SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF LOVECRAFTIAN COSMIC HORROR MOVIES AND AN EVALUATION OF HORROR GENRE IN TURKISH CINEMA

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BY

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PLAGIARISM

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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ABSTRACT

Cosmic Horror, developed by H. P. Lovecraft, is a subgenre of science fiction, fantasy and horror. Cosmic horror is about the fear of the unknowable. It is usually about threatening beings from outer space or ancient malevolent mysteries. It has also played a key role in the development of horror cinema. Unlike stereotypical horror themes, deep stories about the pains of human existence are included in the cosmic horror subgenre. This thesis presents a research on feature films that are directly or indirectly related to the cosmic horror genre. With this aim, some sample films were selected and some sequences of these films were analyzed using the semiotic method. Moreover, in order to make an evaluation on horror films in Turkish cinema, participants who have produced works in the horror genre were interviewed. They were asked to answer specific questions. A conclusion was finally reached based on the collected findings.

Key words: H. P. Lovecraft, Horror, Cinema, Cosmic Horror, Science Fiction, Turkish Horror Cinema, Semiotic

ÖZET

H. P. Lovecraft tarafından geliştirilen Kozmik Korku, bilim kurgu, fantezi ve korku türlerinin bir alt türüdür. Kozmik korku, bilinmeyenden duyulan korkuyla ilgilidir. Genellikle uzaydan gelen tehditkâr varlıklar veya kadim kötücül gizemler hakkındadır. Korku sinemasının gelişiminde de önemli bir rol oynamıştır. Klişeleşmiş korku temalarının aksine, insan varoluşunun acılarına dair derin hikayeler kozmik korku alt türüne dahildir. Bu tez, kozmik korku türüyle doğrudan veya dolaylı olarak ilişkili olan uzun metrajlı filmler üzerine bir araştırma sunmaktadır. Bu amaçla bazı örnek filmler seçilmiş ve bu filmlerin bazı sekansları göstergebilimsel yöntem kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Ayrıca Türk sinemasında korku filmleri üzerine bir değerlendirme yapabilmek için korku türünde eser vermiş katılımcılarla görüşülmüştür. Kendilerinden belirli sorulara cevap vermeleri istenmiştir. Elde edilen bulgular ışığında bir sonuca ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: H. P. Lovecraft, Korku, Sinema, Kozmik Korku, Bilimkurgu, Türk Korku Sineması, Göstergebilim

To My Father

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1. INTRODUCTION

Humans have succeeded in becoming human by telling stories. This thesis aims to explain how old and deep-rooted the narrative tradition is. If there is one characteristic that distinguishes humanity from other animals, it is the ability to tell stories. Homo Sapiens means "wise man" in Latin. But humans not only know, they also narrate. They create stories to carry knowledge from generation to generation, from region to region. The term “Homo Narrans”, which is very appropriate for this concept, means "storyteller" in Latin. This term was first coined by Walter R. Fisher in his 1984 article "Narration as a human communication paradigm: The case of public moral argument" (Fisher, 1984).

Humanity tells stories about what it has known and imagined since the day it came into existence, making it permanent. Stories not only make knowledge permanent, but also open the horizons of pioneering people and guide them. The Apollo 11 mission may have been inspired by literature or cinema, such as the story of a prince flying to the moon (The Little Prince) or Jules Verne's novel From the Earth to the Moon and its movie adaptation. It is natural that most people who watched these movies or read these books at the time dreamed of living on the moon and exploring other planets. The fact that this was achieved so quickly has a lot to do with dreams and hopes. Human beings have always been curious about things beyond what their eyes see and their skin feels. Since the earliest stories and legends that written and oral tradition has been able to transmit to humanity, these fictions, which are a reflection of imagination, have been encountered. Today, these traditional themes of "speculative fiction" continue to live on, modernized and adapted to the times.

The term "speculative fiction" was first coined by Robert A. Heinlein to name a subgenre of science fiction. However, currently it is more commonly used as an umbrella term for genres such as fantasy, science fiction and horror, as well as hybrid forms of these genres. Since the term does not yet have a clear definition, it can be used by different people to mean different things. A modern definition of speculative fiction is any text that departs from a "real" or "natural" explanation for events and characters, which means that it is supposed to be more imaginative than real. Literary genres in this direction emerged as a reaction to the idea that art, which developed after the Enlightenment, should be mimetic, that is, it should imitate life. This form of understanding sought to replace the supposed irrationality of medieval myths with rationality and scientific knowledge. It therefore excluded "fantasy" as a pejorative term from literature. Fantasy was seen as undesirable because it was illogical, unconvincing, naive and childish. For these reasons, speculative fiction is a generic nomenclature for a variety of genres that are in opposition to traditionalized Western culture, which has an unshakable prejudice that literature is an imitation of real life. The attempts to challenge this mimetic conception of literature began with Gothic literature and have continued up to the present day (Oziewicz, 2017).

Meanwhile, genres such as fantasy, science fiction and horror have become more popular today because of their appeal. These genres, which are covered by "speculative fiction", are attractive because they integrate fantastic elements that occur in realistic settings with high moral values. People still love stories about extraordinary people and animals, despite the modern science and technology developing around them. Because these stories remind them that there are other worlds beyond what the eyes can see. It is through stories like these that people can make seminal connections between the past, present and future. Speculative fiction

can help people understand themselves better by showing them how deeply rooted their sense of wonder is. It can also give them the hope to make a difference when they see that people who are different from them are driven by the same motivations and emotions.

The first step to liberation is to think outside the box. When people break free from their current conditioning, it will be much easier for them to choose the path of liberation. In this way, a higher level of life can be achieved by breaking away from the destructive conditioning of mainstream society. They can then create things that have never been created before. Fantasy movies (science fiction, horror, etc.) are perfect tools for this.

In this thesis, examples of Cosmic Horror movies, which are at the intersection of horror and science fiction genres, are presented. The scientific approach of semiotics is used to make sense of these films. Semiotics suggests that every visual or auditory structure can be interpreted according to its elements (sign, signified and signifier). This approach helps to understand the content of a subject by identifying what is being conveyed. Therefore, this research examines how Cosmic Horror films represent modern scientific technologies, especially on a cosmic scale, to convey messages about humanity, science or the environment.

Cosmic Horror refers to the sense of futility that humanity feels when it realizes the vastness of the universe and its own insignificance in this cosmic order. Lovecraft's stories are a satire on the sense of self-worth that humans have in the cosmic order. According to Lovecraft, humans are happy because they have an enormous lack of knowledge. Otherwise, they lose their minds and life becomes

unlivable for them. Nature is unpredictable and uncontrollable. H. P. Lovecraft's stories always have a pessimistic ending (Koçsoy, 2017, pp. 202-203).

