

**THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
BAHÇEŞEHİR UNIVERSITY**

**THE RETURN OF THE REPRESSED: THE
REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN RECENT TURKISH
HORROR FILMS**

Master's Thesis

HANDE YEDİDAL

ISTANBUL, 2010

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CINEMA AND TELEVISION**

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Thesis Supervisor: ASSIST. PROF. DR. KAYA ÖZKARACALAR

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ABSTRACT

THE RETURN OF THE REPRESSED: THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN RECENT TURKISH HORROR FILMS

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This study aims to explore the underlying reasons of representing women as monsters in the reemerging horror films in Turkey starting from 2004. Given that the monsters represent what is repressed in a society, these recent horror films provide valuable sociological and psychoanalytical information about the society. The repressed ‘the others’ of the society return as monsters in the horror films and enable the dominant ideology to confront and defeat them. In a patriarchal society, sexually active, independent young women can be argued to be the most significant the other of the society as they are rivals to men and threat to the institution of family. This study examines six films that are produced between 2004 and 2010; *Semum* (2008), *The Haunted* (Musallat 2007), *Gomeda* (2007), *The Abortion* (Araf 2006), *Gene* (Gen 2006) and *The Spell* (Büyü 2004) in the context of these theories. Through a comprehensive analysis of these films, the monstrous and evil representations of women have been examined in each film, hence the underlying social fears and repressions have been investigated via psychoanalytical theories.

Keywords: Horror, women, the other, repression, abjection, castration, psychoanalysis, monster.

ÖZET

BASTIRILANIN GERİ DÖNÜŞÜ: SON DÖNEM TÜRK KORKU FİLMLERİNDE KADININ TEMSİLİ

Yedidal, Hande

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Bu çalışma 2004'ten itibaren yeniden Türkiye'de üretilmeye başlanmış korku filmlerinde kadının canavar olarak temsil edilmesinin altında yatan nedenleri araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Korku sinemasındaki canavarların toplumda bastırılanın geri dönüşünü temsil ettiği göz önüne alındığında son dönemde yeniden ortaya çıkan türün örneklerini analiz etmek sosyolojik ve psikolojik açılarından önemli bilgiler sunmaktadır. Toplumun ötekileri bilinçaltı tarafından bastırılmakta fakat korku filmleri vasıtasıyla geri dönerek hakim ideoloji için bir yüzleşme ve yeniden altetme imkanı sağlamaktadır. Hakim bir ataerkil toplumda cinsel olarak aktif, bağımsız genç kadınlar hem rakip hem de aile kurumuna bir tehdit olarak görülmeleri sebebiyle toplumun en çok dikkat çeken ötekileri olarak değerlendirilebilir. Bu çalışmada 2004-2010 yılları arasında yapılmış altı film; *Semum* (2008), *Musallat* (2007), *Gomeda* (2007), *Araf* (2006), *Gen* (2006) ve *Büyü* (2004) bu çerçevede incelenmiştir. Bu filmlerin kapsamlı analizleri yapılarak her bir filmde canavar ve kötülüklerin kaynağı olarak gösterilmiş kadın imajı incelenmiş ve buna sebebiyet veren toplumsal korkular psikanalitik teoriler yolu ile araştırılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Korku, kadın, bastırılma, psikanaliz, öteki, canavar, iğdiş etme.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the fear of the unknown.

H.P. Lovecraft (1945, p. 12)

Horror has never been the favorite genre of Turkish Cinema. Until the 2000's there were few examples and many of them were attempts of remakes, which were inadequate for mentioning about a Turkish Horror Cinema. In 2004, with the promising box office success of the movie *The School* (2004), a trend of making horror film as a first film for the emerging directors, became visible. Accordingly between 2004 and 2010, twelve horror films have been produced and met with the audience in Turkey. These films can as well be assumed as a part of the rise in Turkish cinema in general, starting from the nineties. However horror genre deserves a closer look due to the theories that it provides information about what is repressed in the society. Horror cinema has many dimensions that enable to conclude studies in many different perspectives. In this study, I will refer to psychoanalytical and ideological approaches while I analyze the films and construct my arguments.

While I build up my arguments I will analyze six films in order to suggest a more accurate and profound study. These films are *Semum* (Semum 2008), *The Haunted* (Musallat 2007), *Gomeda* (Gomeda 2007), *The Abortion* (Araf 2006), *Gene* (Gen 2006) and *Dark Spells* (Büyü 2004). I selected these six films as these most bluntly and explicitly visualized women and their sexuality as monsters. Even though each of these movies has different story lines, they all have the same tendency towards the representation of women, which is demonizing her either as a daughter, mother, wife or friend. The other six films (*The School* (Okul 2004), *The Little Apocalypse* (Küçük Kıyamet 2006), *D@bbe* (D@bbe 2006), *D@bbe 2* (D@bbe 2 2009), *Shattered Soul* (Beyza'nın Kadınları 2006), *On the Count of Zero* (Sıfır Dediğimde 2007), that I have

not included in this thesis either do not represent women as the monster or do not visualize them as the source of the evil. Some of these films represent women as the victim, parallel to the classical approach of horror film and few are taken from a female perspective. The three films, which are later, produced; *Mansion* (Konak 2009), *The Voice* (Ses 2010) and *The Island: The Wedding of the Zombies* (Ada: Zombilerin Düğünü 2010) are out of the scope of this thesis.

In the theoretical part first of all I will analyze horror as a genre; from literature to cinema. I will start with Tzvetan Todorov's definition of fantastic and continue in the search of the question "Why Horror?" In this part the works of Noel Carrol, Andrew Tudor and Robin Wood will be analyzed. The explanation of Noel Carrol about the structure of horror will be covered and Andrew Tudor's suggestion of two different types of horror; secure and paranoid which had evolved through the years will be explained. Regarding literature I also will refer to Howard Phillips Lovecraft's fear of the unknown theory. In addition I will connect these theories regarding horror film to Robin Wood's return of the repressed theory where he suggested that what is repressed in a society is visualized as monsters in horror film. In order to enrich this analysis I will also refer to Herbert Marcuse's and Luce Irigaray's interpretation of repression. The repression according to Wood is very much connected to the concept of the other, hence I will analyze his suggestions connecting it to Simone de Beauvoir's work about 'women and female sexuality as the other' in her book *The Second Sex*. Beauvoir made a significant analysis regarding the social roles of women in relation to men; wife, mother, independent woman and female sexuality. Consequently, I will argue these social roles prior to indentifying the visualization of women as monsters in horror films.

In the final part of my theoretical analysis I will analyze women and female sexuality as 'the other' in horror films. Here two significant concepts with the help of Barbara Creed will take place; women as abject and woman as castrated/castrator. Creed made a detailed study of Julia Kristeva regarding the concept 'abject' and suggested that its propositions regarding the 'border', the mother-child relationship and the feminine body gave valuable information in the representation of women in horror cinema. Another theorist that Creed had based her arguments is Sigmund Freud. Creed argued that

Freud's suggestion that women invoked fear as she represented the threat of castration is an important element of horror film, however she further suggested that women as monsters in horror films also caused fear as she is also considered as a castrator.

Following the theory chapters I will then make a comprehensive analysis of these six films: *The Abortion* (Araf 2006), *Gene* (Gen 2006), *Gomeda* (2007), *The Haunted* (Musallat 2007), *Semum* (Semum 2008) and *Dark Spells* (Büyü 2004) via these theories. Each involve with both different and also complementary concepts. Their order leads to a connection therefore a greater understanding. *The Abortion*, *Gene* and *Gomeda* evolve around the main theme of illegitimate pregnancy and the monstrous womb. The concept of monstrous womb also connects the film *the Haunted* with these two. *The Haunted*, *Semum* and *Dark Spells* are connected with religious myths. Finally *Dark Spells* and *Semum* are connected with concept of black magic.

In conclusion, I am interested in revealing what is repressed (even unconsciously) in the society. Horror film gives valuable information according to many theorists in revealing the repressed. It is significant and invokes curiosity to discover that the monster is woman in the very first examples of the reemerging genre. I find this information intimidating as it can lead our society to face its monsters which are stuck between westernization and traditional values. Hence, I believe this work will contribute to the confrontation of underlying reasons of the repressions of our patriarchal society and move forward to a better understanding.

2. HORROR FILM AND THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN

2.1 HORROR AS GENRE

Horror is the weird and uncanny child of cinema. Its peculiar pleasures both repel and attract at the same moment. The duality in its nature evokes curiosity; it is the most direct genre hence, it is the scapegoat of the society. Accordingly, as an academic field it provides valuable information about the society. Ken Gelder argues that horror texts have real socio-cultural effects and their own politics, as they are never represented to the world in a neutral way. He explains; “They provide ways of defining, for example what is evil (and what is good) in societies, what is monstrous (and what is ‘normal’), what should be seen (and what should remain hidden), and so on.” (Gelder 2000, p.1)

In order to analyze the horror genre and the valuable information that it provides about the society, first of all we have to define horror. Edwards suggested that the definition of fear and horror; and the thin line that separates these two, could be determined by the kind of external threat. With extreme fear one could feel terror, but with fear and disgust, the experience turns into horror. Edwards finalizes her arguments: “... horror is characterized by the fear of some uncertain threat to existential nature and by disgust over its potential aftermath, and that perhaps the source of threat is supernatural in its composition.” (Cited in Tamborini and Weaver: 1996, p.2) Which brings us to Tzvetan Todorov’s definition of *fantastic*, as Todorov describes the fantastic as the hesitation of a person, who only knows and lives by the laws of nature, confronts an apparently supernatural event. He explains in particular;

In a world, which is indeed our world, the one we know, a world without devils, sylphides, or vampires, there occurs an event, which cannot be explained by the laws of this same familiar world. The person who experiences the event must opt for one of two possible solutions: either he is the victim of an illusion of the senses, of a product of the imagination - and the laws of the world then remain what they are; or else the event has indeed taken place, it is an integral part of reality - but then this is controlled by the laws unknown to us. Either the devil is an illusion, an imaginary being; or else he really exists, precisely like other living beings – with this reservation, that we encounter him infrequently (cited in Gelder 2000, pp.14-15).

When we think about the horror genre, the most comprehensive definition can be found in S.T. Joshi's work. He classifies horror in three categories; supernatural horror, quasi-science fiction and nonsupernatural horror (cited in Weaver and Tamborini 1996, p.3). Supernatural, gothic or horror of the demonic appears when the "natural law" which governs the real world is violated and some supernatural forces cause vital threat. Here we can also refer to Todorov's definition of *fantastic* aforementioned. Quasi-science fiction, science fiction or the horror of Armageddon is a category where again the forces that shape the real world is well understood, however even it is more rational, what have occurred is still impossible. The difference of this category from the prior is that the impossible here is not in fact the violation of the reality; it is impossible because of our inability to yet understand the reality. It is implied that the phenomena will be explainable in the near future, even though it seems supernatural at present (Weaver and Tamborini 1996, p.3). Nonsupernatural, psychological or horror of the personality category on the other hand differs very much from the prior two categories. Joshi divides this category into two autonomous divisions; "*psedonatural*, in which events that appeared to violate natural law are later shown to be the account of an abnormal state of mind; and *conte cruel*, a tale of inhuman brutality." (cited in Weaver and Tamborini 1996, p.3)

Many theorists asked the question; "Why Horror? Why would anyone want to be horrified?" Noel Carroll, Andrew Tudor and Robin Wood have different perspectives regarding this question. Noel Carroll in his book *The Philosophy of Horror or Paradoxes of the Heart* made a comprehensive study about the attractions of horror. He studied many different dimensions of horror theories as he suggested that there was no single theory that would answer the question regarding all consumers. He found out that the paradox of people being attracted to what is repulsive could be explained by many theories; such as Howard Phillips Lovecraft's fear of the unknown theory, which is the basis of his book *Supernatural Horror in Literature* (1945) Lovecraft suggests that the fear of the unknown is the oldest and strongest fear of mankind and it provoked a sense of almost religious sense of awe together with an apprehension of the unknown charged with wonder (Lovecraft 1945, pp.13-15). In his book he enriches his argument;

Because we remember pain and the menace of death more vividly than pleasure, and because our feelings toward the beneficent aspects of the unknown have from the first

been captured and formalized by conventional religious rituals, it has fallen to the lot of the darker and maleficent side of cosmic mystery to figure chiefly in our popular supernatural folklore... When to this sense of fear and evil the inevitable fascination of wonder and curiosity is superadded, there is born a composite body of keen emotion and imaginative provocation whose vitality must of necessity endure as long as the human race itself (ibid. p.14).

Following Lovecraft, Carroll refers to the religious aspect of fear; having God in mind, a paralyzing sense of being overpowered, of being dependent, of being nothing, of being worthless; resulting in a sense of awe (Carroll 1990, p.165). Besides this religious aspect, he also points out that horror genre fulfills in some way the emotional blandness of modern life that lacks the “instinctual fear”. In his words: “...the instinctual fear may be a kind of shorthand for the complicated notion that in the positivist, materialist, bourgeois culture in which we find ourselves, certain thrills and fears that were commonplace to our cave-dwelling ancestors are rare; and these thrills can be retrieved somewhat by consuming horror fictions.” Another explanation of horror consumption that he suggests is that the horrific beings attract because of their power; the audience identify with monsters because of the power they possess (ibid. p.167).

Moreover, Carroll turns to psychoanalytical approaches starting with Ernest Jones; the horror fiction and its figures attract because they manifest wishes (sexual wishes generally), however as these are forbidden or repressed, they come as horrific, repulsive images, functioning as camouflage so that the owners of the wishes can enjoy themselves without blame. The revulsion and disgust on the other hand are the price the dreamer pays for having his/her wish fulfilled. Accordingly: “There is no really deep paradox of horror, for the repulsiveness of its monsters is what makes them attractive for the scheming, circuitous psyche. What appears to be displeasure, and, figuratively speaking pain, in horror fiction is really the road to pleasure, given the structure of repression” (cited in Carroll 1990, p.170). When speaking about psychoanalytical approach Freud’s theory of “Uncanny” should also be included. Uncanny is something that is known, familiar, however has been hidden or repressed. Freud explains: “...the uncanny is nothing else than a hidden, familiar thing that has undergone repression and then emerged from it, and that everything that is uncanny fulfills this condition” (ibid., p.175).

Noel Carroll suggested that all these theories were helpful to understand a different aspect of the horror genre: nevertheless, not one can give the answer for all horror genres totally, regarding the paradoxes of horror. Hence he argued that only one concept can be mutual for all subgenres of horror; curiosity. Carroll states that horror narrative revolves around proving, disclosing, discovering, and confirming the existence of something that is impossible; that such monsters exist. Even after the monster is confirmed, the curiosity continues; audience crave further information about its nature, its identity, its origin, its purposes and its astounding powers (perhaps together with its weaknesses). Furthermore these are not enough; the monster should be confronted and if possible destroyed. In the light of this information he presented the deep structure of the horror fiction in a three-part movement: 1) Normality (a state where social norms are presented) 2) Its disruption (a monster appears which shakes the foundations of the culture's cognitive map and it does forbidden things) 3) The final confrontation and defeat of the abnormal, disruptive being (restoring the social order by punishing the monster because of its violation of the moral order) (ibid., pp.182-200).

2.2 HORROR CINEMA AS A GENRE

Andrew Tudor asked the same question: "Why Horror?" regarding horror cinema. Tudor, besides analyzing the narrative tension and expected monstrosity, also highlights the evaluation of the genre in order to keep its audience. Tudor suggested that horror movies produced and reproduced culture and furthermore they consisted of cultural patterns through which people constructed their understanding of what is fearful. At this end he proposed two concepts for analyzing the context of horror; Security and Paranoia. In a secure horror, the boundary between disorder and order is very clear, and the powers of disorder are always defeated by expertise and coercion. The defeaters are the authorities of science, state or society who protect the individual and social order. The threat is always exterior and there is a center-periphery social structure where those on the periphery need the protection and the expertise of center. It is a secure horror as the threat can clearly be defined together with where it comes from and how it can be defeated. The ones that are facing the threat are appropriately equipped to defeat all

kinds of threats; accordingly genuine doubt is almost entirely absent (Tudor 1989, pp.211-215).

Doubt is the key word between these two categories. In paranoid horror doubt is almost everywhere. The boundaries between known and the unknown are very blur, which would be; conscious and unconscious self, normal and abnormal sexuality, sanity and insanity, collective order and disorder and health and disease. The threat here comes from the inside, such as the psycho killer movies; the unconscious bring up psychopathy to the normal self. Another example would be diseases spreading very fast with the secure environments, causing a social collapse. Human action here is again ineffectual thus the disorder and the paranoia escalates. Paranoid horror usually lacks narrative closure in order to further carry out the cycle of escalation where as the secure horror as aforementioned always ends with the reassurance of the social order. Another significant difference is that, secure horror is more involved with the expert whereas the paranoid horror is evolved mostly around the victim (Tudor 1989, pp.215-217).

