the B type, the order is reversed : 55% directing and 29% screenwriting. The overall distribution of



professions very much coincides with the notion of high-speed production, highlighted by the higher shares of directing and screenwriting compared to producing.

## Conclusion

The tendency to reduce the history of cinema to the history of films and major players (particularly directors and stars) has been abandoned in favour of a focus on the cultural and social dimensions of cinema in the last two decades, in line with the new cinema histories approach. It has become critical to analyze the dynamics of the film industries in relation to narration, audience, and viewing experiences. In this paper, we revisit the practice of film historiography using a novel approach, which considers the key players, not as decision makers and great creators who determine the fate of cinema, but as subjects enabling us to understand the internal dynamics of the industry through the linkages they created. Mapping these linkages among the cinema professionals contributes to our understanding of how Yeşilçam was able to survive for 40 years, despite inefficiencies and crises.

It is a fact that, as well as mainstream films, Yeşilçam produced B type films, for different audiences. However, our findings suggest a clear distinction between the players involved in the two types of films. This distinction, as clearly manifested in our study, reveals the differences

between their modes of production, financial conditions, and narrative characteristics. Also evident in our findings is an unexpected outcome from these two clusters, in terms of the distribution and undertaking of professional roles. In the A type, screenwriters are more central, and professional careers are more identified with particular roles, while in the B type, directing is the most common career. In contrast, in the B type, multiple roles among the players were more common. This suggests that filmmakers in the B type had higher levels of adaptability in terms of finance, narration and professional competencies. Interestingly, these filmmakers were excluded from the historiography, and their films were considered immature and low quality. It seems however, that the professional flexibility of the B type filmmakers was a critical factor in the survival of Yeşilçam. Moreover, it is not surprising to see that multiple roles were common in the Yeşilçam industry, considering similar engagements in other film industries, including Hollywood. The multiple roles in Yeşilçam, indicate that the industry's professional and business structures resemble those of prevailing film industries.

From a methodological perspective, network analysis was applied to a major film industry with the aim to reveal the connections among players, and understand how these connections reflected on the dynamics of the industry. Employing network analysis is not very common in film studies, particularly at an industry scale. Yet, it can be useful in drawing the boundaries of an industry, defining its players and their roles, showing its evolution, and identifying anomalies,

which overall, allow a further assessment of industry's internal dynamics. The limitations of this paper include the restricted period, confined to the most productive years of Yeşilçam. This was because the inclusion of the pre- and post- periods would risk the overgeneralization of our findings. Still, we believe this study will act as a guide for further research, not only in the Turkish cinema industry, but in other cinema industries as well. Future studies in this line may adopt a longitudinal approach to explore the evolution of an industry and evaluate its disposition in a sociopolitical setting, focus on a certain player or a particular cluster for an analysis of micro structural factors, include the actors and actresses to reveal their long-term commitment to the industry, or perhaps, extend the research to include production infrastructures, with a focus on the capacity of the sector and the role of production companies. In point of fact, applying network analysis to multiple film industries would facilitate comparative approaches, and potentially reveal the common dynamics behind the emergence of similar patterns among different industries, while providing a better understanding of the historical connections between them.

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#### ENDNOTES:

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(C2DH) & University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg (2019); 2<sup>nd</sup> International Symposium: Communication in the Digital Age, İLAD & İzmir University of Economics, İzmir (2020).

<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise stated in this paper, the Center for Turkish Cinema Studies database is used as the source for figures.

<sup>3</sup> “One minibus, one film” implies that all the cast and crew of a film would fit into a minibus departing from Yeşilçam street, attesting to the making of a new film.

<sup>4</sup> For a critical assessment of the Turkish sex influx see (Demirhan and Scognamillo 2002; Yaren 2017, 2018).

<sup>5</sup> The film *Kemal the Sailor* (TR Bahriyeli Kemal, İnanç 1974) is a typical case, as the producer and production company details differ in the film’s opening credits, its poster and Özgüç’s encyclopedic entry (Bahriyeli Kemal 2015).

<sup>6</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Turkish\\_films\\_of\\_the\\_1960s](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Turkish_films_of_the_1960s), accessed: March 26, 2021.

<sup>7</sup> SinemaTürk advanced search (SineBul): Type: Cinema film, Origin: Domestic, <http://eski.sinematurk.com/arama/>, accessed: March 26, 2021.

<sup>8</sup> Natuk Baytan’s filmography evolved in two main directions: historical adventures and comedies. He mainly focused on the making of historical adventures during the high Yeşilçam period. However, starting from the late 1970s, he shifted to comedies and directed blockbuster movies in the 1980s, most of which feature Kemal Sunal in the lead role. Since this paper focuses on the high Yeşilçam period, his work appears in the A type. For the details of Baytan’s filmography see (“Natuk Baytan” n.d.).