For example, in "Alien" (1979), the crew of a spaceship has to fight a creature they discover on an alien planet. In "In the Mouth of Madness" (1994), an epidemic of madness spreading from the books of a mad author begins to affect all of humanity. In "The Call of Cthulhu" (2005), the crew of an ocean-going ship discovers that an unnamed island is home to an ancient alien. In "The Mist" (2007), a group of civilians trapped in a supermarket battle alien creatures in the mist that has descended over the town. In "Arrival" (2016), experts investigate alien ships that appear in 12 different locations around the world. These horror films want to show how ideas about nature and society can be dramatically changed by an unexpected catastrophe.

The thesis consists of four parts. Part I is the introduction to this thesis and contains the problem and purpose of this thesis. In addition, the main focus of this thesis is stated. Part II contains a literature review that examines the origins of horror films. Starting from the invention of cinema, the development of horror cinema as a genre has been discussed. Afterwards, the origins of these films in literature are investigated and Cosmic Horror is analyzed as a subgenre. Furthermore, detailed information about H. P. Lovecraft, who is considered to be the founder of this genre, is given.

Part III provides a semiotic analysis of the selected films. The specific scenes in the films were identified and visually described. In the context of Cosmic Horror, the meaning it denotes is articulated. The messages conveyed by the film frames in their denotative and connotative meanings are revealed. Furthermore, in this part, an online interview was conducted with the artists who produced works in horror cinema

and literature. The status of the horror genre in Turkish cinema was discussed with them.

In the last part, a conclusion is reached by using all the findings collected. It is mentioned whether the thesis has reached the conclusion it wanted to reach and suggestions are presented for similar studies to be conducted in the future.

2. HORROR GENRE IN LITERATURE AND CINEMA

2.1. Development Of The Horror Fiction In Literature

This first part of the thesis presents a detailed literature review on Cosmic Horror. The birth, development and current state of horror literature is presented. Information about cosmic horror and H. P. Lovecraft is given. The birth and development of Turkish cinema is also explained. Information is given about the status of genres such as science fiction and horror in Turkish cinema.

2.1.1. The origin of the horror

Fear is an emotion experienced by everyone. All living organisms are in a constant state of fear because of their need to protect themselves. Fear is a natural instinct developed as a result of the need to survive (Garcia, 2017).

The word "horror" comes from the Latin "horrere" and means to tremble in fear or panic (Harper, 2022). Horror fiction is a genre of literature that scares, frightens or generally unsettles. A surprising number of things can be frightening to people in some contexts. Horror literature feeds on this basic emotion. Horror stories are usually supernatural and focus on a protagonist or group of characters trying to survive against the forces of evil. On the other hand, there are also horror stories that do not have paranormal characteristics and are driven by the hostility of a killer or the character himself/herself. In the horror genre, a person is frightened by the presentation of impending danger, risk, destruction or death to themselves or someone else. The desired outcome is an emotional outburst of fear that triggers immediate flight or fight. The terror itself is found in the fact that the threat of danger is present and insoluble (Carroll, 1990).

The horror genre has a long and storied history, dating back to ancient civilizations and continuing to evolve to this day. In ancient times, legends of ghosts, demons and monsters were told to scare people. Horror stories can be traced back to the Shamans who told stories by the fire. One of the oldest examples of horror literature can be found in ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian texts, which contain stories about supernatural beings and the afterlife. These stories were often used to explain the unknown and instill fear in readers. Ancient Greek culture and philosophy also provided early examples of the horror genre. It later spread to a wide geography with the Roman Empire. In the Middle Ages, when fiction and non-fiction were intertwined, horror elements also found their place in abundance. When the institution of religion weakened with the Enlightenment, fantastic stories became unwelcome. As a reaction to this situation, Gothic Literature, which has close ties with the Romanticism movement, emerged (Cardin, 2017).

2.1.2. Gothic literature

The Gothic literary tradition is a genre of literature that emerged in the late 18th century and continues to influence literature today. The term "Gothic" comes from the word "Goth". It was the name given by the Greeks and Romans to the tribes from Eastern Europe and Scandinavia who were instrumental in the fall of the Roman Empire. Over time, this term has become synonymous with destruction, war and barbarism. The term, which first became widespread with the flamboyant Gothic architecture that developed in the thirteenth century, has been effective in different fields. In literature, it was originated as a reaction to the post-Enlightenment period of the 18th century. After the Enlightenment, the idea that works of art should be mimetic, that is, they should imitate real life, became dominant. The idea that everything can be achieved through reason and prejudice, superstition and

"unhealthy" emotions such as fear should be eliminated became widespread. Attempts to challenge this literary conception began with Gothic literature and have continued to the present day. The Gothic tradition is characterized by a fascination with the macabre and grotesque, as well as a preoccupation with the supernatural, including ghosts, demons and otherworldly forces (Davenport-Hines, 2005, pp. 12-14).

The Gothic literary tradition begins with Horace Walpole's 1764 novel The Castle of Otranto. Sir Horace Walpole was born in London on September 24, 1717. His father was one of George II's ministers. Walpole, who traveled around Europe in his youth, initially tried to enter politics but soon decided that it was not for him. Later in his life he lived a simple life. He built a villa in Strawberry Hill using the Gothic architecture he admired. Walpole, who also took the title of Count, used all his wealth to buy artworks (Scognamillo, 2014, pp. 27-28).

When Walpole first published his novel, he concealed his identity and gave his work the impression of a newly discovered historical document. When he saw the interest in his book, he revealed his identity. Walpole laid the foundations of a horror tradition that has survived to the present day. He introduced clichés such as majestic impassable castles, deep corridors, skeletons, chains and torture devices, ghosts and superstitions to the reader for the first time. Gothic literature expresses the fear, tension, awe and pleasure people feel in the face of the unknown and incomprehensible (Smith, 2007, pp. 18-25).

Walpole's other important works include The Mysterious Mother: A Tragedy (1768) and Hieroglyphic Tales (1785). He was criticized by literary authorities for the lack of didacticism in his fiction, shallow and unrealistic characters, etc. when he first published his works. Nevertheless, his debut influenced the writers who came after

him and succeeded in starting a genre. In 1773, John Aikin and Anna Laetitia Aikin (later Barbauld) published On the Pleasure of Objects of Horror, which included an essay discussing why horror stories are loved and a short story called Sir Bertrand. Clara Reeve's novel The Old English Baron (1778) presented a story without fantastic elements. In The Recess (1785), Sophia Lee produced a more professional work (Punter & Byron, 2004, pp. 138-139, 159-160, 169-170).