Andrew Tudor highlights that when the evolution of the horror cinema is analyzed it can certainly be distinguished that during thirties, forties and fifties the conventions of secure horror dominated the genre, however perhaps with the climate change in the world politics and social dynamics, in seventies and eighties paranoid horror started to become significant (ibid. p.218). Especially during thirties and forties, the actions of “other” people, people other than the ordinary folk were the central fear of the horror movies. These other people were suspicious, they had abnormal motives which would give harm to normal people; furthermore perhaps normality, which brings us to the question; “What is the instrument to maintain normality? The answer would be control, in Tudor’s words “Controlling the potential deviants”. He explains the legitimate forms of control; coercion is the first and fundamental impulse, yet more secondary but still effective two other strategies would be “reform” and “repression”. Repressing all the desires, including the desires for power and sex, which would otherwise tear down the norms of appropriate behavior (ibid. p.218).

Andrew Tudor furthermore made an analysis of the elements of this social order, which is highly struggled to protect or restore, according to the secure horror. There are two levels of this social order which are interrelated; the more general one is the class-based level, Tudor further explained; “A rigidly stratified social structure defines the terms in which acceptable social relations may be conducted, and those at the center are expected to accept the rights and fulfill the duties of their position. Those with inherited status, the bourgeoisie, those representing established state authorities and ordinary people are bound together in a network of mutual obligation” (ibid. p.219). Within this structure exists the second one: “the familial order” which is founded by heterosexual romance. This structure can be demolished either by a power outside this institution or by the failed attempt of women because of repressing their potentially destructive sexual impulses (ibid. p.219). He moreover includes the scientific knowledge as a destructive force as it provides a new way of thinking. Another scholar that highlighted the importance of the concept ‘order’ for horror genre is Noël Carroll, who named order as the ideological address of the genre; “Conceptual and moral order—and the cultural schemes thereof—are treated as equivalent to repressive social orders” (Carroll 1990, p.203).

The face of horror movies had changed in the fifties with the political and cultural changes in the society. The nuclear-conscious cold war culture of the period causing a two polar world built up a xenophobic universe. At this universe state is the only ally/savior and the military, government elites together with science are the main tools of the state, therefore they are to be relied upon this time. The shape of fear shapes the monster as well. Before fifties all monsters were anthropomorphic and mostly the creations of human intelligence. However by the change in the political conjuncture the monsters mostly became aliens whom human beings have almost nothing in common (ibid. p.220). As Tudor puts it:

What actually poses a threat changes over the decades, as does the specific character of those responsible for our defense. But the basic reference points remain the same: an essentially hierarchical social order; unquestioning allegiance to the central significance of the traditional family unit; a role division which marginalizes women; a restrictive view of ‘proper’ sexuality, especially as that applies to women; a conception of social deviance as primarily a redeemable individual failing; a broad anti-intellectual stance; and a general commitment to the legitimacy of established state authorities (ibid. p220).

With the shift in the popular culture in the sixties, the horror genre changed dramatically as well. ‘Other’ people are already not to be trusted, but now ‘normal’ people also should be feared, even people from ‘us’ are a genuine threat. The paranoid horror took its basis from the disturbed psyche. Once the soul is disturbed the individual can not be trusted, and when the individual can not be trusted neither can the groups, the institutions nor the society. Andrew Tudor explains this fear towards the individual;

Other people cannot be trusted, whatever their social position and apparent respectability. They are frightening because of what lies concealed within, and, since we do not understand the roots of the disordered psyche, any of us may be subject to its terrible influence. This view of the world which is not simply paranoid about other people. It fears the unreliability of the self, and doubts the security of our identities as functioning and responsible human beings (ibid. p.221).

Society and its institutions regarding paranoid horror are there to protect the center-periphery distance and dependence. Thus, once the deviation in the individual causes the collapse of the social institutions, the ones in the periphery gains a certain autonomy in paranoid horror, such as women and their threatening sexuality. Furthermore when we speak about the social institutions we should most importantly and first of all take a look at the family, because also as Tudor explains it is the main source of psychopathy, violence and repression therefore the only institutional defense towards the upcoming catastrophe (ibid. p.222).

After the sixties, the legitimacy crisis escalated dramatically, after all it was the ‘late capitalist’ and ‘post-modern’ era. Advanced capitalism systematically destroyed the civil legitimation and the functioning of the privatized family. The same structure strengthened as well in the paranoid horror. The incomplete social changes were the source of all fears now; in Andrew Tudor’s words; “It is not the change itself that is now fearful, as it was in the world of secure horror, but the personal and social confusions that follow its wake. What is a crisis of legitimation at a social level is a crisis of identity at an individual level” (ibid. p.223). On the one hand being free from the hypocritical norms and restrictions of the past presents a positive perspective, on the other hand loosing all charts and schemas of the society creates lost individuals; hence comes the everlasting paradox of the paranoid horror.

2.3 HORROR CINEMA AND THE RETURN OF THE REPRESSED

“Monsters are not wholly other, but derive their repulsive aspect from being, so to speak, contortions performed upon the known” (Carroll 1990, p. 166).

Anything that claims to draw the picture of “normal” and “Good/Bad” can easily be suggested as political. In order to label something as good or bad, one needs to be on a side, one needs to have his/her values defined and horror is perhaps the most obvious genre that narrates the good and the evil on the white screen. Hence considering all the genres of cinema, horror is probably the most political one. Noel Carroll first gives the two-way definition of “normal”; “On the one hand, “normal” may be seen to refer to the norms of our classificatory and moral schemes. On the other hand, “normal” may refer to the ethos and behavior of those who unquestioningly conform to some vision of (culturally, morally, politically) complacent middle-class life—the organization man, the moral majority, the silent majority etc.”. He further argues that horror is always in the service of the status quo; it is invariably an agent of the established order, therefore politically repressive. Moreover this repression according to Carroll is thematic; it can be sexist, racist, anti-communist or xenophobic, he further explains: “For example it might be argued that the horror genre is essentially xenophobic: monsters, given their inherently hostile attitude toward humanity, represent a predatory Other, and mobilize, in a way interactively reinforces, negative imagery of those political/social entities which threaten the established social order at the level of nation, class, race or gender “ (Carroll 1990, p.196,203).

In addition, about the re-appreciation of the established order, famous horror fiction writer Stephen King referred to horror fiction as a “Republican in a three-piece suit”. King explains that the story is almost always the same in terms of its development; there is an incursion into taboo lands, where you should not go, you see the monster and then you come back and say I am a lot better than I thought. Hence it has an effect of reconfirming values, self-image and good feelings about one’s self. He underlines the need for monsters in the society to reconfirm social values and continues: “Monstrosity fascinates us because it appeals to the conservative Republican in a three-piece suit who resides within all of us. We love and need the concept of monstrosity because it is a

reaffirmation of the order we crave all human beings ... and let me further suggest that it is not the physical or mental aberration in itself which horrifies us, but rather the lack of order which these situations seem to imply” (cited in Carroll 1990, p.199).

The repression and the reestablishment of the social order in horror films are taken one step further by Robin Wood, as he argued that monsters themselves presented valuable information about the society as they represented what is repressed in the society. In order to analyze Wood’s theory of “The return of the repressed” we shall first identify what kind of repression he refers to here. In his article “*The American Nightmare: Horror in the 70’s*” Wood refers to the Freudian concept of repression (which had been revisited later by Wilhelm Reich and Herbert Marcuse) as the basis of the civilization and social existence. He explains that the repression exists in two forms; the first one is basic repression, the repression of basic instincts and urges that lead to self-control, consideration of others and postponement of gratification which is a prerequisite in all human cultures, and the second one is the surplus repression, which is mostly specific to a particular culture and is a process of conditioning people from earliest infancy to take on predetermined roles within that culture. As Wood puts it:

[...] basic repression makes us distinctively human, capable of directing our own lives and co-existing with others; surplus repression makes us into monogamous, heterosexual, bourgeois, patriarchal, capitalists (“bourgeois” even if we are born into the proletariat, for we are talking here of ideological norms rather than marital status.) – that is, if it works. If it doesn’t, the result is either a neurotic or a revolutionary (or both), and if revolutionaries account for a very small proportion of the population, neurotics account for a very large one (Wood 2003 p.71).

This neuroticism of the individuals according to Marcuse forms a “Sick Society”, introducing new strains and stresses in the individuals due to the surplus-repression, over and above or especially underneath the social conflicts. Marcuse further explains: “The larger the discrepancy between the potential and actual human conditions, the greater the social need for what I term “surplus-repression” that is, repression necessitated not by the growth and preservation of civilization but by the vested interest in maintaining an established society.” The key to this maintenance (and thus control) is that it is not carried out with any kind of special enforcement policies; but with the normal working of the social process which already assures adjustment and submission (such as fear of loss of job or status, ostracism etc.). When we speak about the normal

working of the social process, in order to establish control through the submission caused by these fears, Marcuse claims that we are also talking about the unconscious dimensions together with the visible ones. He puts forward in his article “Aggressiveness in Advanced Industrial Society”: “[...] in the contemporary affluent society, the discrepancy between the established modes of existence and the real possibilities of human freedom is so great that, in order to prevent an explosion, society has to insure a more effective mental coordination of individuals: in its unconscious as well as conscious dimensions, the psyche is opened up and subjected to systematic manipulation and control” (Marcuse 1967 <http://www.wbenjamin.org/marcuse.html>).

Another explanation to the repression within society can be of Luce Irigaray’s. She suggests that individuals act with two behavioral models in order to be a part of the society; one is the Pavlovian model and the second is the Darwinian model. The Pavlovian model is the behavior explained above, that is in order to be adapted to a society’s system, we are trained in repetition and educated to do like, to be like, without any decisive innovations or discoveries of our own. It is the outcome of the relationship with the authority within the society, which established the system and has the power to repress, leading its individuals to neuroticism. The Darwinian model on the other hand is the behavior of struggling against the external environment and also with other living beings. The stronger than these two are able to stay alive, therefore comes competition and having a rival, which is other than the self. Irigaray further explains; “We are struggling against all forms of others to be able to live, and we are still subject to conditioned social rules that we confuse with freedom; hence a single sex or gender and not two, the (patriarchal) culture we are familiar with and no other” (Irigaray 1993, p. 37).

Turkish society can also be suggested to be very much under the influence of Darwinism and Pavlovism. However, it should be noted that these two concepts are very much generalized and no society can only be identified with the concepts that are this simplified therefore overwhelming like these two concepts. There are many cultural, social and traditional dynamics to each and every society. Hence without underestimating the impact of these differentiating cultural, social and traditional

dynamics it can still be claimed that our society has this big gap between the established modes of existence and the real possibilities of human freedom. This happens to be a “Big” gap as the surplus-repression is strengthened with the traditional and religious dynamics. With a history of westernization efforts that are handled by higher officials and the capitalist economy built up a new kind of repression on the society. These new repressions together with its old traditional and religious repressions, the individuals started to experience a repression not only the combination of these but also the discrepancy between them. When you think about a westernized, capitalist, religious and patriarchal society one can easily point out independent women as the scapegoat and a potential threat to the existing order in the contemporary Turkish society. The independent women not only threaten the system, but also are rivals to men.

As being a part of a patriarchal society, Wood claimed that the society offered extreme surplus repressiveness in the interest of the patriarchal family. When we look at what is repressed in the society (by society I also here mean Turkish society, of which one of the foundation blocks is patriarchy) Wood offered four areas: first the sexual energy itself, second bisexuality, third female sexuality and fourth the sexuality of children. The sexual energy as being the source of creative energy in general is the first step of creating a society physically; accordingly shaping that creative energy due to the will of the monogamous heterosexual union will enable the continuity of the system by reproducing future ideal inhabitants (Wood 2003, p.72). Furthermore, the first step of controlling a society is to control its creative energy sexually and intellectually so that each member will not be able to certify and fulfill its individual self, therefore stay as a part of a homogenous community.

Secondly, bisexuality is very much repressed in the sake of our social structure, which as psychoanalysis shows to be the natural heritage of every human individual. It can be perceived as the most direct threat to the family, as besides its potential threat to monogamous romantic myth of “the one right person” it also in the case of homosexuality (perhaps due to its practical purposes most importantly) can be a threat to the reproduction. Therefore it has a dual threat to the family: one to its monogamous structure and second to its reproduction purposes. Hence the systematic repression here

starts from the very beginning, during infancy, taking its roots from the biological difference, manliness and womanliness is inserted (such as “blue for a boy” and “pink for a girl”) in the interest of forming new inhabitants in the specific predetermined social roles. This brings us to the third kind of repression: the repression of the sexuality of children with its different forms from infancy through ‘latency’ and puberty, and into adolescence. As Wood refers to it: “The denial of the infant’s nature as sexual being, to the veto on the expression of sexuality before marriage” (Wood 2003, p.73).

The final and very severe repression is of female sexuality/creativity. In order to prepare her for a subordinate and dependant role in our patriarchal culture the female sexuality is repressed. The underlying reasons and further effects are more comprehensively analyzed in the following chapters.

2.4 THE REPRESSION AND THE CONCEPT OF OTHER

According to Wood, repression is very closely related to the concept of “The Other”. The Other is the key definition for the self, as it defines what is outside of the self, what self is not and sometimes the negative of the self. It draws the boundaries, therefore gives the shape.

The Other is mainly everything that represents what bourgeois ideology cannot recognize or accept but must find a way to cope with: either by rejecting and if possible destroying it, or by making it safe and assimilating it (Wood 2003, p.73). Simply, according to psychoanalysis, it is not only what is external to the culture or to the self but also what is repressed and excluded in order to be hated and rejected. Even though it is a healthier alternative to accept and recognize the Other’s autonomy and right to exist, the repression makes it impossible, so as to comply with the existing system and culture. In order to broaden our analysis of the repression and how it is dealt with within the society, Wood’s referred versions of the Other should be visited; First, other people; any society under the influence of capitalism, regarding to relations of its property principle, it can be suggested that all human relations will be characterized by power, dominance, possessiveness and manipulation. In an environment where one can have

and the other cannot, one side becomes inevitably the Other. Second, the proletariat; which still has an autonomous existence and keeps its stance almost the same to the haves. Third, other cultures; there is no problem if they are remote, exoticized and away from their true character. However if they are inconveniently close they are fit only for extermination, appropriation, domestication or servile. Fourth, ethnic groups within the culture; again they become acceptable in two ways: either they keep their place in the culture and do not trouble the bourgeoisies with their Otherness or they become the replicas of the good bourgeoisies so that their Otherness is reduced. Fifth, alternative ideologies or political systems; Marxism is a strong example when we say an alternative to the existing system. Any alternative, which threatens to change the existing status quo, is an Other to the dominant and controlling culture. Sixth, deviations from ideological sexual norms (notably bisexuality and homosexuality). One of the clearest examples of the repression mechanism in the culture can be seen as homophobia (the irrational hatred and fear of homosexuals). As Wood explains; it is the product of the unsuccessful repression of the bisexual tendencies: what is hated in others is what is rejected (but nonetheless continues to exist) within the self. Seventh, children; they are probably the most oppressed section of the population, as it is not possible to liberate the children until we liberate ourselves. The otherness of the children begins when they reflect what is repressed within ourselves, they are basically us before repression therefore the Other. Accordingly, what previous generation repressed in us, we, in return repress our children, in order to create a replica of ourselves and carry on the tradition. Eighth, women; this final Other is again inevitable in a male-dominated patriarchal culture where power, money, law and social institutions are all controlled by past, present and future patriarchs. Robin Wood again explains; “The dominant images of women in our culture are entirely male created and male controlled. Women’s autonomy and independence are denied; on to women men project their own innate, repressed femininity in order to disown it as inferior (to be called “unmanly” - i.e. like a woman – is the supreme insult) (Wood 2003, p. 74).

2.4.1 Woman as “the Other” According to Simone de Beauvoir

“Woman sums up nature as mother, Wife and Idea; these forms now mingle and now conflict, and each of them wears a double visage.”

In order to draw a comprehensive frame to the representation of woman as the Other, Simone de Beauvoir’s book *“The Second Sex”* should be analyzed. In her book Beauvoir analyzed all segments of society throughout history, together with the artistic and intellectual works trying to find out the power arrangements and psycho-social mechanisms underlying and supporting patriarchal society. Especially in psychoanalysis, she suggested that so far there was a sexual monism offered by Freud and she rejected the idea that there was a single, essentially masculine, libido that defined all sexuality (Stam 2000, p. 170).

Beauvoir points out that males and females are two types of individuals, which are differentiated within a species for the function of reproduction; they can be defined only correlatively. However, she further adds that even the division of a species into two sexes is not always clear-cut (Beauvoir 1993, p.3). The Other is the border that defines one. Accordingly, in regards to man, woman is that borderline, and in order to a borderline to be formed first of all, clear cut definitions of values are necessary. Man visualizes the world through this duality, accordingly man also cannot think of himself without thinking the Other. So he determines the elements of being other than man according to his will, so that he can be defined as he wishes. Beauvoir claims that woman is that privileged judge to establish the values needed by man, however she is authorized to do that by man as being dominated by him, she would not determine anything foreign to him. As Beauvoir puts it: “Being the Other, she remains exterior to man’s world and can view it objectively; and being close to man and dominated by him, she does not establish values foreign to his nature” (Beauvoir 1993, p. 193).