Ann Radcliffe was the writer who best utilized the themes of Gothic literature. Continuing in the realist tradition of Clara Reeve, she wrote highly acclaimed novels such as A Sicilian Romance (1790), The Romance of the Forest (1791) and The Mysteries of Udolpho (1794), and her most influential work was The Italian (1797) (Davenport-Hines, 2005, pp. 180-183).

William Beckford published his Arabic-influenced novel Vathek in 1786. The novel is about a power-hungry Caliph who is jealous of the Prophet Muhammad and tries to usurp his place and become God. Vathek's quest for power eventually leads him to his inevitable downfall. Beckford's writing is so colorful that it is easy to lose sight of the overall theme of the novel. Nevertheless, Beckford completed the novel using a very complex structure and language that was appreciated by later writers (Punter & Byron, 2004, pp. 181-184).

Gregory Matthew Lewis published his much-discussed novel The Monk in 1796. A bawdy religious satire, the novel was heavily criticized by conservative circles. This was the first Gothic novel in which the supernatural featured prominently. Instead of ghosts, there is a malicious monk named Simon. He starts dealing with weak people and destroys their faith in God. He then becomes obsessed

with stealing relics and their power, eventually creating chaos (Smith, 2007, pp. 27-33).

2.1.3. Development of modern horror fiction

In the 19th century, the Gothic tradition evolved into the Horror fiction known today. Although critics opposed Gothic literature, the masses of the public showed interest in these stories. Writers of this period used grotesque characters to express their fear of the unknown, a world beyond their understanding. The stories in such novels take place in gloomy castles, during storms, at midnight. The atmosphere is dark; feelings of terror and tension are felt throughout the story. Supernatural elements such as ghosts, vampires and werewolves are often added to make the setting even more eerie (Scognamillo, 2014, pp. 44-45).

English writer and poet Mary Shelley is best known for her novel Frankenstein (1818). She drew on the same Gothic tradition that inspired her predecessors. However, she abandoned the Gothic genre and its stereotypical themes of horror, death and haunted houses. Instead, she used modern science as a literary tool. The origin story of the novel Frankenstein is worthy of attention. In 1816, the famous writer Lord Byron, Mary Goodwin (Shelley), her fiancé Percy Shelley and other friends gathered at a villa near Lake Geneva. Unable to go out due to the weather conditions, everyone decides to write a horror story. Frankenstein, the foundations of which were laid here, was published in 1818. Two years later, the book would be recognized as a classic (Scognamillo, 2014, pp. 33-36).

The Gothic tradition, of course, reaches beyond Europe. It crosses the Atlantic Ocean and influences the writers of the New World. Among the well-known early horror writers in America are Charles Brockden Brown, Washington Irving, Nathaniel

Hawthorne and Edgar Allan Poe. Charles Brockden Brown was the first American to write Gothic novels with titles such as Wieland (1798) and Ormond (1799). Washington Irving is known for his fantastic adventure stories, but he also published a number of Gothic novels. Nathaniel Hawthorne combined the supernatural with domestic life in stories such as The House of the Seven Gables and Young Goodman Brown. Edgar Allan Poe occupies a unique place in both American and world literature. He is considered the father of the modern horror story. He is also known as the creator of detective fiction and science fiction. His short stories and poems such as "The Fall of the House of Usher" and "The Raven" are known for their chilling atmosphere and psychological depth (Punter & Byron, 2004, pp. 97, 123-124, 129-130, 155-156).

Edgar Allan Poe's works have similar themes focusing on death, fear and mystery. He has a unique writing style. Poe is thought to have invented some writing styles that are still used by many writers today, such as his use of eerie imagery and the use of dialog to explain characters' actions and motivations. His stories have a psychological component, focusing on the disturbed minds of his protagonists. Poe was also a literary critic and made important contributions to the horror genre. He is considered one of the best writers of horror stories of all time, along with Horace Walpole, Lord Byron and Mary Shelley. His works are more psychologically frightening than those of his predecessors. He has a special talent for creating plots full of twists and surprises that make his stories more interesting than those of his contemporaries (Smith, 2007, pp. 61-68).

Poe's works were influenced by his own life experiences and emotions, which he often expressed in his writings. Poe is most famous for his horror stories, which are short stories dealing with mysterious and macabre subjects. He also wrote a variety of

poems, short stories, novels, plays and essays dealing with similar themes of death and murder. Poe's writing, especially his poetry, is very dark and is often considered to contain extremely disturbing subjects (Punter & Byron, 2004, pp. 155-156).

Robert Louis Stevenson's "Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" (1886) is considered one of the cornerstones of the horror genre. The story tells of a lawyer who is transformed into a horrible creature after an experiment. The monster continues to live his life but has no control over his actions. This is the first example of a monstrous being acting within our own society, rather than in a distant mythological setting. The plot of the novel revolves around a double life that becomes too complex for one person to handle. The novel also introduced the concept of a monster born out of scientific experiments (Punter & Byron, 2004, pp. 166-167).

One of the most popular horror writers is the Irish author Bram Stoker. His novel Dracula (1897) is generally considered the first official vampire story. It is about a count named Vlad Tepes who becomes a vampire and returns to his castle in Transylvania. The book is a classic of horror fiction and inspired many other authors to write vampire-themed novels. There have been many adaptations of Dracula, but perhaps the most famous is the 1931 film starring Bela Lugosi as the Count. The vampire genre has become embedded in popular culture and indispensable in modern horror films (Davenport-Hines, 2005, pp. 304-313).

Lovecraft is also credited with inventing the subgenre of Cosmic horror, which deals with the fear of the unknown and the horrors that lurk beyond the limits of human understanding. Lovecraft was influenced by Edgar Allan Poe when he started writing horror stories. Lovecraft's stories contain descriptions of strange creatures and situations not easily explained by science or rational human thought. They revolve

around human protagonists who explore unknown regions or dimensions in our universe. These regions are filled with strange and terrifying creatures that cannot be understood by humanity. Lovecraft's short story "The Call of Cthulhu" is about a group of people traveling to an island in the Pacific Ocean where they find a strange ancient God called Cthulhu (Davenport-Hines, 2005, pp. 132-133).

Horror literature has continued to grow and develop over the years. Many classic horror stories have been made into movies and TV shows. In the second half of the twentieth century, the horror genre began to diversify with the emergence of new sub-genres such as slasher films, zombie and body horror. The rise of the internet and social media also led to the emergence of online horror stories and creepypastas.

Nowadays, the horror genre continues to evolve with new technologies such as virtual reality and augmented reality being used to create immersive and terrifying experiences. Horror movies, books and video games continue to attract audiences of all ages, while the genre remains as popular as ever.

As a result, the horror genre has a rich and varied history spanning centuries and continents. From ancient tales of the supernatural to modern explorations of technology and the human mind, the genre has constantly evolved and adapted to changing times.

2.2. Lovecraftian Cosmic Horror

Cosmic horror is also referred to as "Lovecraftian horror". This naming derives from the name of the American horror writer H. P. Lovecraft. It is linked to the common theme and worldview that Lovecraft uses in his weird stories. In his fictions, the cosmos continues to exist in all its might, and humanity has no significant influence on him. In many of his stories, Lovecraft's protagonists encounter ancient, alien beings that defy human comprehension and wield unimaginable power. When people want to access more information about the workings of the universe, or when this information is suddenly encountered, their own weak perceptions prevent them from making sense of that information. When they realize the nothingness and purposelessness of humanity in the face of all the might of the universe, the characters go mad. In Lovecraft's stories, the universe is incomprehensible. Because human beings are very insignificant in the face of the unique knowledge of the universe and their minds cannot perceive it. According to Lovecraft, everything perceived by the limits of the human mind and body is ridiculously superficial and incomplete. Therefore, he criticizes humanity for placing itself at the center of the universe. According to him, the Universe is in a cosmic indifference towards humanity (Ralickas, 2007, pp. 366-367).

Lovecraft wrote in 1920s America, a time when science had made remarkable strides but was thought to be losing its soul as it became entwined with capitalism and progressivism. Most of his stories take place in New England. H. P. Lovecraft's works are set in different times, as well as his literary style differs among them. Cosmic horror is characterized by sorrow, alienation, dread, foreboding, and hopelessness. It has three distinctive elements: anti-anthropocentrism, awareness of humanity's

insignificance in the universe, and themes about knowledge bringing catastrophe to people (Punter & Byron, 2004, pp. 143-144).

The protagonists of these stories are confronted with alien beings that are superior to humans. They are superior to humans, possessing cosmic secrets. Since people tend to deify them, cults and beliefs have been formed in the name of these beings. These beings are neither good nor bad by nature. They are simply in a "cosmic indifference" towards humanity. For them, humans have no value in the cosmic order. However, people still believed that these alien beings had a plan for humans because of their anthropocentric views. But of course, this is a hoax. Any action of these beings will create absolute destruction for people. According to these stories, humans cannot understand the true nature of the universe. There is no room for them in the world of cosmic beings. This feeling of smallness is a universal and immutable idea to humanity. The universe is not going to grant humanity great power just because they want it (Peak, 2020, pp. 175-179).

2.3. Howard Phillips Lovecraft (1890-1937)

This part presents a biography of H. P. Lovecraft, his literary career and the state of his literary legacy after his death. H. P. Lovecraft's literary career was tumultuous and ultimately unsuccessful, but he remained influential as a horror writer and became one of the most reprinted authors of the 20th century. He is considered the father of modern horror.

2.3.1. Early life

Howard Phillips Lovecraft was born on August 20, 1890 in Providence, Rhode Island, USA. His mother, Sarah Susan Lovecraft (née Phillips), came from a wealthy industrialist family. His father, Winfield Scott Lovecraft, was a long-distance "commercial traveler". In 1893, when H. P. Lovecraft was three years old, his father suffered a psychotic break and was admitted to Butler Hospital (a mental institution) in Providence, where he remained until his death in 1898. Winfield's cause of death is listed in medical records as "general paresis". Although it was not known until 1911, today it is accepted that this diagnosis was caused by syphilis. Lovecraft said throughout his life that his father was paralyzed from overwork and remained that way until his death. It is not known whether he distorted the truth consciously or unconsciously (Joshi, 2013, pp. 25-26).

After his father's illness, Lovecraft and his mother moved in with his maternal grandfather Whipple Van Buren Phillips, two aunts and his grandmother (454 Angell Street). Whipple was a very wealthy businessman. Lovecraft began to live in very good conditions here. His grandfather became a real father figure for him. Because of his father's condition, his mother was very protective and fond of Lovecraft. Howard had a rather spoiled upbringing. His grandfather often traveled for his work. He brought young Lovecraft various gifts. He took a very close interest in him and

nurtured his curiosity. From an early age, Lovecraft began reading various books in what he described as the "black, windowless attic room" of the house. It was here that he laid the foundations of his future literary and intellectual ideas (Joshi, 2016, pp. 14-15).

Lovecraft adopted an anti-Christian attitude from an early age. In a letter to R. Michael, he says that he was never impressed by the Sunday School he was sent to when he was five years old. He frightened everyone in the church and declared that he was first a Muslim (under the influence of the Arabian Nights) and then a Pagan (under the influence of Rome). He built altars in the woods near their home and made offerings to the Roman gods. Over time, as his interest in science grew, Lovecraft explained, he abandoned this childish Paganism and became an inveterate atheist and materialist (Letter to R. Michael, July 20, 1929).

Lovecraft then familiarized himself with English culture. According to Lovecraft, his father was an Anglophile, and even the English he spoke was British English. Lovecraft's thinking was based on white Anglo-Saxon supremacy. He criticized the northern states for taking a stand against slavery during the American Civil War. He harbored a deep racism against blacks. He maintained this attitude throughout his life. He also had a hatred for foreign immigrants and mongrelization. His Anglophilia was so strong that he even thought it was wrong for America to gain independence and separate from Britain. He wrote articles emphasizing that the United States should have fought alongside the Allies in World War I. Theater and especially Shakespeare had a great influence on him. He preferred to use British English instead of American English in all his writings throughout his literary life (Joshi, 2013, pp. 29-30).

When Lovecraft's grandmother Rhoby Alzada Place Phillips died in 1896, the family entered a period of great mourning. Lovecraft, who was only five and a half years old, remembers those days very well. His mother and aunts wear black mourning clothes. There was a constant sense of sadness in the house. During this period, Lovecraft begins to have nightmares under the influence of these black clothes. He is haunted by supernatural, demonic beings in his nightmares. These beings, which Lovecraft himself calls "night-gaunts", must have originated from the luxury edition of John Milton's epic poem Paradise Lost, illustrated by Gustave Doré (Lovecraft, 2019, pp. 25).

In a letter to Rheinhart Kleiner dated November 16, 1916, Lovecraft describes these nightmares as follows: "...In my dreams, they spin me through space with nauseating speed, all the while frightening and pushing me with their hideous spears..." (Letter to Rheinhart Kleiner, November 16, 1916).