On the other hand, the concept of the Other embraces the whole. Just as one needs the Other, in order to be separated and to define itself, it also needs the Other the exact same way, to be whole. When we think about our world that is defined by duality, woman is all the concepts that man do not find appropriate for himself. However as the good cannot exist without evil, or the strong without weak; this complementary aspect

of the Other makes it ambivalent. Such as woman, she is variable and indispensable but man needs her in order to have a meaning and even though woman is not the only Other to man, she is the strongest one, therefore always referred to as the Other in a society dominated by man. Simone de Beauvoir explains this ambiguity;

[...]her ambiguity is just that of the concept of Other: it is that of the human situation in so far as it is defined in its relation with the Other. As I have already said, the Other is Evil; but being necessary to the Good, it turns into the Good; through it I attain to the Whole, but it also separates me there from; it is the gateway to the infinite and the measure of my finite nature. And here lies the reason why woman incarnates no stable concept; through her is made unceasingly the passage from hope to frustration, from hate to love, from good to evil, from evil to good. Under whatever aspect we may consider her, it is this ambivalence that strikes us first (Beauvoir 1993, p.152).

Beauvoir suggested that throughout history men have always kept all concrete powers in their hands; since the earliest days of the patriarchal social order, they have always found the best way to keep woman in a state of dependence, established their codes of law against her and accordingly established her as the Other. As she further explains:

Once the subject seeks to assert himself, the Other, who limits and denies him, is none the less a necessity to him: he attains himself only through that reality which he is not, which is something other than himself. That is why man's life is never abundance and quietude; it is dearth and activity, it is struggle. Before him, man encounters Nature; he has some hold upon her, he endeavors to mold her to his desire. But she cannot fill his needs. Either she appears simply as a purely impersonal opposition, she is an obstacle and remains a stranger; or she submits passively to man's will and permits assimilation, so that he takes possession of her only through consuming her – that is, through destroying her. ... There can be no presence of an other unless the other is also present in and for himself: which is to say true alterity -otherness- is that of a consciousness separate from mine and substantially identical with mine (Beauvoir 1993, p. 147).

Besides the issue of control and there is another dimension of desire that women (according to men) to have a double and deceptive visage; the attainability. She is “the temptation of unconquered Nature” according to Beauvoir, she carries within the good and the evil, together with their moral values. Furthermore she is the reason of man's reflections to these concepts and to his existence. She is there to serve him and be company to him, but her duties are not over; she is also expected to be the audience and the critic of men in order to confirm his being. Beauvoir further explains; “He projects upon her what he desires and what he fears, what he loves and hates. And if so difficult to say anything specific about her, that is because man seeks the whole of himself in her and because she is All. She is All, that is, on the plane of the inessential; she is all the Other” (Beauvoir 1993, p. 208).

2.4.1.1 The Wife or the Mother

In our society when a baby is born the traditional approach is to embrace a boy rather than a girl. The underlying reason can be considered as the boy (man) is entitled to continue the generation and as man has the power in a patriarchal society, a boy who will become a man is believed to bring more power to the family. The family is continued only if there are men in the family, forasmuch as a boy is to stay in the family whereas a daughter will be given to another family when she gets married. Regarding the marriage, the girls are literally “given” to the grooms’ family. This action is carried out in a prior ceremony; asking the family of the prospective bride to give their daughter beforehand the marriage ceremony, where the family of the groom candidate asks for the permission of the prospective brides’ family for the marriage and the father of the bride decides to give away her daughter or not. Then the ‘given’ daughter becomes a wife. Even though the sudden transition is strong, she is still defined according to another man. Being dependent is something that she is used to; thus she continues to be passive. The social structure and organizations support this transition maintaining its passive character.

To be chosen as wife is another obligation of women. Simone de Beauvoir states that society traditionally offers marriage as destiny to women (Beauvoir 1993, p.447). She demonstrates that most women are either married, or have been, or plan to be, or suffer from not being. The celibacy of a woman always needs an explanation, and the explanation is always made with reference to marriage; she is frustrated, rebellious or indifferent etc. However the frustration builds up in marriage when the patriarchy turns it into a tool to oppress women. Honor of the family lies in the responsibility of woman and she is the only side that can damage that. Any behavior of men regarding sexuality out of the monogamist nature of marriage is even considered as a rightful need and a necessity of manhood. As Beauvoir puts it: “Woman awakens in man an unknown being whom he recognizes with pride as himself; in the blameless orgies of marriage he discovers the splendors of his own animal nature: he is the Male” (ibid. p.186).

The marriage rites eliminate the magic weapons of woman and subordinate her economically and socially to her husband. The 'good wife' according to Beauvoir, is man's most precious treasure (ibid. p.185). Now the woman belongs to him so deeply that she partakes of the same essence as he; she has his name and his gods. He calls her his 'better half' and he is responsible of her. The wife is a source of pride just like his house, his lands, his flocks and his wealth. According to Beauvoir: "Through her he displays his power before the world: she is his measure and his earthly portion" (ibid.). At this end she gives the example of Oriental view of desirable wife; a woman should be fat so that people can see how well nourished she is and she will honor her lord and master by hard work. Furthermore, more wives with more flourishing appearance is a positive attribute for the man. Nevertheless, in bourgeois society as well, one of the main roles assigned to woman is *to make a good showing*: her beauty, charm, intelligence and elegance. The visible signs of her husband's wealth, just like his car or his house (ibid.).

Besides the enriching the representation of men within the society, woman has another role under the roof. She brings the functions of female animal into the world of humanity Simone de Beauvoir states; she maintains life, she brings the warmth and the intimacy of the womb into the home (ibid. p.186). She gives birth to the next generation and she feeds the children already born. She further shields the house from the hazards of the world, she guarantees the recurrence of meals, of sleep, caring for her husband when he is sick, mending, washing, etc. (ibid.).

Beauvoir further maintains that as soon as man possesses the woman, her charms disappear, he has succeeded in enslaving her and it is not appealing to him anymore. She is no longer a thrilling prey with the treasures of nature as she is now integrated in the family and society. Her magic has disappeared; she is now reduced only to a servant. The marriage rites according to Beauvoir, originally was organized to protect man against woman. She becomes his property, however while enslaving woman man is also enslaved. By trying to socialize eroticism by marriage one can only succeed in killing it (ibid. p.197). Man is the slave of his own characteristic; the hunter. He is addicted to the adrenalin but when he captures his prey the adrenalin wears down.

Being wife is not the only duty of a woman there is a more “holly” duty; the motherhood. Simone de Beauvoir identifies that a woman will be cherished and respected first of all as Mother as she is subjected to that role (ibid. p.181). However, man only wants to know the attractive aspects of maternity. This holly and reassuring aspect of motherhood at first causes man to love his wife even more. Beauvoir explains the reason: “Limited in time and space, having but one body and one finite life, man is but a lone individual in the midst of a Nature and a History that are both foreign to him. Woman is similarly limited, and like a man she is endowed with mind and spirit, but she belongs to Nature, the infinite current of Life flows through her; she appears, therefore, as the mediatrix between the individual and the cosmos. When mother has become a figure of reassurance and holiness, man naturally turns to her in love” (ibid.).

However, besides the spiritual aspect of motherhood there is also a material, a more visible aspect. Weighted down by maternities she loses her erotic attraction, it takes time to regain her charms. Once attractive as a wife is now a figure of mother: “She is said to be withered, faded, as might be said of a plant. [...] The old woman, the homely woman, is not merely objects without allure – they arouse hatred mingled with fear. In them reappears the disquieting figure of the mother, when once the charms of the Wife have vanished.” (ibid.).

2.4.2 Female Sexuality as “the Other”

In a society where man is defined by his established definitions of woman, woman is defined according to her relation with him. All her roles in the society (mother, wife, daughter etc.) are determined according to the kind of relationship that she has with men. Furthermore when speaking of sexuality Simone de Beauvoir says that we sometimes say ‘the sex’ to designate woman; she refers to the flesh; its delights and dangers (Beauvoir; 1993, p.151). Woman as Beauvoir states, in all civilizations and still in our day inspires man with horror, and she argues that the source of this horror is the horror of his own ‘carnal contingency’, which he projects upon her. Till the day she is able to give birth she is no threat, erotic games between boys and girls in infancy are

allowed. However the day she is in puberty, woman becomes impure; and rigorous taboos surround the menstruating female (Beauvoir 1993, p. 157).

Regarding menstrual activity of women Julia Kristeva makes a definition of 'abject' (which will be covered in the following chapters) in drawing one's own and clean self. The abjection of those flows from within according to Kristeva, becomes the sole object of sexual desire with the arrival of puberty. She maintains as "a true "ab-ject" where man, frightened, crosses over the horrors of maternal bowels and, in an immersion that enables him to avoid coming face to face with an other, spares himself the risk of castration" (Kristeva 1982, p.54). This immersion gives him a full possessive power and the abjection then takes place of the other. Due to the threat of castration, he uses the joy he gets by activity to transform the abjection into the site of the Other. The eroticization of the abject or an abject that is already eroticized is an attempt to stop the bleeding of the castration (ibid. p.55).

Sexuality within genders in a patriarchal society is beyond its bodily nature; it is very much about power and control. In order men to maintain their power and status within the society they need to develop different means of control over women. Accordingly, as the fundamental two attributes of woman for man is her sexuality and her generative power, he first of all tends to repress and control this area. Men, to conquer and possess women, use sexuality as an instrument. Simone de Beauvoir explains that man uses sexuality as a tool in the means of appropriating the Other and 'brand' her as his. However, she believes this effort in branding her is frustrating for him as at the end of each sexual act, he has to renew his efforts to conquer her. She puts it as: "Woman survives man's embraces, and in that very fact she escapes him; as soon as he loosens his arms, his prey becomes again a stranger to him; there she lies, new, intact, ready to be possessed by a new lover in as ephemeral a manner. One of the male's dreams is to 'brand' the woman in such a way that she will remain forever his; but the most arrogant well knows that he will never leave with her anything more than memories..." (Beauvoir 1993, p.172.).

Furthermore, according to Beauvoir being a woman is not enough to serve as intermediary between man and the world; not only having a complementary sex organs to men is sufficient. She must also be beautiful. As woman is something to be possessed even though the ideal feminine beauty varies, certain demands regarding her body is sought; the passive qualities of an object. “Virile beauty lies in the fitness of the body for action, in strength, agility, flexibility; it is the manifestation of transcendence animating a flesh that must never sink back upon itself” (ibid. p.166).

When one thinks about it erotically, man in fact embraces the loved one and seeks to lose himself in the “infinite mystery of the flesh”, however even though this mystery is appealing to him, the obscurity of it makes him at ease, as he fears that this mysterious appealing force can make him lose control and become controlled. Therefore, he aims to define his urge, and the woman. His sexuality tends to dissociate Mother from Wife (Beauvoir 1993, p.160). Simone de Beauvoir suggests that woman is disclosed first as wife in the patriarchy, since the supreme creator is male. She adds that it is not only a subjective and fleeting pleasure that man seeks in the sexual act; he wishes to conquer, to take, to possess; to have woman is to conquer her; he penetrates into her as the plowshare into the furrow; he makes her his even as he makes his the land he works; he labors, he plants, he sows (Beauvoir 1993, p.60).

Simone de Beauvoir suggests that the ambivalence of man’s feelings toward woman reappears in his attitude toward his own sex organ; he is all at once proud of it, laughs at it and is ashamed of it. She further adds that his first erection fills him with pride and fright at the same time. It is an organ that gives him an irreplaceable pleasure; however, at the same time it is not under his absolute control like other muscles, almost free from the rule of the brain gives him a constant unease. Beauvoir explains man’s duality and uneasiness:

The grown man regards his organ as a symbol of transcendence and power; it pleases his vanity like a voluntary muscle and at the same time like a magical gift: it is a liberty rich in all the contingency of the fact given yet freely wished; it is under this contradictory aspect that he is enchanted with it, but he is suspicious of deception. That organ by which he thought to assert himself does not obey him; heavy with unsatisfied desires, unexpectedly becoming erect, sometimes relieving itself during sleep, it manifests a suspect and capricious vitality (Beauvoir 1993, p.171).

In social context he declares himself independent and then the ruler, the controller of the order, however there is a far more fundamental order that life finds its form before the society; the natural order. In natural order according to Beauvoir man is no longer an independent consciousness, a clear, free being but more like a limited, perishable object as he is now involved with the world. Man in natural order functions as the carrier of germs to the maternal womb therefore this function makes it a “part” of the system not the ruler of it. This system is initiated with the concept of desire, which automatically activated within the process. Therefore, as man cannot control the organ, he tends to control the object of the desire that arouse the organ: which is woman, in the case of heterosexual relationships. Hence Simone de Beauvoir argues that when a woman is given to man as his own property he wants her to represent purely the flesh: “Her body is not perceived as the radiation of a subjective personality, but as a thing sunk deeply in its own immanence; it is not for such a body to have reference to the rest of the world, it must end the desire it arouses” (ibid., p.166). She is given man for his satisfaction; through her, his desire is satisfied.

It can be claimed that through the ‘hunter’ instincts men are conditioned to possess. According to Beauvoir at that end even the wife at first is a dangerous prey. Her genitals have a double function; the man penetrates in where she gives birth. This duality according to ancient beliefs raises taboos as Beauvoir points out: “In Venus risen from the wave – fresh foam, blond harvest – Demeter survives; when man takes possession of woman through the pleasure he gets from her, he also awakens in her the dubious power of fecundity: the organ he penetrates in is the same as that which gives birth to a child. This is why man is protected by many taboos against the dangers of the female sex. The opposite is not true, woman has nothing to fear from the male; his sex is regarded as secular, profane” (ibid., p.169).

The marriage also changes the shape of the relationship within society as Beauvoir argues. In traditional patriarchal societies once a woman is married, her husband must not give her signs of affection in public, he must not touch her; in order not to give any information about their intimate relationship. Their sexual relationship is now a sacred act that should be carried out with prohibitions and precautions (ibid., p.170).

2.4.2.1 Virginity

Regarding the tools of this control over female sexuality we can first of all suggest virginity. Virginity has been a must for women in order to be a wife in patriarchal societies for centuries. In the case of Turkey, even though in the big cities this tradition is not carried out and valued like it was in the past, still mostly in the eastern and the rural parts of Turkey it is practiced. The idea behind the wish of the wife being delivered to him as a virgin lies in the fear of woman's sexual experience. In the patriarchal societies masculinity is also determined with a set of rules; one of which is the sexual superiority. Manhood is defined sexually as always ready to have sex, very experienced and always in control. A woman with a sexual experience is therefore horrifying as she can always challenge man's knowledge and control. This fear even can be spotted in the language as in Turkey a girl becomes a "woman" when she has sex for the first time, not her period like it is believed in many other cultures. This again can be considered an attempt to label and discriminate the experienced from inexperienced women.

When man has his wife as a virgin he is to be the first and the only one that the woman has sex with, accordingly he draws the lines and the form of sexuality for her. She defines sexuality with him, as him. She experiences, learns and lives a sexuality that he enjoys, knows and controls. Even if she is not content with what she experiences, she does not blame man, she blames herself and her sexuality. Eventually it becomes a duty for her, as one of the duties of a wife is to please her husband. Even if female sexuality is unsettling mystery to him, he finds comfort in being in the position of the experienced, teaching one. With the experience and the position of being a teacher he has a given authority and power, helps him deal with his fear. Simone de Beauvoir highlights male's hesitation between fear and desire within the myth of virginity as a struggle between the fear of being in the power of uncontrollable forces and the wish to win them over. She continues;

Now feared by the male, now desired or even demanded, the virgin would seem to represent the most consummate form of the feminine mystery; she is therefore its most disturbing and at the same time its most fascinating aspect. According to whether man feels himself overwhelmed by the encircling forces or proudly believes himself capable of taking control over them, he declines or demands to have his wife delivered to him virgin. In the most primitive societies where woman's power is great, it is fear that rules

him; it is proper for woman to be deflowered before the wedding night (Beauvoir 1993, p.160).

2.4.2.2 Independent Women and Sexuality

The independent woman is the most significant contemporary threat to men. The reason of this threat is very well put by Simone de Beauvoir; “Once she ceases to be a parasite, the system based on her dependence crumbles; between her and the universe there is no longer any need for a masculine mediator” (Beauvoir 1993, p.713). Women for decades were not let to work by their husbands or fathers. Moreover even when they were able to work they were economically oppressed, discriminated in the work place and still continued to work at home as well. Hence the minute she had equal opportunities with man, she managed to be independent and accordingly a serious dual threat for man. She is a threat at the work place and at home; she can take away his job and his authority at home. However, she is again an exciting prey. This excitement and the threat fetishizes the woman even more.

Simone de Beauvoir argues that the relationship of man and woman in a patriarchal society is more like a matter of self-defense; man wants to give and woman is taking for herself. However the moment she is free she becomes creative; she does not have to take whatever she is given, she now can create for herself. Thus the old mechanism crashes and the struggle begins. In Beauvoir’s words: “The womb, that warm, peaceful, and safe retreat, becomes a pulp of humors, a carnivorous plant, a dark, contractile gulf, where dwells a serpent that insatiably swallows up the strength of the male. The same dialectic makes the erotic object into a wielder of black magic, the servant into a traitress, Cinderella into an ogress, and changes all women into enemies: it is the payment man makes for having in bad faith set himself up as the sole essential” (ibid., p.202).