Lovecraft said that he tried to stay awake at night to avoid these nightmares (Letter to Rheinhart Kleiner, November 16, 1916). It is not hard to imagine that it was the nightmares of these years that inspired the aliens of the future Cthulhu Mythos.

Lovecraft began his first attempts at writing when he was seven or eight years old. However, in his own words, he did not really write a story until he was 14. During this period, as his interest in science and especially astronomy grew, he stopped writing stories for a while. He was even convinced that writing was not for him (Letter to R. Michael, July 20, 1929).

In 1904, his grandfather Whipple Van Buren Phillips died and the family soon collapsed financially. Lovecraft was forced to move with his mother to a small house (598 Angell Street) very close to their old home. Meanwhile, Lovecraft began to

suffer from psychological problems. Leaving the home he was born and raised in had a huge impact on him. He even contemplated suicide. Throughout his life, Lovecraft's crises almost brought him to the point of detachment from life. First, the death of his grandmother (1896), the prolonged illness and death of his father (1898) and finally the death of his grandfather (1904) caused him intense psychological disturbances (Joshi, 2013, pp. 86-88).

As a result of a series of mental crises during his high school years, he failed to graduate from high school and his university dreams were dashed. However, he managed to improve himself and his scientific articles were published in various journals. After a discussion with poet Fred Jackson in Argosy, one of the pulp magazines he read in those years, he switched to amateur journalism. He contacted the United Amateur Press Association (UAPA), which operated mainly by correspondence. Here he wrote articles and reviews. He became a well-known figure in amateur journalism before he started writing weird stories here again. He was even elected president of the UAPA in 1917-18. In 1916, he published his 1908 story "The Alchemist" in the United Amateur at the insistence of editor W. Paul Cook. Later, with Cook's encouragement, he tried again to write short stories, and in 1917 he wrote The Tomb (published in 1922) and Dagon (published in 1919). These stories were published in Cook's amateur press magazine The Vagrant. Although he later published his stories through amateur publishing houses, it took some time before he had a professional literary career. It was not until Weird Tales magazine was founded in 1923 that Lovecraft found a regular platform to publish his stories (Lovecraft, 2019, pp. 10-12).

While Lovecraft continued to be an amateur writer, his grandfather's legacy was slowly eroding. His mother Susie wanted her son to take a professional job where

he could earn a regular income. Lovecraft felt that professionalism would weaken his fiction, so he continued to write as an amateur for some time. He felt that he was too far outside the literary tastes of the time. Indeed, Lovecraft's early stories are largely influenced by 18th century literature. However, from 1916 onwards, he began to earn a living by working as a proofreader and ghostwriter. Of course, these jobs did not help him earn a regular income (Joshi, 2013, pp. 341-342).

In 1919, his mother Susie was separated from her beloved son after a nervous breakdown and was taken to Butler Hospital. This hospital, where Lovecraft's father had been hospitalized and died years before, was also the place where his mother spent her last days. The underlying cause of Susie's illness was their deteriorating financial situation. Since his mother was in this hospital for a long time (until her death in 1921), Lovecraft had to cope with life alone for the first time. However, this period cannot be perceived as a bad time for Lovecraft. Lovecraft went out of the city for the first time to meet and socialize with the friends he had made through correspondence over the years (Lovecraft, 2019, pp. 78-80).

In fact, it is not quite accurate to see him as an "eccentric recluse", as every Lovecraft biography suggests. At one point in his life (1908-13), Lovecraft had a lonely period in which he failed to graduate from high school and his dreams of university were shattered. The years of amateur journalism that began immediately after this period allowed him to make many pen pals. H. P. Lovecraft wrote approximately 100,000 letters during his lifetime. Lovecraft corresponded with many of his pen pals until the end of his life, but he never met most of them face to face (Joshi, 2013, pp. 848-849).

Among the pen pals he met during this period were Alfred Galpin, Frank Belknap Long, Samuel Loveman, and the painter and poet Clark Ashton Smith, whom he met through Galpin. Long and Smith remained in close contact with Lovecraft throughout his life and were members of Lovecraft's own writing circle, the Lovecraft Circle (Joshi, 2001, pp. 116-117).

On May 24, 1921, his mother Sarah Susan Lovecraft died during gall bladder surgery. This unexpected and traumatic loss caused Lovecraft to fall into depression for a while. Consoled by his friends at times when he felt he had no reason to live, Lovecraft underwent a transformation during this period of his life. He is now a somewhat grown-up Lovecraft, trying to adapt to society. This sudden change is attributed to his mother's half-repressive and half-protective attitude towards him throughout his life (Joshi, 2013, pp. 329-330).

Lovecraft began to travel longer and stay at friends' houses. His amateur writing endeavors also gained momentum during this period. He even began a romantic relationship with Sonia Greene, whom he met through amateur journalism (Lovecraft, 2019, p. 81).

Sonia, a middle-class businesswoman, was a Jewish immigrant from Russia and worked as a milliner in a department store in New York. She has all the qualities that Lovecraft's conservative New England family would disapprove of. Lovecraft marries Sonia without informing his surviving aunts and moves to New York. This was to be a radical change for him. At first he loved the splendor of the city. He often visited the city's historic districts. But why did Lovecraft marry Sonia, a Jew, despite his hostility towards non-Anglo-Saxon races? Likewise, one of his closest friends, Samuel Loveman, was also Jewish. Clearly Lovecraft saw them as individuals

assimilated by "American civilization". However, his marriage to Sonia was soon shaken, mainly for economic reasons. First, Sonia lost her job. For the first time in his life, Lovecraft started looking for work. Unfortunately, his efforts were unsuccessful. Sonia then found a job in Cleveland and left the city, leaving Lovecraft in New York. Lovecraft began living in a slum. The multi-ethnic population made Lovecraft sick. This, of course, fueled his xenophobia. The story "The Red Hook Horror" bears traces of these days. In 1926, Lovecraft returned to his hometown of Providence. It was an indescribable relief for him. His marriage to Sonya was effectively over, but they remained married until 1929 (de Camp, 1975, pp. 5-6, 160, 183-184, 222-264).

2.3.2. Lovecraft’s inspirations

Lovecraft stated that he started reading at the age of four and that one of the first books he read was probably Grimm's Fairy Tales. These tales opened the doors of the medieval world for him. Soon after, at the age of five, he discovered the Thousand and One Nights and was fascinated by these Eastern stories. He even set up an oriental corner in his room with the help of his mother. Lovecraft says that it was during this period that he coined the name Abdul Alhazred, the author of the fictional Necronomicon, which would later become an important part of his stories. At the age of six or seven, another world of inspiration opened up for Lovecraft. He discovered Greco-Roman myths and became interested in the history of the Roman Empire and Paganism. It is here that one must look for the origins of the mentality that would later develop into a deep materialism. Lovecraft recalls that at the age of five he was told that Santa Claus was not real. The next thing he said was that God must be equally unreal (de Camp, 1975, p. 18).

Lovecraft's philosophy of life is called "cosmism". Lovecraft is a mechanical materialist and atheist. His perspective is anti-human-centered. He argues that the

universe is in a cosmic indifference towards humanity. It is impossible for man to grasp the cosmic order. Feeling his own purposelessness in the face of the universe, man falls into a deep nihilism. On the other hand, Lovecraft's philosophy is different from nihilism. He judges that there may be a purpose and understanding for some intelligent beings somewhere in the universe. Even if there are such intelligent beings, the probability of humans encountering them is very low. From his point of view, it is tragicomic for a human being to put himself at the center of the universe and think that the cosmos has a divine plan for him (Joshi, 2013).

Lovecraft was an atheist, yet his stories often contained references to the ancient pagan pantheon of gods. Some gods, such as Cthulhu, are original to Lovecraft's writings, while others are based on the inventions of other authors. Lovecraft's work is characterized by an "unhealthy interest in forbidden knowledge" and an intense aversion to "non-Anglo-Saxons". Most of Lovecraft's protagonists are ordinary people who are either interested in forbidden knowledge or stumble upon it by chance.

Lovecraft relates that his grandfather told him strange improvised stories. These were all powerful sources of inspiration for the young Lovecraft. But Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849) was undoubtedly the one who truly influenced Lovecraft and led him to write Weird Fiction. Lovecraft saw Poe as a turning point for Weird Fiction, which he saw as a distinct departure from Gothic literature and as revealing the essential character of horror storytelling (Joshi, 2013, p. 43).

Weird Fiction is a hybrid term in literature. It is essentially an unusual blend of science fiction, horror and fantasy genres. This subgenre, which deals with supernatural, futuristic, bizarre and dreamlike themes, tries to see beyond the limited

and time-bound mind of humanity. As emphasized by H. P. Lovecraft, it symbolizes a shift in storytelling from anthropocentric to cosmos-centric. In these stories, human goals, thoughts and knowledge become ineffective and useless in the face of the cosmos (Noys & Murphy, 2016, pp. 117-118).

Weird Fiction, inherited from Gothic Literature, should be more than a mysterious murder story, more than a violence whose violent elements are created according to a certain rule. The danger must come from outside, from outside human beings. The laws of nature, which mankind assumes to be fixed and unchanging, should lose their validity for a short time (Lovecraft, 2013).

Weird fiction will often combine elements of science and illusionism to create the sense that something important has been overlooked; something lurks beneath the surface of things, waiting to be discovered. The characters in weird literature are therefore driven by an inner drive; an intense desire to explore the world around them. The idea of characters driven by emotional desires and striving for something that can never be achieved is a common feature of weird fiction (Noys & Murphy, 2016, pp. 123-125).

The tradition of Gothic literature begins with Horace Walpole's 1764 novel The Castle of Otranto. However, according to Lovecraft, these stories failed to produce a real sense of "horror" due to their features such as the conflict between good and evil, a didactic narrative, characters without depth and a happy ending. Edgar Allan Poe was the first American writer to achieve this. Poe succeeded in expressing horror in its entirety like a "chronicler" by conveying the good and the bad, the beautiful and the ugly, without adding his own personality to the story.

According to Lovecraft, Poe served as a pioneer for the Weird Fiction tradition that would follow him (Lovecraft, 2000, pp. 27, 43-46).

Edgar Allan Poe is considered by many artists, including H. P. Lovecraft, as the first practitioner of Weird Fiction. His stories differed from other Gothic stories in that they were more direct, sincere and real. Most importantly, he was never didactic. Poe's works called people to look back to their childhood and perceive the world in a new way. No one had ever done this before. Poe introduced themes such as madness, endless doubt, fear of the unknown and alienation from society. With this new genre came for the first time in literature an atmosphere of the macabre, and not just the fear of monsters or ghosts. Poe implied that something was wrong with nature itself and the only thing that could be done was to accept it (Davenport-Hines, 2005, pp. 334-340).

Lovecraft then studied writers such as Algernon Blackwood, Ambrose Bierce, Arthur Machen, Robert W. Chambers and, most importantly, Lord Dunsany, and defined his own literary style. Especially Dunsany's fictions helped him to define his literary style in the early years of his professional writing. His stories, which started with Dunsany's influence, gradually matured his own style (Joshi, 2013, p. 226).

Algernon Blackwood's novella "The Willows" (1907) is considered an important work of the genre. H.P. Lovecraft considered this work as the most successful supernatural story in English literature. The story is influenced by Blackwood's impressions from his trips to the River Danube. The author's novella "The Wendigo" (1910) is about a demonic, cannibalistic creature (Punter & Byron, 2004, pp. 90-91).

Ambrose Bierce was a newspaper columnist and satirist. His writing was often dark and pessimistic. Some say he was the first writer to take cosmic horror seriously before it was defined as such. Some of his writings were inspired by his time as a war correspondent (Punter & Byron, 2004, pp. 89-90, 114-115).

The British writer Arthur Machen is another well-known writer in the field of weird fiction. His works often involve themes of interdimensional travel and supernatural encounters with beings typically thought to be from outer space. Like Lovecraft, Machen used his work to challenge the conventional reality of his time (Punter & Byron, 2004, p. 146).

Robert W. Chambers wrote the classic weird tale The King in Yellow in 1895. The story is about a secret drama written by a mad playwright named Carcosa and the madness of those who read it. The King in Yellow was a major inspiration for H. P. Lovecraft's Cthulhu Mythos (Punter & Byron, 2004, p. 101).

2.3.3. Literary career

Weird Tales, one of the "pulp magazines" that became widespread at the beginning of the twentieth century, was founded in late 1922 by J. C. Henneberger and J. M. Lansinger. The first issue dated March 1923 was published on February 18, 1923. This magazine, which publishes in the horror-fantasy genre, also included science fiction stories in later periods. Other important pulp magazines of the 1920s and 30s include Amazing Stories, Famous Fantastic Mysteries, Strange Tales, Fantastic Novels, Terror Tales and Horror Stories (Scognamillo, 2014, pp. 121-123).

Lovecraft submitted several stories for consideration when Weird Tales magazine was published. Dagon was the first story published in Weird Tales in October 1923. The Hound was published in February 1924. The royalties from these

first sales were modest. However, he continued to write and submit work to "pulp" magazines, even though he was frustrated by the low pay rates. From then on, Lovecraft became a regular contributor to the magazine and enjoyed a relatively stable income. He even ghost-wrote for the famous illusionist Harry Houdini (Joshi, 2013, pp. 379-380, 410).