2.5 WOMEN AND FEMALE SEXUALITY AS ‘MONSTER’ IN HORROR FILMS – “THE MONSTROUS FEMININE”

“It is a question whether the horror inspired in man by woman comes from that inspired by sexuality in general, or vice versa. “
Simon de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*
(Beauvoir 1993, p.170)

Female sexuality in a patriarchal society in the absence of a sexual revolution can be one of the worst nightmares of men. It is because women who are in control of their sexuality are less likely to be under control and furthermore men’s competence is under question. Hence as aforementioned horror film is argued to visualize the return of the repressed in the society, female sexuality is one of the main themes. When Turkish society is considered, probably it is the most obvious one. Noel Carroll has pointed out that in many recent horror fictions, the victims of the monsters that are viciously slaughtered often are sexually active adolescent women. He continues; “One interpretation of this is that they are being taught a lesson: “Fool around and this is what you can expect/deserve” (Carroll 1990, p.196).

2.5.1 Women as object; The Archaic Mother

Barbara Creed on the other hand argued that women, besides being visualized as victims, they have been visualized as monsters as well. Creed explains and further investigates this argument of Julia Kristeva in her book while constructing her argument of ‘The Monstrous-Feminine’. She suggested that these images of the “monstrous-feminine” provided valuable information about that society’s patriarchal subconscious. Creed built her argument around Julia Kristeva’s book “Powers of Horror”; in which Kristeva using the elements of psychoanalysis and literature, explored the areas of the society that ‘abjection’ worked as a tool that separates human from the non-human and the fully constituted subject from partially constituted subject (Creed; 1993, p8). Kristeva explains her term ‘abjection’ as; “It is not lack of cleanliness of health that causes abjection but what disturbs identity, system, order. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite.” (Kristeva 1982, p.4). Creed took only the three dimensions

of Kristeva's abjection theory; its propositions regarding the 'border', the mother-child relationship and the feminine body.

Kristeva suggests that the abject is a threat to life, which should be 'radically excluded' from the living subject, moved away from the body and placed on the other side of an imaginary border that separated the self and what threatens the self. The abject both has to be excluded and be tolerated at the same time, as it while threatening to destroy life, defines life as well. Having said that, what exactly is abject? Kristeva proposed that it can be experienced in many different ways; for instance food loathing, corpse (whole and mutilated), bodily wastes such as shit, blood, urine, saliva, sweat, tears and pus. The body ejects these things to protect itself as Creed explains the writings of Kristeva: "The body ejects these substances, at the same time extracting itself from them and from the place where they fall, so that it might continue to live" (cited in Creed 1993, p.9). Kristeva also reveals the special relationship of woman with abject as she is specifically related to polluting objects that are either excremental or menstrual. In other words; the image of woman's body, because of its maternal functions is more likely to signify abject. Hence the material female body is constructed as the border in horror film (ibid., p.11).

Kristeva suggests that every individual experiences abjection in his/her earliest attempt of breaking away from the mother. She further presents the mother-child relationship as an ambiguous one; as while child struggles to break free, mother is unwilling to let go. As Kristeva argues;

The abject confronts us, on the other hand, and this time within our personal archeology, with our earliest attempts to release the hold of maternal entity even before ex-isting outside of her, thanks to the autonomy of language. [...]The difficulty a mother has in acknowledging (or being acknowledged by) the symbolic realm—in other words, the problem she has with the phallus that her father or her husband stands for—is not such as to help the future subject leave the natural mansion. ... In such close combat, the symbolic light that a third party, eventually the father, can contribute helps the future subject, the more so if it happens to be endowed with a robust supply of drive energy, in pursuing a reluctant struggle against what, having been the mother, will turn into an abject. Repelling, rejecting; repelling itself, rejecting itself.Ab-jecting" (Kristeva 1982, p. 13).

The mother has to hold on to the child as Kristeva claims, because of her problematic relationship with the symbolic. She needs the child to fight against phallus; her father

and her husband. Creed points out the visualization of this concept in horror text where child struggles to break away from the mother (the representative of the archaic mother) and the father is absent. The mother is the monster in this type of horror movies as she refuses to release the child and take its proper place in relation to the symbolic. The child, both because of the desire to keep on being part of this close relationship and terrifying feeling of separation easily give up struggling (Creed 1993, p.12).

Secondly, Julia Kristeva suggests that the concept of border is one of the main determinatives of the concept abject; hence it is central to the construction of monstrous in the horror film. Barbara Creed explains it as; “which crosses or threatens to cross the ‘border’ is abject”; thus even though the nature of border changes in every film the function of the monstrous is the same (cited in Creed 1993, p.11). It is a confrontation and struggle of the symbolic order and the thing that threatens its stability. The argument of abject and its relation to border can be suggested to have connections to Andrew Tudor’s argument of restoring social order in secure horror. Creed suggests that when the border of the symbolic order is threatened by an abject, it is visualized as monstrous in horror film and the horror film is about the struggle with the monster. Tudor on the other hand, as mentioned above, presented that anything that threatens this clean-cut social order is the monster in secure horror and these threats are either class-based or against the heterosexually formed family (Tudor 1989, p.219). Accordingly, classes other than bourgeois class and desires other than the ones within heterosexual marriage are threats to social order; the boundaries of the society, therefore they can be suggested as the abject to society.

Furthermore, just like Kristeva suggested that the image of the woman’s body due to her maternal functions, signify the abject, Tudor argues that the failed attempt of women repressing their destructive sexual impulses is also a threat to the social order according to secure horror (ibid.). Consequently, the image of woman both maternally and sexually is central to the construction of border in the horror film. In the light of these two theories, Barbara Creed’s argument of ‘horror film purifying the abject through a decent into the foundations of the symbolic construct’ finds meaning. Creed claims that via horror film there is a confrontation with the abject (bodily wastes, corpse,

monstrous-feminine) and ejection of the abject in the aim of redrawing the boundaries between the human and non-human (Creed 1993, p.14). Creed concludes: “As a form of modern defilement rite, the horror film attempts to separate out the symbolic order from all that threatens its stability, particularly the mother and all that her universe signifies. In this sense, signifying horror involves a representation of, and a reconciliation with, the maternal body” (ibid.).

Finally, Kristeva’s last argument about woman being abject is again connected to her motherhood. However first of all, the social and cultural position of the abject should be investigated. Kristeva describes abject as something, which appears when man is wandering by the territories of animal. Hence abjection is a tool for the primitive societies to mark out and remove a precise area of their culture in order to disconnect it with the threatening world of animals or animalism (Kristeva 1982, p.13). Sex and murder is mostly associated with the world of animal and animalism, whereas the word human is mostly associated with the concepts such as compassion or civilization. When it comes to drawing boundaries of abject and motherhood, as mentioned above, Kristeva argues that woman is related to polluting objects in two categories; excremental, threatens the identity from outside and menstrual, threatens the identity from within (cited in Creed 1993, p.12). Following these two dimensions; she further suggests that maternal authority is experienced first and above all, in the primal mapping of the body; during toilet training the mother by frustrations and prohibitions frames the body into a territory having areas. The child immediately learns from the mother the differentiation of proper-clean and improper-dirty parts of the body (Kristeva 1982, p.72). In her own words: “Maternal authority is the trustee of that mapping of the self’s clean and proper body; it is distinguished from paternal laws within which, with the phallic phase and acquisition of language, the destiny of man will shape” (ibid.). Moreover, regarding the excremental dimension Kristeva states that polluting objects also have a discriminating value, such as neither tears nor sperm has the polluting value although they are within the borders of the body, however menstrual blood is issued as a threat to the relationship between the sexes as it refers to sexual difference (ibid., p71). Barbara Creed draws attention to relation of horror texts representing monstrous-feminine and Kristeva’s notion of maternal authority and the mapping of the self’s clean and proper body. Creed

further suggests that the images of blood, vomit, shit etc. while constructing central notions of horrific culturally and socially, draws a line between two orders; the maternal authority and the law of the father (Creed 1993, p.13).

2.5.2 Woman as Castrated and Castrator

Woman being abject is a complex yet a very to the point argument, however, there is another argument of Barbara Creed that gives a clearer picture of the horrific image of women in men's eyes. According to Creed, in horror film regarding castration anxiety the monstrous-feminine is represented in two powerful ways; woman as the castrator and woman as castrated (Creed 1993, p.122). She suggests that woman as castrated is represented in many films where woman is victim, for instance in the slasher movies where she gets stabbed several times until she looks like a bleeding wound. However, in many other horror movies she is transformed into a revenge seeker, psychotic monster as she has been symbolically castrated, in other words 'rubbed' (ibid.). Creed turned to the work of Sigmund Freud and made a critical rereading of his propositions about castration anxiety as it was the dominant theoretical justification for analyses of woman as monster in the horror film. Creed focused mainly on Freud's work on 'Little Hans'; "Analysis of phobia in a five-year-old boy" and his different writing about dreams. In the first article Freud analyzes the sexual development of a five-year-old boy, especially him acquiring the 'castration complex' as it is one of the main elements in analyzing neurotics (Freud 1995-v10, p.8). According to Freud's main theory of 'Oedipus Complex', which was inspired by a Greek myth mainly is about the child developing interest in his/her sexual organs as an area of pleasure (Phallic phase) and develops the first sexual attraction for the parent of the opposite sex, and the hatred of the parent of the same sex. Having these feelings the child feels guilty due to the social organization. The child can never defeat the strong parent of the other sex, however in the case of male he persists to have the sexual attraction for his mother, taking the risk of what is valuable to him harmed by the father; his penis. Therefore, he has this repressed sexual attraction for the mother and the hatred of the father due to the 'castration anxiety'. The only solution the child comes up with to solve this Oedipus complex is the identification with the parent of the same sex (Freud 1995-v5, p.619).

In Freud's work of Hans, he argues that Hans's phobia was the fear of the mother's genitals, as he believed her to be castrated. The image of the vagina reminds him of the castration anxiety he repressed. He further explains this issue in his article "Fetishism": "What happened, therefore, was that the boy refused to take cognizance of the fact of his having perceived that a woman does not possess a penis. No that could not be true: for if a woman had been castrated, then his own possession of a penis was in danger; and against that there rose in rebellion the portion of his narcissism which Nature has, as a precaution, attached to that particular organ" (Freud 1995-v21, p.154). Barbara Creed takes this proposition one step further and claims that Hans's phobia was not the image of her mother as castrated but castrating (Creed 1993, p.89). At this end she recalls that the threat of castration first came from Hans's mother, which Freud claimed that she made a reference for the father's act. However Creed explains Eric Fromm's criticism about this claim; that the parent who utters the threat is the reason of the dread of castration (cited in Creed, *ibid.*).¹

Furthermore, another case appears when Hans sees that her mother is bleeding when giving birth to his baby sister. Hans's mother could threaten to castrate him therefore he knew that she had the powers to castrate. Hence he believed that just like his father, her mother had a 'widdler' (penis), too. Barbara Creed argues that the blood caused Hans to believe that her mother castrated her sister during birth with her penis phallic in shape and sharp as a blade (*ibid.*, p.96).

Laura Mulvey (1975, pp.34-35) on the other hand addressed the paradox of the phallogentrism, as it needed the image of the castrated women for meaning. Her lack and desire produced the symbolic presence of the phallus. She argues that the function of the woman in the patriarchal unconscious worked in two ways; first symbolizing the threat of castration and second by raising her child into the symbolic. When these two is achieved then her meaning ends. Mulvey states; "Woman's desire is subjugated to her

¹ Julia Kristeva's theory of mother being the one to determine the map of the child's body can also be considered as related. Kristeva explained that mother is the one to teach the child the clean-proper and improper-dirty parts of the body (Kristeva 1982, p.72). This teaching is mainly made by the feelings of shame and guilt as well as fear from a threat.

image as bearer of the bleeding wound; she can exist only in relation to castration and cannot transcend it.” Regarding the child Mulvey argues that “she turns her child into the signifier of her own desire to possess a penis” (ibid.). She fights to not to let go of her child in order to find a meaning, otherwise she will have to give a way to the world, the name of the father and the law. Mulvey strongly claims that the woman in patriarchal culture stands for the signifier for the male other and while he lives his fantasies and obsessions by her image, he ties to her place of being the silent image of the bearer of the meaning, not maker.

Furthermore, Barbara Creed examined the myth of Vagina Dentata and Sigmund Freud’s theory of it. Creed explains that in many myths that represent woman as castrator the female genital is symbolized as *vagina dentata*, in other words toothed vagina (ibid., p.105). It addresses the double-faced nature of woman; who promises pleasure to trap her victims. Furthermore, Creed reveals the two other explanations given for the horrifying yet not castrating feature of vagina dentata. One approach is the symbolic expression of the oral sadistic mother, which is the infant’s fear that just as he/she derives pleasure from feeding from mother’s breasts, the mother in return desires to feed on them. The other approach is the vagina dentate is the visualization of the dyadic mother; a maternal figure of the pre-Oedipal period who would symbolically absorb the infant causing a threat to his/her physical existence (ibid., p.109).

A very well known image of vagina dentata as Freud suggests is Medusa’s head in the myth of Perseus and Medusa. He argues that the head with the hair of snakes is the symbolic image of the castrated female genitals. Barbara Creed explains that the castration anxiety becomes real for the child when he sees the genitals of the mother. Because of the pubic hair it resembles the father’s genital area with one exception. In this context, Freud offers that Medusa’s head, with the hair of snakes represents this image (cited in Creed 1993, p.110). Medusa’s head with deadly snakes and her mouth as well gives reference to sexuality as Creed points out the sexual pleasure is also connected to the excitation of the mouth and lips. This connection of orality and sexuality is highlighted in Freud’s work as subjects understanding of desire and satisfaction, including sexual satisfaction are based on the early oral experiences as an

infant (cited in Creed 1993, p.113). The similarity of the two images; the mouth and the vagina; both having lips and an inwards nature enhances this connection. Even in the light of all this information Freud still argues that by the proper formation of femininity and masculinity the vagina is valued as a shelter for the penis. Creed criticizes this statement: “Given Freud’s landmark efforts in uncovering the secrets of the unconscious; the darker side of human desire; the incredible phantasies the human subject constructs around sexuality and the ‘other’; given this theories about repression, transference and displacement – given all of these factors, how can Freud possibly expect us to accept that the ‘normal’ construction of vagina is a ‘place of shelter’-‘home sweet home’?” (ibid., p.115).

3. FILM ANALYSES

3.1 *THE ABORTION (ARAF)*

The Abortion (2006) is the first feature of the director/producer Biray Dalkıran who is originally an advertisement and music video director. Dalkıran was born in 1976 and a Film and TV graduate. He is still a Radio and T.V. doctorate student. *The Abortion* is the first horror film in Turkey that had been distributed to the United States and the rest of the world by an American distributor company. The original name of the movie “Araf” in Turkish means purgatory; the place between heaven and hell according to the Islamic beliefs (tdkterim.gov.tr). It is also a section in the Koran. The English name “The Abortion” is directly referring to the theme of the movie, rather than a translation. The distorted colors of the film provides a surreal feeling and the frames are usually crooked referring to the balance which is lost. Some of the shots are low angle and sometimes the camera shakes or hides when looking at the protagonists; referring to the perspective of the ghost girl; in other words they are not alone.

Eda is a leading dancer in a dance company and Cenk is her boyfriend who follows her passionately, taking pictures of her; almost like watching her behind his camera while she practices with the rest of the company. She cheats on Cenk, with Cihan, who is a middle-aged married man with a son, very insensitive and cruel to Eda. Eda tells Cenk that he is her uncle. Cihan and Eda’s affair consists of only very passionate sex by which Eda gets pregnant. When she goes to the doctor, she finds out that she is sixteen weeks pregnant and it is too late to have an abortion. She falls into despair and decides to have an illegal abortion, which happens to be very bloody and painful that she almost died. The abortion took place on the night of Eda’s dance company’s performance at which Oya (her best friend) took the leading part due to Eda’s absence.

Three years later Eda and Cenk is married and Eda is pregnant. The ghost of a three-year-old girl starts to haunt Eda, night and day, calling her “mother”. One day when she is visiting her best friend Oya at the conservatory, the ghost haunts her again causing her to loose the baby. When she is at hospital trying to recover from the miscarriage,

Cenk learns from the doctor that she had a damaging abortion before and she will never be able to have child again. The missing pieces come together and Cenk finally realizes that the uncle was not really an uncle and she was cheating on Cenk, before they were married. After this miscarriage everything starts to fall apart for Eda, hence for Cenk, too. She starts to see a psychiatrist by who she seemed to have a little comfort. However the haunting continues and when one day she cuts herself Cenk takes her to a mental institution. She is diagnosed by schizophrenia and kept in a small, dark room. Cenk is in misery, tries to be with her all the time. One day he remembers that when Eda was scared he set the webcam recording. When he watches the recordings he sees the ghost and realizes that she was not sick, she was telling the truth. He rushes back to the hospital, hoping to save Eda. However when he gets there Eda is missing; the toy phone rings, Eda is calling to say she is with her daughter from now on.

The film opens with the explanatory image of Cenk's situation and emotions; sitting on the side of a roof, talking with his friend, with their feet hanging from the edge almost about to jump, he feels stuck in between giving us a hint that the main concern of the film will be Cenk and his life. With the over exposed colors of the film giving a surreal feeling, the protagonist Cenk explains himself being stuck somewhere in between. This opening and Cenk being the narrator of the story makes the audience identify with him. Hence we see the story from Cenk's point of view.

Then we see Cenk behind the camera, taking pictures of Eda all the time. Throughout the film we see different cameras, giving us the feeling of being watched all the time, like no secret is kept behind doors. The first camera we see is Cenk's followed by him putting up Eda's pictures on the wall; leading us to his almost scopophilic, unhealthy obsession about her. He is the protagonist, however he is not in control of his life, his fate so to say, more like a storyteller of the events that has happened to him. Camera, on the one hand highlights this identity of him as a motionless viewer but on the other hand it explains that he has the gaze therefore he is the active one. Laura Mulvey explains in her article "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" that in a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. She further continues; "In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously

looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness.” Especially at the beginning of their relationship with Eda camera almost all the time exists between them. This situation and Eda as a dancer always being on stage makes her a fetish object for Cenk. Mulvey puts out that traditionally woman in the film had functioned on two levels; as erotic object for the characters within the screen story and as erotic object for the spectator within the auditorium, hence for instance the device of the show-girls allowed the two looks to be unified. This relationship of owning the gaze and fetishistic approach to women is further clarified in particular in Mulvey’s work:

But in psychoanalytic terms, the female figure poses a deeper problem. She also connotes something that the look continually circles around but disavows: her lack of a penis, implying a threat of castration and hence unpleasure. Ultimately, the meaning of woman is sexual difference, the absence of the penis as visually ascertainable, the material evidence on which is based the castration complex essential for the organization of entrance to the symbolic order and the law of the father. Thus the woman as icon, displayed for the gaze and enjoyment of men, the active controllers of the look, always threatens to evoke the anxiety it originally signified. The male unconscious has two avenues of escape from this castration anxiety; preoccupation with the re-enactment of the original trauma (investigating woman, demystifying her mystery), counterbalances by the devaluation, punishment or saving of the guilty object (an avenue typified by the concerns of the film noir); or else complete disavowal of castration by the substitution of a fetish object or turning the represented figure itself into a fetish so that it becomes reassuring rather than dangerous (hence over-valuation, the cult of the female star (Mulvey ..)

Another strong element that the director used while handling the theme of the film is time. The images in the opening credits give us hint about the theme; uncanny images passes by; a broken doll, a cradle, some metal devices, operation tools, the face of a woman, a playground, a crow and a clock working backwards, all in red, symbolizing blood. This image of the clock working backwards symbolizes time working against Eda (basically in fact against all women), an enemy that cannot be controlled or reversed to clear the mistakes that are already made. In general terms time is the enemy of the women because of the biological clock ticking in order to have children, which oppress women due to the social expectations. Motherhood is the primal responsibility of women according to patriarchal societies; a woman first has to get married and second “give” children to her husband. Hence she has to do it before her biology stops being able to have a child. Therefore it is a race against time, time is the enemy that she cannot control. Simone de Beauvoir explains that this reproductive function is not only biological but also social; “It is in maternity that woman fulfills her physiological

destiny; it is her natural 'calling' since her whole organic structure is adapted for the perpetuation of the species. But we have seen already that human society is never abandoned wholly to nature" (Beauvoir 1993, p.509). She continues that giving birth is not only of biological chance, it is under the voluntary control of human beings. Moreover not only biologically being able to have a child is solely comforting, the women have to be married in a patriarchal society to welcome the news. When Eda goes to hospital to find out what is wrong with her, she gets the news that she is sixteen weeks pregnant and abortion is not an option at this point, it is too late. The doctor is a woman and gives the news joyfully, by congratulating her. Just after congratulating she directly asks her "You are married right?" She is with an illegitimate child and cannot have an abortion; the only solution could be a clock working backwards, which is impossible.

The second image of time appears when Cihan forgets her watch by Eda's drawer, in front of Cenk's picture. Furthermore when she visits him at his office to return his watch; the hallway and his room are full of big clocks of which director takes close shots. There in this dark, suffocating office, Cihan gets very angry her being there, because he is married and he does not want anybody to find out this relationship. Therefore he gives her one minute to talk, constantly checking the time; back and forth at the clock on the wall and his watch. Eda decides not to share the pregnancy news with him due to his cruel behavior. When she returns his watch she asks sarcastically "Wasn't it your wife's present?" and leaves without hearing the answer. After she leaves we see the photo of two boys and a dog and Cihan replies to himself "No, it was my sons present." Clearly the watch is a metaphor between the two; time is already spent leaving them with responsibilities and luggage. Furthermore time is a ticking bomb for Eda that has already exploded.

Another reference of time is in Cenk's narrating speech, when Eda is having sex with Cihan and Cenk is putting up the photos of Eda, he asks the question "If we cannot interfere time and space, then will it be our destiny?" Here he highlights his situation as a witness and questions again if it is possible to turn back time; in other words, control time, which is impossible for all characters.

The depiction of the main characters of the film and the approach towards their perspective gives us valuable information about how the director handles the genders. Eda is a childish, irresponsible, pleasure seeking, lustful and weak character, who happens to be punished due to her bad choices. She does not have the ability to calculate the consequence of her actions nor has the strength to bear and overcome these consequences. The prior also affects the second; as if she were able to know her limits she would act accordingly, however she is visualized as a character that is incapable to calculate the power of her decision-making. In the first scene of Cihan and Eda, we see that Eda is behaving like a little girl, sucking her candy in a childish manner. Cihan seems very distant and indifferent to her, the only slightly caring thing he tells her is “You shouldn’t eat too much candy” almost in an unavoidable fatherly manner. Eda replies him as “No harm, no joy. What do you know about it?” explaining her perspective of life, which will later affect all her life. This quote gives a very clear idea about Eda as a character; she is irresponsible and ready to do any bad or immoral thing just to have a little joy. Hence it indicates that she chose deliberately what she was about to live; even though she did not know what exactly was on the way. Moreover when Cenk calls her, she tells him that she is with her uncle; she is a cheater, liar; a morally challenged person.

Cenk on the other hand is a very devoted, self-sacrificing, caring and loyal person, who is a very good husband and son. His only vice is his love and obsession for Eda, which becomes his misery. Throughout the film, especially in the second part where they are three years married he is very supportive and caring of Eda. Even when he learns that she had a prior abortion and she had cheated on him, he carries on taking care of her, stays by her. He is the victim of Eda’s mistakes. He has done nothing wrong, however choosing the wrong wife causes his suffering. Furthermore even though Eda is the one that has to have an illegal abortion, had a near death experience, and haunted by the ghost of the baby girl the audience still identifies with Cenk’s pain, as he is the narrator.

Cihan is the other male character, “the other man” so to speak. He is a cold, distant and ruthless man towards Eda. In the first scene where Cihan picks up Eda with his car from the conservatory, due to the age gap, It is not clear that they are having an affair until

they get into the Eda's home and start to have a passionate sex. In the morning Cihan puts on his clothes while looking at the picture of Cenk standing on Eda's drawer with a contempt and when he is all dressed up he leaves the house leaving Eda vomiting in the bathroom, carelessly. There is no compassion, no humanly approach; he just leaves her like that. Again when Eda goes to his office to return his watch that he forgot at his place, he is very intimidating and pushes her aggressively to his office trying to get rid of her at once. However despite all this inhumane and cruel behavior, the last scene where we see Cihan almost clears his image. When Eda leaves his office the camera focuses on the picture of two kids with a dog and Cihan loudly declares that the watch was the gift of his son; indicating that he is a loving father. Just by that one scene and one phrase, Cihan directly becomes a tender, self-sacrificing (As there is no picture of the wife on the desk, It can easily be projected that he does not leave an unhappy marriage because of his son) person. This one scene gives the audience an underlying reason for his indifferent, distant behavior, invites the audience to understand and have sympathy for him.

Hence the male characters, even Cihan with a final twist, depicted as the victims of women. Eda also suffers from the ghost but as her behavior brings evil she is only paying the price of her actions, whereas Cihan is even though totally innocent, Eda victimizes him. Eda is depicted as the one who brings evil by her reckless behavior; she is the source of evil. Furthermore, a very crucial point is that the haunting ghost, in other words the monster is a girl; a female. It is the exact image of the return of the repressed; both for Eda who wanted to repress her past and both for the patriarchal Turkish society.

It can be said that there is a very strong traditional patriarchal approach in the theme and the proposition of the film. Following her desires (especially sexual desires) for a woman has severe consequences, punishments. There are two ways offered to women; they either pick the traditional approach where they are controlled by man, live their sexuality under the holly roof of marriage and become a respectable member of this institution and the society, or choose to fulfill their desires, live their sexuality freely and get punished by the society, nature and God. When Eda's chooses the second;

living her sexuality freely, out of marriage and furthermore with a married man, causes this unwanted pregnancy as a punishment. She feels regret and desperation immediately. She loses her strength towards the traditional patriarchal discourse that the society had placed under her skin, from the very first day of her life. As a modern young woman, even unconsciously she had been fighting and resisting this discourse imposed by her family and society. However, right after she gets the news from the doctor, she falls into despair and accepts the discourse with defeat. Her desperation and defeat is clearly indicated in her tirade with her inner voice while she is walking to the sea, at the edge of a probable suicide;

What am I going to do now? What will I do all alone? God knows when we see each other again. A fear that freezes my life shivers my vanes. When the day comes you had to make a choice. I was not as strong as I thought I was. Life was really a two way street. The things that you've been told when you were a little girl, you never understand until you live through it. When the day comes you had to make a choice. I am not as strong as I think I am. Life really was a two way street. So this is the end of the road.

This duality is very well depicted at the abortion/performance scene. The abortion takes place at the same time with the dance performance; symbolizing these two paths just like two parallel lives. If Eda had chosen to repress her sexual desires for a married man and had not had an extramarital sexual relationship, she would have been on the stage and be a star, rather than having an illegal, painful abortion. Oya and Eda are the two symbols of good and bad, regarding this patriarchal proposition. Oya is the “good” girl who is married, living under the codes of patriarchal society accordingly life rewards her, just like having the leading part at Eda’s presence and becomes a respected teacher at the conservatory. Whereas Eda is the “bad” girl, paying the price of her bad choices. The abortion and the performance scenes are interwovenly depicted with a “grand finale” where Eda passes out with pain and Oya lies on the stage as the ending of performance. Two parallel lives shaped by choice; suggesting the audience a black and white picture of a “correct” behavior leading to a good life. Eda suffers from her “wrong” choice even after three years from the abortion. After recovering from the miscarriage the ghost still does not let go of her and when she tells Cenk that she is paying the price of the bad things that she had done in the past.” In the light of the monolog aforementioned and this dual scene, it can easily be argued that the film suggests that women are both incapable of making the right decisions for themselves

and not strong enough to bare the consequences of these decision. They have to be under the authority and control of a man for their and society's benefit.

The abortion scene besides its bloody and painful situation appears to be very devastating due to its harassing nature. It takes place in a very dark with a man who supposed to be a doctor and a nurse who is distracted by her cell phone almost all the time. Eda is screaming with pain, while doctor is working, Doctor berates Eda "Shut up! You do it, you do it and we struggle with it". Then he turns to the nurse is constantly text messaging with her mobile phone during the procedure and says "texting, texting, texting..He doesn't text back does he?" and laughs. The man is rude and unemphatic towards women who are single. A woman without a man is presented as a weak and desperate being. Even though pregnancy is the outcome of a two-person intercourse, woman is to blame if she is single. It becomes solely her action and her responsibility, as she is the one who suffers it physically. Accordingly in a patriarchal society, women's extraordinary gift of giving life turns into a controlling and punishing device of men. As aforementioned Noel Carroll argued that women were the sufferers and the victims of the monsters in horror films, these vicious punishments are there in the aim of "teaching a lesson" to the sexually adolescent women: "Fool around and this is what you can expect/deserve" (Carroll 1990, p.196).

Furthermore, the image of maternal women according to Julia Kristeva is abject as it is the reminder of the archaic mother; an image that belongs to the earlier stage where the child tries to break away from the mother (Kristeva 1982, p.13). In this case, the child (the ghost) is strongly tied to the mother as she is the only one that has the knowledge of her prior existence. Her mother is the only thing that connects the ghost to this world. Therefore the child/ghost cannot be freed from her. The child can neither be free from her mother, nor can exist for her; her mother is an abject.

In addition, the relationship of mother, unborn baby and men is ambiguous. The baby is an abject to him as Julia Kristeva explains; "But devotees of the abject, she as well as he, do not cease looking, within what flows from the other's 'innermost being', for the desirable and the terrifying, nourishing and murderous, fascinating and abject inside of

the maternal body” (Kristeva 1982, p.53). Both the first and the second babies are abjects; as they loose their lives when they were fetuses; first due to abortion and second due to miscarriage. They stopped living before they were born, before they are a person; hence they are not corpse but not an object, too, they are even more abject than the corpse. The ghost is a little girl; both a part of her, as being her daughter but also not as she does not belong to this world; an abject. The second baby is again the same; he/she was a living organism with figure of a human, soon to be a person; becomes a piece of meat, less than a corpse. This uncanny feeling of abjection is reinforced in the scene where the ghost girl is playing with the body of the second fetus, which is all in blood and still with his/her umbilical cord; the two abjects together. The illegitimate children are the fruit of a lustful sin, as Barbara Creed explains; “[...] the child is transformed into a visible image of its mother’s desire. The ‘monster publicly signals all aberrant desire, reproves all excessive passion and all illegitimate phantasy’ (1993, p.46)

Another very interesting point is found in the religious connection. When the sura named Araf in the Koran is analyzed it can be found that the main theme of the movie is vey parallel. Araf is the part of Koran in which the detailed myth of Adam and Eve being expelled from paradise. Adam and Eve seduced by the Devil eat the fruit of the forbidden tree, against the prohibition of God and fall from paradise. It further explains that the ones who come against the word of God will find his/herself in hell. In the movie as well Eda literally ‘ate the forbidden fruit’ and they both together with Cenk found themselves in hell (www.theholyyquran.org).

3.2 GOMEDA (GOMEDA)

Gomeda (2007) is the first feature film of the director Tan Tolga Demirci, after many award winning short films. Demirci was born in 1975 and has a director of photography major at university. He is mainly interested in psychoanalysis and the movement of surrealism. He searched the ways to connect these two with cinema; *Gomeda* is its major example. He also published a book in 2006; “The Psychoanalysis of Horror Film” which was also his graduation thesis.

The film is the story of five friends (Sibel, her boyfriend Tolga, Didem, Çağan and Ebru) taking a road trip towards the Gomededa valley. On the way they have an accident and as the car does not work, they decide to camp a place nearby. Near the camp they find a strange tent with uncanny pictures, writings and a notebook, which has intriguing writing about an answer of reality and nightmare found in the caves of the Gomededa valley. With the desire of Ebru they decide to go to the valley. As they arrive closer to the valley strange events and nightmares follow them. When they arrive at the valley, they decide to camp near the caves. According to the notebook that they have found in the tent an unmarried pregnant woman could trigger the curse and Sibel is pregnant. As the night falls, Sibel goes in one of the caves and the nightmare begins. One by one they get lost in the caves and find themselves in their most intimate nightmares. The border between the real and surreal disappears. The caves were hunted by the memories of many tortured pregnant women, centuries ago. One by one they all get lost and die. Later Ebru opens her eyes and sees a doctor, nurses, Sibel and Çağan. She had an abortion and the father of the baby was Tolga. Everything was a nightmare due to narcosis.

The film starts with the terrifying myth of the Gomededa valley. A male narrator tells the story with the accompanying images of a pregnant woman is about to give birth but she is crucified and wears a chastity belt. She is in pain as the belt does not allow the birth; a brutal punishment of death. The narrator explains: “ In year 500 A.D. in the area called Gomededa, hundreds of women who were pregnant by extramarital relationships were doomed with their unborn children unable to born, in the caves where they were severely tortured. It is believed that the wrath stuck in the womb of Gomededa gives birth to its curse, with the help of a symbolic umbilical cord made up of Satan’s words.” This very strong introduction gives a clear idea of the main theme. Women were severely punished due to their affairs because they were pregnant and their pregnancy was used as a weapon against them, a way to brutal murders. Only women were punished for having sex without getting married. Furthermore the same punishment is connected to this era again with a pregnant woman who is having an extramarital relationship. Barbara Creed argues that the ancient connection of woman her womb and evil is evoked in many horror films. She indicated that it is a tradition from classical to

Renaissance times to draw uterus as evil (Kristeva 1993, p.43). Julia Kristeva presented the grounds of this fear of the archaic mother, as the fear of her generative powers (Kristeva 1982, p.77). Creed furthermore argues that the definitions of the monstrous in the modern horror film are strongly connected to the ancient religious and historical notions of abjection such as; “sexual immorality, and perversion; corporeal alteration, decay and death; human sacrifice; murder; the corpse; bodily wastes; the feminine body and incest” (Creed 1993, p.9). Thus in *Gomeda* as well the ancient notion of archaic mother is raised as the fear and reason of upcoming haunted events. Furthermore, the caves of *Gomeda* symbolize the umbilical cord leading to the monstrous womb.