At first, his stories were accepted despite their relatively different style, but as his writing style gradually changed over time, some of his stories were rejected. In addition, among the first writers of the magazine were Seabury Quinn and Henry S. Whitehead, who were much better known than Lovecraft at the time. Clark Ashton Smith and Frank Belknap Long, Lovecraft's close friends in the literary community, also contributed to the magazine. Lovecraft Circle members Robert Bloch, August Derleth, Robert Ervin Howard, Donald Wandrei, C. M. Eddy Jr. and Henry Kuttner, who later joined the magazine with Lovecraft's support, also contributed to the rise of the magazine with their fiction (Scognamillo, 2014, p. 122).

The magazine, which started to be published under the editorship of Edwin Baird, suffered a great loss at the beginning. Henneberger, who was then in search of a new editor, contacted H. P. Lovecraft, who had published a few stories in Weird Tales at the time, and offered him the editorship of the magazine. Henneberger offered to pay him in advance, but if Lovecraft accepted the job, he would have to move to Chicago, where the magazine was based. That year (1924) Lovecraft married Sonia Greene and moved from his beloved hometown of Providence to New York City. Not wanting to leave his new wife, Lovecraft was hesitant. It was also doubtful whether Henneberger would actually pay Lovecraft, as he was making a loss on Weird Tales. Then Lovecraft turned down the offer. Henneberger found another

alternative. After this date, Farnsworth Wright took over the editorship of the magazine (Weinberg & Price, 1999, p. 4).

From its foundation until its closure in 1954, the magazine experienced financial problems and sometimes had difficulty in paying its writers. Nevertheless, the magazine survived for thirty years, which is not expected from a pulp magazine, and gave birth to many works and writers whose influence is still felt in the horror, fantasy and science fiction genres (Scognamillo, 2014, pp. 121-123).

Lovecraft said that most of his stories were inspired by dreams. His dreams contained strange and disturbing images, and his fiction often reflected them. He wrote extensively about dreams and their influence on his writing is evident in many passages in his works. Many of these stories were accepted for publication by "Weird Tales". For various reasons, Lovecraft was slow in submitting his stories, and he often revised them extensively before sending them out. He was also a slow and methodical writer, producing on average only one finished story per year. Most of his work was never published during his lifetime.

Lovecraft also wrote an essay, "Supernatural Horror in Literature" (1927), detailing many of the literary techniques he and others used to create horror stories. This essay provides important insights into Lovecraft's philosophy of horror.

Early in his career, H. P. Lovecraft began to attract correspondents who became a core group of literary associates known as the "Lovecraft Circle". They saw themselves as part of a wider movement of pulp magazine writers. Together, they adapted and developed many of Lovecraft's ideas, contributing stories and artwork that expanded the Cthulhu Mythos (Joshi, 2013).

Lovecraft's correspondence played an important role in the development of early science fiction and fantasy. His correspondence with Robert E. Howard, Clark Ashton Smith, Fritz Leiber, Henry Kuttner and Robert Bloch formed the basis for many publications on mythos.

Similar to Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith's work often deals with the survival of ancient races, occultism and magic. His work combines elements of horror, fantasy and mythology in his own unique style. Robert E. Howard created the genre now known as sword and sorcery with his character Conan the Barbarian. The first story, "The Phoenix on the Sword", was published in Weird Tales magazine in December 1932 and the series was soon serialized in the magazine. The character continued to evolve, with regular contributions from H. P. Lovecraft and Clark Ashton Smith, among others (Scognamillo, 2014, pp. 125-128).

Lovecraft's most famous work is "The Call of Cthulhu". This story takes place in New England and the Pacific Ocean. The story begins with a narrator describing a statue made of an unknown material. The statue is described as "an octopus-like head whose face was a mass of feelers, a scaly, rubbery-looking body, prodigious claws on hind and fore feet, and long, narrow wings behind". Lovecraft's point is that focusing on the statue makes it difficult to understand what is really important in the story. What people really need to understand is that there are strange alien beings living in the depths of the ocean who are keeping humanity under control.

Lovecraft's stories are often about "a sense of insignificance" and this can be found in many of his works, such as "At the Mountains of Madness", in which a group of explorers find an ancient city in Antarctica that was obviously built by an alien species. The explorers realize that there could be thousands or millions of these

cities all over the world, and suddenly they feel insignificant and powerless in the face of such powerful beings. Other notable Lovecraft stories include "The Color Out of Space", in which a meteorite crashes into a rural town and begins to affect the surrounding area, dooming all who come into contact with it. In The Dunwich Horror, he tells of ancient and malevolent creatures living in New England.

Many of their stories are about the idea that when you discover something terrible or wondrous beyond human experience, it can cause deep feelings of anxiety that can drive you mad. Learning that you are insignificant and powerless in the world can cause deep feelings of hopelessness. They eventually realize this fact and go mad or commit suicide to escape their feelings of hopelessness.

Lovecraft did not achieve full recognition until the 1960s and 1970s. Since then, his literary works have become better known. Lovecraft's work led to the creation of a new genre: Cosmic horror or Lovecraftian horror.

Horror writers such as Ray Bradbury, Stephen King and Brian Lumley have adopted H. P. Lovecraft's literary themes in their own work. In the 1980s there was a significant revival of weird fiction with writers such as Clive Barker, Poppy Z. Brite, Caitlin R. Kiernan, Elizabeth Hand and M. John Harrison. Writers continue to draw on the works of Lovecraft and other seminal writers of weird fiction, as well as other sources of similar material (Noys & Murphy, 2016, pp. 122-131).

Also known as "weird fantasy" or "New Weird", it is a new phenomenon that emerged in the 1990s with the work of Jeff VanderMeer, China Miéville, Michael Moorcock, M. John Harrison and other writers. The New Weird has been hailed by literary critics as a contemporary revival of interest in the genre of speculative fiction, with an emphasis on exploring new trends and subgenres. The New Weird often

focuses on topics such as posthumanism, cyberpunk, or ecological issues (Vandermeer & Vandermeer, 2012, pp. 16-19).

Today Lovecraft has a strong cult following. His works have been turned into comics, movies, video games and more.

2.3.4. Cthulhu mythos

H. P. Lovecraft's stories share a common universe and theme. Millions of years before humans, the world was ruled by the "Great Old Ones". In the alternate reality in which Lovecraft's stories take place, there are various cults in different parts of the world who see these aliens as gods. These cults believe that one day the "Ancients" will rule the world and the so-called human domination of the world will come to an end. In Lovecraft's stories, this is a reality beyond belief.