Kristeva’s theory of archaic mother; the maternal body being abject due to the earlier stage of child trying to break away from the mother and mother not releasing him immediately visualized in the following scenes. Ebru dreams herself between the walls of a cave, she is dressed all white symbolizing innocence, sees a woman giving birth with the help of doctors whom she realizes to be her own mother. She is witnessing her own birth. However, just as she beds over to look between her legs the mother turns to a monster bleeding all over. Furthermore, as she wakes up and begins to tell the dream to her friends in the car, the image of her monstrous mother appears on the road which causes them to have an accident.

Furthermore in the tent they find at the camping area there are pictures/illustrations of women in blood, giving birth and a notebook. The notebook is full of sketches of again pregnant woman and many writings about the curse in the *Gomeda* caves; “The distance between the nightmare and the reality, the key to the nightmares can only be found in the words of a woman who carries another being in her womb...Only one tool can turn the rage to a curse and bring it to the present day and it is the umbilical cord by which the pregnant woman can connect with the being in her womb.” These words also address the connection of the baby to the mother, the monstrous, sinful and wrathful mother. Hence in the movie as well the curse awakens by Sibel, who we discover to be pregnant when she takes a pregnancy test in the caves of *Gomeda*. She is the contemporary version of the sinful women who was tortured centuries ago. She is not married, young and sexually active, and furthermore she is independent. She is the

first one to go in the caves; “the monstrous womb”, with a child as a fruit of her sins in her monstrous womb.

The female characters Sibel, Didem and Ebru are depicted mainly as mean, insensitive and distant characters. Sibel is in a unsatisfied relationship with Tolga, thus she with her sarcastic attitude tortures him all through the trip. She is jealous of Ebru as she thinks Tolga is interested with her and tries to make him confess. She does not trust him. Didem on the other hand invited Çağan to this trip to enjoy his passion about her even though she is not interested in him. Çağan expresses his feelings in every chance hopelessly even though he knows that Didem despises him, enjoys humiliating him. Didem is so selfish that in one scene she even tells Çağan that she does not deserve to see him suffer because of her love. She enjoys teasing him and letting him down. It seems like Didem also secretly has feelings for Tolga and called Çağan to this trip to show Tolga how desirable she is. Tolga on the other hand is not really aware of this, he is more curious about Ebru. Ebru is a very distant character; she is uneasy being in this trip and does not seem to be close to anyone. She is the one willing to trace the curse to the Gomeda Valley; hence she is the first reason to bring the evil.

The male characters Tolga and Çağan, even though seem like complete opposite of each other regarding the power issues, they are the victims of women. Tolga is in a disturbing, unloving relationship with Sibel in which she constantly annoys him with sarcasm. Tolga seems careless about Sibel, as he plans to break up with her and he is also interested in Ebru. He is more like the handsome, spoiled kid who takes the attention of all the girls. Çağan on the other hand, is a depressive and weak character. He is crushed with the mean attitude of Didem, unable to avoid it he is completely submissive to her. The misery of both Tolga and Çağan is caused by woman. Furthermore let alone the misery, the nightmare that leading to their painful death is also caused by women; the lustful women of the past and the ruthless women of today. They are the victims of women, their sins and their wrath.

The nightmares that five of them all separately see at the campsite give references to the complicated feelings and relationships. Ebru in her nightmare sees Sibel as a zombie-

bride, decomposing in her wedding dress comes out of nowhere and scares Ebru. Didem sees Tolga fishing with a yellow raincoat, all alone, crying just like a little boy. In Sibel's nightmare she sees a coffin and hears the voices of Tolga and Ebru having sex coming from the coffin. As she tried to see what's in the coffin, she falls in it. Çağan sees herself in make up and ugly telling Didem "I do not deserve to see you suffer because of the love you have for me." All these interrelated visions are the visualization of their anxiety regarding their desires and suspicions.

After the curse is triggered again, they all separately get lost in the caves and have their own experiences. Some of these experiences especially the ones that Tolga and Çağan had, appear to be great examples regarding the monstrous feminine and the fear of female sexuality. The first example would be one of the Tolga's experiences. He enters one of the caves, it is a room where a woman in white dress is sewing some used condoms to a white cloth, she is ornamenting with the condoms. In the wall there is a collection of used condoms each having a woman's name tagged under, next to a collection of butterflies. The woman leaves the cloth aside and puts nails into a baby bottle. Right behind the woman there is a middle-aged man having a bath in a bathtub. He listens to wedding vows from a radio next to him and by dropping the radio into the bathtub he commits suicide. This is a clear reflection of Tolga's fear of marriage; his belief of wedding is suicide. Besides, the collection of the used condoms on the wall symbolizes the man's assessment of having sex with many different women as a triumph, in patriarchal societies. Moreover the woman sewing condoms represent the wife as the controller of man's sex life. The baby (feeding on nails in the bottle refers to the monstrosity of the baby as well) is the tool that woman uses to control man, to force into marriage.

Another nightmare that is valuable to analyze is Çağan's vision. Çağan enters into another cave, another room where there is a beauty queen woman dances with a final move by which she raises her leg to a line of man. There is a child holding on to the other leg crying, where the impatient man are waiting in the line, probably to have sex. The woman starts to cough and blood spills on the book in front of her, which is a medical book that shows a pregnant woman's body. This scene shows the little boy's

attachment to the mother and the mother's lustful aim to present herself a sex object to many men. The image of the pregnant woman on the medical book shows standing in the middle of the line of man and woman represents the threat of illegitimate pregnancy. Furthermore it is fatal to the mother and the child (probably illegitimate as well) is victimized due to the choices of his mother.

The final and the most impressive scene in the film is the scene of Tolga's murder. Tolga enters another darker cave; he sees a black trash bag moving like there is something alive inside. The bag is torn in the middle and Sibel comes out, she is nine months pregnant. She asks Tolga if he wanted her to lose their baby due to miscarriage. As she approached him a knife appears under her belly, like a penis and she stabs Tolga several times like having sex, till he bleeds to death. This powerful scene is the visual example of Julia Kristeva's idea of horror film depicting woman not as castrated but castrating (Creed 1993, p.89). She criticized the work of Sigmund Freud regarding castration complex as Freud claimed that due to Oedipus complex man has a fear of female sexuality because during childhood he believed that woman was castrated. Creed suggested that the image of female genitals not only invoked the fear of castration but also the executer of the threat; as mother is the first parent to utter the threat of castration the child believes that she has the power to castrate (ibid.). Furthermore Freud his article *Fetishism* explains that the objects chosen as substitutes for the absent female phallus would appear as a symbol shaped like penis. In this context the knife, appearing as a deadly phallic figure is an exact image of a fetish. Freud further explains this concept: "Yes in his mind the woman has got a penis, in spite of everything; but this penis is no longer the same as it was before. Something else has taken its place, has been appointed its substitutes, as it were, and now inherits the interest, which was formerly directed to its predecessor. But this interest suffers an extraordinary increase as well, because the horror of castration has set up a memorial to itself in the creation of this substitute" (Freud 1995-v21, p.154). Barbara Creed interpreted this information while analyzing Freud's work of little Hans; as when Hans sees the blood in her mothers bed during her sister's birth he believed that her mother castrated her sister with her penis phallic in shape and sharp as a blade (ibid., p.96).

In conclusion, all the images of woman in the film *Gomeda*, both the protagonists and the images of woman in the nightmares are visualized as evil, lustful, malicious and irresponsible. Woman's wrath and sexuality are the source of evil, hence the trigger of it. The men are the victims of women in all respects. Woman's generative powers are feared not only due to the fear of archaic mother, but also it is a reason to submit man to marriage in traditional societies. Men are afraid of the responsibilities of marriage as well as the monogamy itself. The relationship between man and woman is uncanny as the woman is perceived as castrated and castrator.

3.3 *GENE (GEN)*

Togan Gökbakar, the director of the movie *Gene* (2006) is a young director who studied Film and TV at college. His brother Şahan Gökbakar is a renowned comedian therefore he had the opportunity to shoot his first feature film at the age of twenty one, together with him (Şahan as one of the scriptwriters). In the following years Togan Gokbakar has shot the comedy *Recep İvedik* series where his brother is in the leading role. The three movies of *Recep İvedik* have been all time top three movies in the Turkish box office. Besides, Şahan Gökbakar, one of the four writes, is a familiar name; Alper Mestçi, the director of *Haunted*. Togan Gokbakar in an interview explained that their main motive in making *Gene* was to make a basic 'slasher' movie following its western examples (Cinemascope issue15, p.109).

Dr. Deniz is an enthusiastic newly graduated psychiatrist, who happened to be assigned to an upstate mental hospital. Deniz only has a mother who is a catatonic schizophrenia patient. The day she arrived at the hospital, a patient has committed a suicide and the police is there to investigate the case. Due to the landslide the road to the city is closed and also all lines of communication are shut down. The two police officers; officer Halil and Cemil (newbie) are staying at the guesthouse because of the landslide. The next three days three murders are committed; three men, all over forty and had been in the hospital more than 29 years. All the victims are severely murdered and also their genitals together with their eyes are removed. The murderer took the eyes and genitals

of the victims. Meanwhile Dr. Ragıp helps Deniz to get used to the hospital. Besides regular psychiatric patients; there are two catatonic schizophrenia patients who are sedated most of the time, four old imprisoned patients who are sedated all the time and a psychopath in the isolation room, with a straitjacket on all the time. The patients are mainly under psychotic medication and sometimes EDT (Electroconvulsive therapy) is applied to them. The cops question everybody and after making assessments through psycho-criminology they decide that the next victim is either the chief of the hospital or the psychopath in the isolation room. Hence the two cops set up two separate ambushes the same night. The murderer with a raincoat comes to the chief's office and kills officer Halil, the chief, and the doctor's hunt down the murderer. It is Deniz. Besides, while Deniz was in the chief's office, she finds out that the patients have taken the place of the doctors while sedating and electro shocking the real doctors all the time. They drag her to the isolation room and lock her inside with the psychopath. The psychopath rapes Deniz. Nine months later Deniz is a patient in the hospital, pregnant with the psychopath's baby. Furthermore we learn about her story; her mother was raped in that hospital by one of the patients and became catatonic schizophrenic by that incident. Deniz is the daughter of the psychopath and came to that hospital for revenge. Hence, she faces the same end with her mother.

Gene is a rape-revenge, slasher movie. Although in slasher movies women are generally victims, in the sub genre of rape-revenge films they appear as the castrator. The protagonist (the monster) is a single twenty-nine years old psychiatrist who was mainly living with her sick mother until she moved to work at a hospital. The attributes of this 'monster' can be analyzed in many ways. The first dimension of this character is her problematic and consuming relationship with her mother. The mother because of her sickness is a major responsibility for Deniz all her life. Furthermore the victimization of the mother had victimized the daughter as well. The mother is not letting go of Deniz, consuming her independence. This relationship can be suggested to be similar to the one in the earlier stages of an infant. According to Julia Kristeva, due to her problematic relationship with the symbolic, the mother is not willing to let go of her child. Hence she becomes abject for the child; something he struggles to break away. However she needs the child to have power in the phallic order; against her father and her husband

(cited in Creed 1993, p.12). Barbara Creed points out that this concept is visualized as the main theme in many horror texts; the child struggles to break away from the mother (the representative of the archaic mother) and the father is absent. The mother is the monster in these types of horror movies as she refuses to release the child and take its proper place in relation to the symbolic. Creed gave the very well known examples; *Psycho* (1960), *Carrie* (1976) and *The Birds* (1963). Thus, in Gen as well the mother who does not let go of her daughter, due to her illness is the abject causing her daughter not being able to get her proper place in the symbolic. Her daughter is the monster in the film; however, the mother in fact is the source of the real monstrosity.

Another approach to this exact relationship of the mother and the child is Laura Mulvey's. Mulvey (1975 p.34) highlights the dilemma of phallocentrism as it depended on the castrated image of the woman. The lack of the woman produces the phallus's symbolic presence. Accordingly, woman functioned in two angles in forming the patriarchal unfold; one is the castrating threat by her lack, the second is raising her child to the symbolic. As soon as these two are achieved, the meaning of women comes to an end. Deniz and her mother are the two perfect examples of this theory; they first represent the lack and therefore unfold the castration anxiety and second get pregnant. Hence completing both missions, they leave the symbolic (symbolically) by being catatonic schizophrenia patients. As Deniz is the monster/murderer; she does not only represent the threat of castration, she literally castrates her victims. The tool of castration is a knife; a penis like sharp object which is an image of fetish.² Furthermore she takes their genitals with her that refers to her desire to possess a penis and its powers. Hence she could get revenge, Laura Mulvey further suggests that she turns the child into the signifier of her own desire to possess a penis which she believes the only condition to enter the symbolic. Thus Deniz following her desire to possess a penis and inherit its powers, experienced both possible alternatives. Accordingly she was severely punished by the men in the patriarchal authority and the tool of punishment was penis/rape.

In most of the western examples of the rape-revenge movie the woman punishes men because of the rape and she successfully takes her revenge. In these examples woman

² Sigmund Freud's argument of the knife, appearing as a deadly phallic figure is an exact image of a fetish is further analyzed in the prior film analysis *Gomeda*. The detailed information can be found on page 56

turns to a revenge machine, but the real monsters are men, hence the monsters pay their price. The image of rape taking place at the beginning of the movie strengthens the image of this monstrosity and the following punishment in a way has a relieving effect on the audience. However, in the case of *Gene* even though the women (Deniz and her mother) are the victims they are visualized as monsters. Furthermore, Deniz is hunted down and dragged to the isolation room where she got her punishment; rape by the psychopath. Even at the end of the film we hear Deniz narrating her earlier desire; “I am going to rip off him, my reason of existence (Meaning her father’s genitals). Then we’ll be able to have our peace” where she reveals her monstrous revenge desire, which is not accomplished. Furthermore the final speech of the Chief (revealed to be a patient) is also very significant. Right before they throw her inside the isolation room he explains that there may be times when one has to turn things upside down, in order to teach a lesson. They punish Deniz with rape in order to teach a lesson for not complying with her submissive role.

Another dimension of the monster is her single, independent woman as a colleague. She is a very well educated woman who at the beginning of the movie, moves from the city to this small mental hospital. Carol Clover in her book *Men, Women and Chainsaws* while analyzing the rape-revenge films she pointed out that a great proportion of horror took its starting point with a visit or a move of urban people to the country (Clover 1992, p. 124). Hence the city/country split is a determinant of the rape-revenge film. All the doctors but mostly Dr. Ragıp was interested and curious with her idealistic choice to work at that country hospital. He is a doctor in mid-thirties but works at the same level as Dr. Deniz. He asks her why she picked this place and when she answers that because of her ideals he says he had ideals, too until he came to that hospital and faced the reality. He constantly questions Deniz’s idealism and demoralizes her; another example can be found in this dialogue:

D - Medicine was my first choice, so was psychiatry. I have wanted to analyze people since childhood.

R - I was also an idealist, just like you. But it is over now, I’ve recovered.

D - You think being an idealist is a disease?

R - in a way, yes. But don’t worry you will change in a couple of years.

D - I won’t change.

R - You will.

Ragıp's constantly tries to lower the motivation of Deniz because he sees her as a professional threat. He has been there for many years and could not progress even a little bit, and now there is a threat that even his current position is jeopardized by an idealistic, hardworking young woman. Z. Tül Akbal Süalp in her article "Cinema of Thresholds, Without Gravity Under Urgent Time: Distant Voices, Stilled Lives" referred to the connection of economic crises and the rising discomfort towards "the others". She suggested that in Turkey, the strong and continuous economic crisis created hopelessness within the society; mainly male majorities as it led to unemployment and growing poverty. She further argues that this brings hatred and discomfort towards "the others" which include women as well. Thus, the independent, successful and young women are double threat to men when the economic situation in Turkey is taken into consideration. She is not only monster at home, or at bedroom but now also at work. Men were already competing hard enough in the patriarchal order of the workplace but now they have to compete even harder with these successful, career focused, hardworking women.

Furthermore, working with women is complicated when they are seen as a fetish object. Besides Deniz there is another young woman at the hospital, a nurse. She is insulted and harassed by the doctors except Deniz who are all men. She is a weak character but her sexuality draws attention to all men. During the second murder she, together with a male nurse is watching porn on TV. Even cops insult her; while questioning her officer Cemil irrelevantly asks her if she was abused when she was young. When she nervously asks the relevancy of the question, he replies: "Nurses get harassed a lot. Maybe you have been, too". He is very prejudiced as a 'nurse' is something sexual to him, a fetishistic object of desire.

3.4 THE HAUNTED (MUSALLAT)

Alper Mestçi is a young director of many TV shows who chose horror genre for his first feature film. He directed and wrote the script of *The Haunted*. The movie is a supernatural horror that includes religious elements. Mestçi in one of his interviews claims that *The Haunted* is completely a Turkish Horror (Cinemascope, issue12, p.108).

Suat is a young man who lives in the village and is about to get married. With the help of one of his childhood friends Metin, he finds a job in Germany and decides to make some money before getting married. However, he starts to have some disturbances just after he moves to Germany. He feels homesick and lonely and starts to have uncanny nightmares, then visions of her fiancé where she appears as a monstrous figure. He is haunted by dark visions such as; his wedding, wedding ceremony, nuptial, his new bride (wife), the news of becoming a father. He seeks remedy at his friend Metin, however Metin can not figure out what is wrong with him. Metin first tries to convince him that he will adjust in some time and tells him that the money will bring peace to him. Suat starts to take some drugs to cope with the stress and the visions become worse. He tries to find comfort by calling his mother but every time he tries to explain that he is not well, the mother either does not hear him, or just says how content she with Suat making money. Metin tries to help Suat adjust Germany, at this end he one night brings two prostitutes. Suat while having sex with the woman sees another uncanny image of her monstrous fiancé and asks all to leave his house.

Later on when Suat gets worse and attempts suicide Metin decides to take him to the hospital. After a detailed analysis the doctors could not find anything abnormal with his brain and advised a psychiatric treatment. Afterwards Metin took Suat to Istanbul to seek a different kind of remedy from a hodja (a religious healer);Hacı Burhan Kasavi. Hodja sees Suat a couple of times and understands that a Jinn have send Avamir to haunt Suat. Hodja explains that a Jinn sends Avamir if there is something or someone that it can not leave. Hodja gives Suat an amulet to protect him from the Avamir. That night just when Suat takes off the amulet the Jinn strikes him to death. Metin finds out the body and with Hodja's instructions they bury him in his village. When hodja gets back home he discovers that the Jinn also stroke his family. Then the Jinn comes back to strike him.

Then the story reveals that the Jinn was in fact in love with Suat's fiancé since it saw her in a Turkish bath when she was a child. Her epilepsy was the haunting of the Jinn. The Jinn sent Avamir to Suat to keep him in Germany; meanwhile it took the human

form as Suat and married to Nurcan. All the visions that Suat had back in Germany was the images of Nurcan's life that took place at the same time. Then Nurcan gets pregnant and dies during birth. The baby is more like a creature and the midwives kills the baby right after birth. When the Jinn sees the dead bodies of both Nurcan and the baby it goes mad and kills first Suat blaming him for the deaths, then kills Metin, and then strikes Hodja and his family. It was a forbidden love.

The film consists of many dualities. In the first part the exact sentiments of being a Turkish worker in Germany is depicted. The symptoms of the isolation, alienation and psychological troubles of living in a completely foreign country are visualized as the symptoms of being 'haunted'. Furthermore, in his most vulnerable and psychologically damaged situation what haunts him most, just like a monster; is his fiancé Nurcan. Especially Nurcan with sexual desires and fecundity; in the nightmares or visions Nurcan appears as either desiring to have sex or get pregnant.

Simone de Beauvoir (1993 p176) suggested that Christianity imposed another frightening perspective to woman; the fear of the other sex, which is shaped by the uneasy conscience of men. Beauvoir further claimed that Christianity separated a person to body and soul and the original sin made the body the enemy of the soul, hence the flesh is evil, sin. As women is always the Other (in religion, too as Christianity is clearly patriarchal) here the flesh referred to woman; "the hostile *Other* is precisely woman" (ibid). The ideas of Beauvoir can be suggested for all patriarchal religions, thus for Islam as well. The flesh of woman represents all the temptations of the earth, hence the devil. Nurcan represented all these temptations for Suat, accordingly he visualized her as evil. Moreover most importantly in all his visions, nightmares (and later on flash-sideways) the two are married. The images of Nurcan are at first with a wedding dress; later on he visualized their wedding day, their married life and Nurcan's pregnancy. As if he fears that marriage will reveal the monster within Nurcan, he fears Nurcan as his wife.

Another woman in the film Suat's mother is depicted as an insensitive and mean character. She is mean both to Nurcan and Suat. Many times he calls his mother to find comfort, but every time she either does not hear him or says insensitive things. Even

though it reveals that the Jinn was the reason of these conversations, she is a selfish, unaffectionate character. Simone de Beauvoir claims that what men both desires and hates in all woman, including mother and the lover is in fact the fear of death:

[...] what man cherishes and detests first of all in all woman – loved one or mother – is the fixed image of his animal destiny; it is the life that is necessary to his existence but that condemns him to the finite and to death. From the day of his birth man begins to die: this is the truth incarnated in the Mother. In procreation he speaks for the species against himself: he learns this in his wife's embrace; in excitement and pleasure, even before he has engendered, he forgets his unique ego. Although he endeavors to distinguish mother and wife, he gets from both a witness to one thing only: his mortal state. He wishes to venerate his mother and love his mistress; at the same time he rebels against them in disgust and fear (ibid., p.175).

Man fearing his own death in the image of woman makes sense when the movie *The Haunted* is taken into consideration as the real source of Suat's suffering and death is in fact Nurcan. When Hacı Burhan asks him in his first visit what his sin is, he answers "None". Suat is the victim of his fiancé's beauty. Nurcan's beauty had attracted the Jinn therefore she is the monster. Nurcan even victimized the Jinn, as it had to live within humans while being imprisoned in the human form, furthermore it lost its child. All the evil that killed Suat, Metin, Hacı Burhan and his family had rooted in the beauty of Nurcan. She is involved in a forbidden love which opened the gates of dread. Simone de Beauvoir propounds that in patriarchal societies if the husband does not manage to keep his wife in the path of virtue he is the one to blame when she turns to the evil forces (ibid., p.200). In a patriarchal society Beauvoir suggests, it is always believed that women evade the rules of the society to turn to Nature and to demon and let the uncontrollable evil forces interfere the collective midst. She explains: "Fear is always mixed with the blame attached to woman's licentious conduct. If the husband does not succeed in keeping his wife in the path of virtue, he shares in her fault; in the eyes of society his misfortune is a blot on his honor; there are civilizations severe enough to require him to kill the wrongdoer in order to dissociate himself from her crime" (ibid.).

Furthermore, not surprisingly all male characters in the movie are represented with positive attributes and they are the victims of evil from women. Accordingly all the female characters are represented with negative and evil characteristics. Suat is an honest, hardworking, responsible person who left everything to make money to help his family. Metin is a good friend who strives to help Suat, working hard to take care of his

own family. When Suat gets sick Metin does what ever he can to help him, tries every remedy. Another significant character Hacı Burhan is a religious, honest man and he refuses to take money for helping Suat. Hacı Burhan's son is again a respectful son, a religious man and a good family man. Even the insignificant characters; such as the psychic boy and the man who saved Suat's life when he was about to jump off the roof are very positive characters. Even the Jinn is almost like a positive character, because the reason of all his action is love. It is very caring and loving towards Nurcan. After they are married it waited almost for a month to have sex, it did not enforce Nurcan to do anything. It acted as a good husband, never let anyone to hurt Nurcan. The killings of the jinn were also connected to its victimization. Even the murders of the jinn is justified with the scene where it looses Nurcan during birth and the women gave birth to Nurcan kill the child because of his appearance. The jinn is a lover and a father in pain.

On the contrary, all the female characters are depicted with negative attributes. First of all, Nurcan, the source of the evil as she is beautiful, draws the attention of all men. Even though the story is told like she was unaware of the Jinn taking place of Suat, her body language tells the contrary. Her eyes, her facial expressions especially on their wedding day refers to something evil, as if she is aware of the situation, or she is about to do some harm. Suat's mother again seems like a manipulative character. She seems like a nice mother both to Nurcan and Suat, however she has an underlying problem with Nurcan; a classical power struggle of the bride and the mother-in-law, over Suat. Even the small female characters, like Suat's neighbor in Germany or the prostitutes are represented as hostile or perverse characters. Another important example is the image of Hacı Burhan's wife that appeared at the end of the film as the tool of the most horrifying confrontation of Hacı Burhan and the Jinn. Hacı Burhan had a stroke when he saw the image of his dead wife. The Jinn haunted both men with the image of their spouses, their supposedly loved ones that reveals to be their greatest fear.

The prior information of the depiction of the characters however is not surprising. The story itself is from the patriarchal perspective; as it is from Hacı Burhan's notes, from his point of view. Nevertheless, he is the narrator of the story; the oldest man as the narrator is a clear symbol of patriarchy. His clear indications of forbidden love over and

over again in the end of the story tells us about the rule makers, hence the condemners. Furthermore he is writing it down as a warning; “Learn, tell, take precautions and never forget”. Actually all through the film he makes comments and warnings: “We all have sins... We are told that we are not alone in this world. What ever happened is because we neglected this fact”. Moreover in the final part where he reveals the story he points out the exact reason of the evil and suffering, while the camera zooms Nurcan’s picture: “So what was the reason of all this; the evil and the suffering? It is obvious; love, a big love, a terrifying love. If they knew how big this love was, they would stay away from her, they would never want to have her... His love was from this world however he was from another. Who got involved with this curse, got what he/she deserved. It was wrong, completely wrong. It was a very big love, but it was forbidden. Never underestimate the curse under a great passion and always observe carefully the people around you”. All his statements and warnings highlight the evil force of the desire towards women and the suffering brought by a forbidden love that women provoke. These two phenomena are the worst enemy of the essentials of patriarchy and its tools.

Another duality that the film presents is science vs. religion. This is one of the major subjects of the genre. In the case of *The Haunted* it is more like Science vs. Islam; and Germany represents western scientific knowledge whereas Istanbul represents eastern religious spirituality. In the first part of the film, Metin first seeks the remedy in medicine and than the doctors of a comprehensive hospital. The doctors so all the tests but still can not find anything to heal. Nevertheless, this is how far the science could get, all these comprehensive tests leading to nothing refers to the fact that ‘there is something that science can not comprehend; there are forcers greater than science’. Man controls science, whereas spirituality is beyond his control and sometimes comprehension. There is something out of the boundaries of man but within the boundaries of God; the greatest patriarch. Thus it is now time to turn to god, but not any god, the god of Muslims. This is cleverly visualized in the scene where they decide to go back to Istanbul, at first the camera shows the church and the voices of bell in Berlin and then passes through the mosque and voices of call to prayer in Istanbul. The voices of call to prayer and mosque are the symbols of a healing hand reaching for Suat.

In addition, the generative functions of woman identify her as on the side of abject. The maternal body as mentioned above is abject due to the earlier relationship of the baby and the mother where the mother is reluctant to let go off the child (Kristeva; 1982, p 13). Following the maternal body, what is inside the maternal body is again abject, due to Kristeva's inside/outside theory of abject; the skin covers the clean-proper body, however the womb and what is inside a womb is revealed with childbirth, it is abject. Kristeva argues: "Evocation of the maternal body and childbirth induces the image of childbirth as a violent act of expulsion through which the nascent body tears itself away from the matter of maternal insiders. Now, the skin apparently never ceased to bear the traces of such matter. These are persecuting and threatening traces, by means of which the fantasy of the born body, tightly held in a placenta that is no longer nourishing but devastating, converges with the reality of leprosy" (ibid., p.101). She also explains the religious explanations of the inside/outside by analyzing the bible where there are examples of people beautiful and righteous of the outside but unclean and hypocrite on the inside, which exactly explains the projected image of Nurcan in the film.

Last but not least, the monstrous baby of Nurcan and the Jinn are enlightening details regarding the subjects aforementioned. Barbara Creed explained that through centuries it was generally believed that monstrous offspring were created by the maternal imagination (Creed 1993, p.45). In other words the babies are transformed in to the objects of their mothers' desire. Creed further states that for many centuries birth deformations were believed to be the marks of a curse or copulation with devil (ibid., p.45). In conclusion; the monstrous body of the murdered baby in *The Haunted*, is abject in three dimensions; it is newly born with blood and placenta all over, it is monstrous as its father is the Jinn and finally it is a corpse. This three times abject baby is the fruit of the forbidden love; an effective image of what happens when one does not obey the patriarchal rules.

A final point would be about the opening videos at the beginning of the film. The movie opens with the realistic videos of neighbors' interviews. One neighbor explains; "The neighbors were feeling uneasy about them. We were really anxious about the way they are. As they never socialize with anyone so you can never get acquainted with them,

you never know [...]”. It is an interesting approach, as clearly the neighbor is talking about ‘the other’ of the neighborhood. At first the audience cannot figure out exactly whom the neighbor is talking about. Nevertheless, at the end of the film, it is still a mystery; is it Jinns, Hacı Burhan Kasavi’s family or women?

3.5 *SEMUM (SEMUM)*

Semum (2008) is third feature film of Hasan Karacadağ; a Turkish director who is graduated as a film director in Japan. Karacadağ combines Japanese horror film elements with Islamic motifs. His former film *Dabbe* (2006) also involved an Islamic myth leading to a curse. Following *Semum* he shot his fourth film *Dabbe II* (2009).

A newly married couple (Canan and Volkan) buy a house within a quite housing complex. Right after they settle, they learn from the uncanny gardener that the wife of their neighbor is gone missing and the husband is the number one suspect. Canan is a housewife and stays home taking care of her husband and the house. She has one close friend Banu who is single and jealous of their new home. They enjoy happily their new house until Canan starts to have horrifying experiences. Canan is uneasy with the neighbor and when one day the neighbor comes to her door and annoys her about dropping smelly meat all over the garden, Volkan threatens the neighbor. Canan’s horrific visions and experiences escalate as she psychologically starts to get affected. Volkan does not believe her visions and starts to get annoyed by each event. He even gets angry with her for not being strong enough. Canan asks constantly for help. One day she sees the number of 13 at the wall of their attic and she goes crazy. She believes that the number indicates the evil of their neighbor next door and she tries to kill him. Finally Volkan decides to take her to a psychiatrist. The Psychiatrist diagnoses her with temporary depression. Meanwhile Banu visits Canan frequently, he gives her a painting of ‘evil eye’ as a gift, saying that it would protect their home. Banu helps Volkan taking care of Canan. Canan starts to feel an evil spirit within the house and that spirit visits her at nights. She starts to see the evil spirit; it has long black hair, blue eyes and skin of fire. At one of its visits it blows a black substance into Canan’s body and possess her. Canan becomes aggressive and tries to kill Volkan. Volkan is desperate, together with

Banu they decide to call the psychiatrist for a visit at home. When the psychiatrist sees her he goes back to get an ambulance to take her to the hospital. Meanwhile Ali, Volkan's friend from work, comes to help Volkan and when he sees Canan he understands that there is a Semum inside her body. According to Koran Semum are creatures that have been created from smokeless fire, they worship to the master of fire; Demon. He convinces Volkan and takes him to a Hodja, a savant who lived in Pakistan for several years. They ask the help of Hodja and he agrees to go with them. The same moment the psychiatrist comes with the ambulance. They argue about the kind of treatment Canan should get. Hodja proves to the doctor that there is a Semum inside her. Hence Hodja does the exorcism and when Semum is out they have a fight with Hodja in the hell. Hodja via God wins. Hodja further reveals that the number 13 at the attic was in fact the letter B and Banu was the source of the evil. It turns out that Banu performed a black magic to call Semum and make it haunt Canan. After the exorcism, Hodja, Canan, Volkan and Ali goes to house of Banu to get rid of the black magic. They make her confess where she buried the spell. Canan asks Banu "why?". Banu tells her that Canan had everything she did not have. Finally Banu pays the price of calling the Semum, the other Semums take her soul to hell for constant torture.

Semum is a possession horror film. The visible possessor is Semum an evil servant of the Devil and the possessed is Canan; the wife. Hence the underlying theme, as we can see in the posters and the promotion pictures of the film, is the slow transition of the woman to a monster right after getting married. The tagline of the film is "Hell lies in Ambush", and in one of the promotion pictures explains the tagline; Volkan sits in the middle of two Canans, one is her loving wife and the other is his monstrous wife.

According to Simone de Beauvoir, marriage is a traditionally offered destiny to woman by the society (Beauvoir 1993, p.447). Hence to be chosen as a prospective wife is a heavy duty of women. The man fears that woman is hiding her real nature in order to get married. Hence once they get married, there is no need to make believe anymore therefore she reveals her monstrous nature. She is now irrational, uncontrollable and dangerous; a threat and humiliation for the husband. In the case of Canan, she is haunted by an evil spirit, however starting for the first crisis Volkan always thinks that

Canan is exaggerating and acting unreasonably, he is disappointed and angry with Canan. He keeps saying “there is nothing wrong here, it is your delusions” or “I would expect you to be stronger, reasonable”. Instead of worrying about her wife, he was angry with her.

Furthermore, Barbara Creed suggests that a possessed or invaded being is a clear example of abjection as the border between the self and the other is clearly violated (Creed 1993, p.32). When a female body is the object of this possession it indicates double abjection. Julia Kristeva explains that the abject existed in the opposition of the paternal symbolic and its rules/laws, therefore, in the side of the feminine. It is what ‘disturbs identity, system and order’ (Kristeva 1982, p.4). When the clean and proper self is constructed, the abject is an important component. Creed explains: “In order to enter the symbolic order, the subject must reject or repress all forms of behavior, speech and modes of being regarded as unacceptable, improper and unclean” (Creed 1992, p.37). Accordingly, all possessed monsters (in the case of Semum; Canan) is the clear image of the abject with inappropriate forms of behavior and unclean bodily appearance with all the blood, spit and scars. Creed identifies: “Abjection is constructed as a rebellion of filthy, lustful, carnal, female flesh” (ibid., p.38).

Moreover Canan is also a castrating monster. In one scene she attacks the husband next-door with a knife and Volkan saves him and in another scene Canan attacks Volkan with a scissors a clear tool to rip body organs apart. After that incident, Volkan decides to tie her to the bed; she is an obvious threat for him.

Another reflection of women trying to fulfill their social destiny of marriage is analyzed by Barbara Creed. Creed suggested that in many horror films the heroine who is an unmarried career woman is transformed into a monster because she is unable to fulfill her need for husband and family (Creed 1993, p.122). Creed further argues that in these movies woman’s violent destructive impulses arose from her failure to have a family and a husband. She fails to lead a ‘normal’ life therefore she is sexually and emotionally unsatisfied which leads to her monstrosity. Creed argues: “This version of female psychopath represents a more conventional view of female monstrosity in that woman

transforms into a monster when she is sexually and emotionally unfulfilled. She seeks revenge on society, particularly the heterosexual nuclear family, because of her lack, her symbolic castration” (ibid.). Hence Barbara Creed suggests that her transition to monstrosity is caused by the anger of her castration. The reason turns to motive; the castrated castrates. However it can also be suggested that unfulfilling the projected destiny of woman makes her feel like a failure and in order to eliminate the feeling the woman turns to a monster and destroys the already fulfilled destinies; the other heterosexual families. She is jealous of her own kind, of the ones that carry around their marriage like a gold medal, the medal of the society. As a single independent woman, she is a threat for the society’s well being, she is the Other.

Banu is the exact image of this threat, the real monster of the film. She is a single, beautiful woman however she could not ‘manage’ to find someone to have a decent relationship. Canan, as already successfully married woman gives advices to her such as; “you must be more flexible honey otherwise you will remain a spinster”. And in another case Volkan asks Canan whether Banu is dating with anyone, and when Canan is jealous he explains his curiosity: “Well, I’m not saying it just because she’s your friend but Banu is a beautiful girl. No I mean that it is hard to be smart and beautiful like her. See she could not find herself a nice guy yet”. Being beautiful and single is a curse and a genuine threat to the institution of family.

In the beginning of the film all men look uncanny and suspicious. The characters of gardener and the husband next door throughout the film give mixed messages whereas Banu is acting like a caring friend. The gardener Raci constantly peeps their house and tells them horrifying stories about their neighbors next door. The husband next door is a suspect of his wife’s murder and threatens Canan several times. He also acts very suspicious as he takes out big garbage bags and puts them in his car, drew away in the middle of the night. In the end both men reveal to be innocent, even victimized. The neighbor’s wife comes back home and the charges against the husband drops. However Banu on the other hand turns out to be the source of evil. She was a two-faced monster who successfully hid her monstrosity. Barbara Creed suggests that this dichotomous view of woman is central to the female killers in horror films (Creed 1993, p.42). The

deceptive visualization of woman is again connected to abjection; as its inside/outside conflict. According to Julia Kristeva due to abjection and the outside/inside boundary, the threat comes no longer from outside but from within. Which appear beautiful and righteous on the outside can be unclean and hypocrite on the outside (Kristeva 1982, p. 114).

There are two main struggles in *Semum*: the first is the major struggle of many horror films; religion vs. science and the second is men vs. women; the fathers vs. the mothers. The struggle of religion and science is clearly depicted in the long scene of Hodja and Psychiatrists argument:

P- You are a charlatan!

H- Medicine cannot help this girl right now. Science is never a god to be worshipped.

P- and religion is not for the cons to earn a living.

H-look doctor, science is a necessity but don't you ever forget this, human can not live without faith. Religion is as necessary as science. Do you discriminate?

Following this scene Hodja proves the doctor that Semum is there and the doctor is terrified while respecting Hodja.

The other struggle is between the law of the father and the mother; the Hodja and Canan. Hodja is the clear patriarchal authority symbol and Canan is a young, sexually active woman. The visible struggle is between these two. Furthermore two more men; Volkan and his friend Ali help Hodja during the exorcism. Three men fight back a monstrous woman. Moreover it can clearly be suggested that the Semum that possess Canan is female. Its long hair, skinny structure and narrow waist are the features of a female figure. Thus Hodja is struggling with a female body with a female devil inside. Nevertheless the two cannot overrule the patriarchal authority and Semum dies.

Kaya Özkaracalar when analyzing the film *Şeytan/Satan* (1974) (The Turkish version of the movie *The Exorcist* (1973) he mentioned that the main theme of the film was the reconfirmation of Islam's power and validity (Özkaracalar 2003, p.215). *Semum* also can be claimed to have the same effect considering its similarity with the movie *The Exorcist*. The exorcism again is carried out by a religious figure; Hodja. Özkaracalar further argues the roots of modernization/materialism versus religion/tradition back to the 19th century Ottoman Empire. From then on he argues that Turkey's modernization

aim had been radically carried out by the Republican government towards secularization in all areas of life. Özkarcalar points out that even today this tension remains not only in the Turkish political scene but also deep down within the socio-cultural psyche (Özkarcalar 2003, p.215). Hence the same struggle can be observed in the theme of *Semum* with a conclusion of reconfirmation of Islam's power over modernization.

3.6 *DARK SPELLS (BÜYÜ)*

The director of *Dark Spells* (2004) Orhan Oğuz is one of the reputable directors of Turkish cinema who shot his first feature film in 1987. He is the eldest director of the films analyzed in this thesis. He shot films of many different genres and TV series'. *Dark Spells* is a successful example of the recent horror films regarding the box office numbers, hence inspired many emerging directors for the genre.

A group of archeologists take a trip to the Dengizhan Village in Mardin at the eastern part of Turkey for an archeological research of the Artuks. The professor leads the group of six; his daughter Sedef, the philologist Ayşe, Cemil, Aydan and Ceren. On the way they meet an elderly villager. He tells them that Dengizhan village is cursed and tells them the story of a witch that brought evil to the village. The witch convinced the villagers that their daughters were to blame for the evil and convinced them to bury their daughters alive. Hence followed the terror until no one was alive. They arrive at the deserted village and start the archeological dig. Meanwhile Ayşe's old friend Zeynep gives money to a witch to cast a spell for Ayşe's death. Zeynep is jealous of Ayşe because of her happy marriage and successful life. The witch makes a spell which would awaken the curse of the village.

The same night uncanny events begin. A Jinn rapes Aydan, she cannot confess to anyone else as she cannot reason it herself. Ayşe starts to experience uncanny events herself, sees a ghost in one of the houses. Meanwhile the digging continues, Sedef finds a piece of leather with some symbols on it, she accidentally wipes her bloody hand on it. Ayşe claims that the leather is a kind of spell. The same night Cemil and Ceren under the possession of an evil spirit have sex, when Ceren awakes she runs away with guilt

as she is engaged to Cemil's best friend. Cemil is murdered that night and beheaded. His body is put on the ceiling and his head on the door. When they discovered the body the panic begins, Aydan claims Ceren is the murderer. Suddenly Ceren gets lost; they search all the area and find her body as well. She is murdered, too. Aydan tries to explain that she is not the murderer; she confesses that a Jinn raped her on the first night. They try to leave the village but get lost in the caves and find themselves in the village again. That night Aydan goes to the house of the old witch, she is murdered there. Professor and Ayşe come looking for Aydan, they discover her body, suddenly Sedef appears with a bloody dagger in her hand. Apparently she is under the spell. Sedef kills her father with the dagger and cuts his head off. Later Sedef attacks Ayşe, however the spirit of a girl protects Ayşe bringing her an amulet. Ayşe with the protective force of the amulet leaves the village and goes to a hospital. Zeynep on the other hand has a car accident with the witch and they both die. Ayşe's husband goes to get Ayşe but Sedef is still after her.

Many horror films are inspired by the dark heritage of the myths and beliefs of that society. West and East have their differences regarding religion, beliefs and folkloric traditions, therefore have different images and horror objects. H.P. Lovecraft highlighted the importance of this dark heritage: "...East and West alike were busy preserving and amplifying the dark heritage, both of random folklore and of academically formulated magic and cannibalism, which had descended to them. Witch, werewolf, vampire and ghoul brooded ominously on the lips of bard and grandma, and needed but little encouragement to take the final step across the boundary that divides the chanted tale or song from the formal literary composition" (Lovecraft 1945, p.18).

The witch is a monster that have existed both in the western and eastern horror genre. Barbara Creed points out that historically and mythologically the witch both attracted and horrified (Creed 1993, p.74). She explained that the magical powers whether used for the good or the evil purposes have been horrifying for the members of the ancient societies. Nevertheless they usually have one within the society. Creed argues that woman due to her motherly duties has always been the responsible one for developing

early forms of medicine (ibid.). Together with this ability and her generative powers woman inspired dread as a witch.

Simone de Beauvoir also analyzed woman's connection to magic. She argued that woman's ability to magic is conceived as a weapon to cast spell over men (Beauvoir 1993, p.173.) Furthermore, she highlighted that an act is magic only if it came from something passive; men perceived woman as passive, she does not act according to her will, she is not subject but an object for men. The word sorcerer both male and female can have positive attributes. There is no single word for man just like 'witch' that indicates the evil aims of the woman in casting spells. Beauvoir further explains:

The threadbare vocabulary of the serial novels describing woman as a sorceress, an enchantress, fascinating and castrating a spell over man, reflects the most ancient and universal of myths. Woman is dedicated to magic. ...In the societies where man worships these mysteries, woman, on account of these powers, is associated with religion and venerated as priestess; but when man struggles to make society triumph over nature, reason over life, and the will over the inert, given nature of things, then woman is regarded as a sorceress. The difference between a priest and a magician is well known: the first controls and directs forces he has mastered in accord with the gods and the laws, for the common good, in the name of all members of the group; the magician operates apart from the society, against the gods and the laws, according to his own deep interests. Now woman is not fully integrated into the world of men; as the other, she is opposed to them (ibid., pp.173-174).

The two witches of *Dark Spells* have different characteristics; the ancient one is more like a healer and witch and the contemporary one is like a sorcerer. The ancient one is old and ugly hence is respected as she has the power to convince all village to bury their daughters alive. The contemporary one is more like a representative of a line of work, she makes money due to her services. She can probably provide all kinds of spells according to the need.

There are many monsters in the film all of which are women; Sedef the visible monster, ancient witch, contemporary witch and Zeynep the underlying monster. Sedef, under the spell, possessed by the evil spirit murders everyone one by one. Nonetheless she only decapitates men and hangs their heads on the doors like a symbol. She is the perfect image of a castrating monster. The ancient witch is the source of the pouring evil, her black magic and slaughtering the daughters of the village still haunts innocent people. The contemporary witch is again only cares for money, have no mercy for an innocent soul and powerful to call the evil. Finally Zeynep's jealousy and her inability to form a

'decent' family transform her to a monster. She is a sexually active, single woman who is a threat to the family as an institution, hence the society.

4. CONCLUSION

Horror is an intriguing genre. It provides valuable information about the society. It is one of the visible tools to identify what is defined as good and evil in the society, thus what is 'normal' and monstrous. However still, "Why anyone wants to be horrified?" is an important question to enlighten the genre's high box office revenue. Robin Wood suggested that the monsters in the horror films represented the return of the repressed; they are our "Collective nightmares" (Wood 2003, p.78). In the case of six films that are analyzed in this thesis, the monster is woman and her sexuality. In a traditional patriarchal society the repression of woman and her sexuality is commonly experienced. Thus, it is not surprising to see monstrous feminine in the recent horror films. Furthermore almost the half of the horror films that are produced between 2004 and 2010 represents woman as monstrous and the source of evil, which is a significant amount. Furthermore these movies are mainly the first examples of the subgenres; first fantastic horror, first slasher film, first possession horror film etc.

Kaya Özkaracalar in his article "Between appropriation and innovation: Turkish horror cinema" explains that till 2003 only three features were produced within the category of horror genre in Turkey, plus one art-house horror movie and some few other pictures with horror motifs in other genres (2003, p.216). He further suggests that none of them consisted of horrific elements of Turkish folklore and mythology; instead these few examples were either directly inspired by renowned American features or based on western horror motifs (ibid.). With the reemerge of the genre in 2004 in Turkey, by the movie *The School*, many of the young directors chose to follow its lead. All directors of the films that are analyzed in this thesis, except Orhan Oğuz are in their early thirties, well educated (Mostly film and TV graduates) and modern men who are also ambitious directors. They choose horror genre for their first feature films, some to catch the box office success of *The School* and some just because mainly enjoyed the genre. Many of them also wrote their own script. Hence all of these ambitious, idealist young directors decided to make a horror movie and the in their very first movies all of them visualized

woman as the monster. Consequently, these deliberately made choices indicate that the most strongly repressed other of the patriarchal unconscious of our society as woman.

Tül Akbal Süalp argues that the strong and consecutively developed economic crises have been effective for this psychology as they let to high unemployment and growing poverty in Turkey (Akbal Süalp). The economic situation Akbal Süalp suggests, lead to hopelessness and helplessness among silent majority (mainly male majorities) causing strong discomfort and hatred towards “the others” (mainly women). She explains that starting from the mid-nineties, the representation of women in the white screen has changed gradually;

They faded away from the scenes as characters and have become backdrops in most of the dramas. No meaningful dialogues have been written for them. On the screen they have started to emerge as new types of femme fatale characters but now from different backgrounds and classes. Most commonly, these women have appeared from the city skirts, from lower classes as morbid provocateurs and seducers who lead men to commit crime, violence and irrational actions and, of course, become the victims of these brutalities and violence (Akbal, Süalp.)

The male characters according to Akbal Süalp are suffering from a life full of drama in which, either no woman is included or weakly represented as cartooned and ill two-dimensional silhouettes (ibid.).

Different explanations of the reason of this repression are explained by many other theorists besides Robin Wood such as Julia Kristeva. Kristeva argues in her theory of abjection that woman is perceived as an abject in three dimensions: first as a border, second as the mother who is unwilling to release her child and third as a feminine body. The woman is the border of man; man defines himself according to the woman, hence she is a necessity but not within the self, an abject. The generative features of woman as Kristeva suggests are considered abject. The maternal body and her monstrous womb are abject to the individual because in the earlier stages of infancy the mother is reluctant to break away from the child (Kristeva 1982, p. 13). The child is necessary for the mother to make sense in the symbolic. Furthermore Kristeva further argues that the mother is the primal authority in mapping one’s clean and proper body. Accordingly, Barbara Creed explains that the maternal body, the womb and the female body as being abject find their places in the representation of monster and evil in the horror films (Creed 1993, p.8). The films *Gomeda*, *The Abortion* and *The Haunted* included the

exact images of the monstrous womb. In the first movie *Gomeda* myth was originated by a monstrous womb and the caves represented many interwoven wombs. In *The Abortion* the monstrous womb was the source of the haunting ghost and all the evil. Finally in *The Haunted* there is the perfect image of the evil that the monstrous womb evokes; the demonic half Jinn baby.

Barbara Creed brings another explanation of the monstrous feminine via Freud's theory of castration anxiety. Creed argues that the castration anxiety is represented in the monstrous feminine not only by the woman as castrated but also woman as the castrator (ibid. p.122). The female body represents the threat of castration to men; nevertheless, she is monstrous as she is also perceived as the castrator. The movies *Gene*, *Semum* and *Dark Spells* are the perfect examples of the monstrous feminine as the castrator. In *Gene* the slasher was the perfect image of the monstrous feminine as the castrator: a woman who castrated all her victims and collected their genitalia. In *Semum* the wife attacks her husband and the neighbor with scissors. Finally in *Dark Spells* the murderer who is a woman under spell murders both men and woman; however, only decapitates men. She furthermore hangs the heads of her male victims to the doors as a symbol of her victory.

When analyzing these films the theories of the west regarding repression, "the other" and gender are can be argued to be very much explanatory. It is true that the society suffer from these repressions severely, however the reason of western theories complying with these films can also be argued as the directors having a western perspective. All these young, well educated male directors, even though include Islamic or folkloric horror elements to their movies have the tendency to create with the western principles. These directors reproduce and reaffirm the western theories by their work due to their western education and lifestyle. Nevertheless, this information points out that in a patriarchal society, even well educated and modernized men regardless of their social class repress women and their sexuality.

Turkish society while trying to keep the old values of its traditions and to integrate the concepts of the west suffers from great pressure. There is a big gap between the established modes of existence and the real possibilities of human freedom in our

society. Furthermore, there are also religious dynamics together with economic conditions to enhance this pressure. The individuals try to exist and succeed within all these conflicting values within the society. This patriarchal and traditional yet westernized and capitalist society is threatened by the independent, young, sexually active women. They are the scapegoats of these incompatibilities within the society. It is still a strongly patriarchal society ruled by the traditions and religion. However due to the establishment of the western principles the patriarchs can no longer control the independent woman. Hence she is a threat, a monster that is repressed and punished accordingly. She is a threat to the fundamental institutions of the patriarchal society; the family and an ambitious rival at the workplace. These anxieties are directly reflected in the horror films. The monsters are young, independent, usually well-educated and sexually active women. They are so ambitious and uncontrollable that, they do not hesitate to invoke evil powers to get what they want. Accordingly, they are severely punished by men in the end; hence enabling the relief that the society seeks.

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