The "Cthulhu Mythos" is a term referring to a series of interconnected fictional universes strongly influenced by the writings of H. P. Lovecraft, as well as other authors such as Clark Ashton Smith and Robert E. Howard. The alien god "Cthulhu", which gives the term its name, was coined by Lovecraft in his story "The Call of Cthulhu" (1926). Cthulhu's appearance resembles an octopus, a dragon and a caricature of a human being; his trademark is his tentacles dripping greenish slime. The term was not coined by H. P. Lovecraft. It was popularized by August Derleth, one of Lovecraft's protégés.

August Derleth, a member of the Lovecraft Circle, was the writer who did the most to perpetuate Lovecraft's Cthulhu Mythos stories. In doing so, however, he moved away from the central idea of Lovecraft's fiction. Lovecraft treated humanity as a worthless race with no power or importance in the face of the "Great Old Ones".

Since humans are of no importance in this cosmic order, any action of the aliens would be a disaster for humans.

Derleth reinterpreted these fictions and created an anthropocentric fictional world with humanity at its center. He added the "Elder Gods" to Lovecraft's fictional pantheon and characterized them as good gods. He transformed the Great Old Ones into evil gods. However, Lovecraft's fictional world is dominated by a cosmic vision in which there is no room for good or evil. Derleth also categorized these gods on the basis of four elements. Undoubtedly, Derleth's Catholic Christianity, as opposed to Lovecraft's strict materialism, is at the root of this radical change. Derleth argued that he found in Lovecraft's fiction a motif parallel to the exorcism of the devil in Christian mythology (Mackley, 2013, pp. 121-122).

It was August Derleth who, after Lovecraft's death, removed the literary ambiguity surrounding his work and published a series of publications about him. Although many Lovecraft fans criticize the changes he made to his literary legacy, his contribution to introducing Lovecraft to future generations is undeniable.

On March 15, 1937, H.P. Lovecraft died of cancer of the small intestine and, as stated in his will, appointed R. H. Barlow as his literary executor. As a young writer, Barlow spent a lot of time with Lovecraft and was deeply influenced by him. Later, August Derleth and Donald Wandrei, members of the Lovecraft Circle, contacted Barlow and obtained Lovecraft's manuscripts and manuscripts from him. This access gave Derleth and Wandrei the chance to revise and edit Lovecraft's work. They first contacted different publishers and tried to get his works published. When this failed, they decided to set up their own publishing house. The publishing house was named Arkham House, after the Massachusetts town where Lovecraft created his

fictional world. The importance of this publishing house was that it removed the uncertainty surrounding Lovecraft's literary works and ensured that they would be passed on to future generations (Mackley, 2013, p. 120).

The company's initial goal was to publish the works of H. P. Lovecraft, but it gradually broadened its focus. The first book published by Arkham House in 1939 was "The Outsider and Others", a collection of Lovecraft's short stories previously published in magazines such as "Weird Tales". "The Outsider and Others" did not sell well and the company would experience financial difficulties several times in the 1940s. By the end of the decade, Arkham House was well on its way to publishing more mainstream works by authors such as H. P. Lovecraft's contemporaries Clark Ashton Smith, Robert E. Howard and Robert Bloch. After Derleth's death in 1971, Arkham House made efforts to publish new works by Derleth and other writers associated with the Lovecraft Circle (Mackley, 2013, p. 120).

The company continues to publish new works by authors associated with the Lovecraft Circle. These works are not only classics of the horror genre, but also an important part of American literature. H. P. Lovecraft's influence on future generations is undeniable and incomparable. Although his works were ignored by critics and many readers when they were first published, Lovecraft has made profound contributions to both literature and cinema in modern times.

2.4. Horror Genre In Cinema

The horror genre is one of the oldest and most popular genres of cinema. It usually consists of an antagonist who threatens an innocent protagonist or a group. The victim(s) fight the physical violence of the antagonist to regain their safety and sanity. Horror films often emphasize the "unknown". Because the unknown is also horrifying. Some horror films blend genres such as fantasy, comedy, action and science fiction (Park, 2018, pp. 6-7).

The struggle of humanity against the supernatural is a common theme in modern horror films. This struggle can be against mutant monsters, aliens, zombies, etc. Many horror clichés have emerged over the years. These are often cheaply put together to create box office movies. However, many directors have managed to transcend the potential of the horror genre and create new classics out of its clichés. These auteur directors include Tod Browning, James Whale, Alfred Hitchcock, Roman Polanski, George Romero, Dario Argento, John Carpenter, David Cronenberg, David Lynch, James Wan and others.

2.4.1. The invention of cinema

The emergence of cinema cannot be reduced to a single source or a single history. The technical invention of cinema is much more complex and has been fueled by different discoveries. What makes cinema exist is retinal persistence, which is essentially a flaw in the human eye. An object in front of the eye continues to be seen in the retina of the eye for one-tenth of a second after that object disappears. This situation has been known since ancient times. Thus, the illusion of motion could be created on objects that were not actually moving (Abisel, 2003, pp. 14-15).

Before cinema, people created a primitive cinema with shadow plays. Plato touched upon the subject of creating a virtual world with shadows in his work, Republic. In this design, called the “Allegory of the Cave”, people who have been in a cave with their bodies fixed throughout their lives think of the real world as only shadows reflected from the outside. This shows that in Ancient Greece, it was known that light reflects the shadows of moving objects. Various figures made of parchment and metal in China were projected onto a silk curtain. Magic ceremonies were held in Japan using mirrors reflecting the shadows. The shadow play tradition, most of which spread to Asian culture from here, reached Europe in the 17th century. Shadow play, which has been used as a storytelling method in various parts of the world for centuries, lost its importance with the advent of cinema (Teksoy, 2005, pp. 15-17).

The first invention in the process leading to the cinema is called camera obscura (dark chamber). It happens by reflecting the object outside in an inverted way through a small hole that opens into a completely closed dark box. It was first described in Giovanni Battista Alberti's book Magia Naturalis. Lanterna magica (magic lantern) emerged right after the camera obscura (Teksoy, 2005, p. 17).

The magic lantern was invented in 1684 by the German priest Athanasius Kircher. It was already known that the shadow of an object placed in front of a light source can be reflected onto a surface. Kircher developed this further, using mirrored lenses, and was able to project the image using candle or kerosene lamplight. Magic lantern is considered to be the direct ancestor of cinema projectors. However, some more time had to pass before the illusion of motion could be created (Özuyar, 2017, p. 13).

In 1825 John Ayrton and John F. W. Herschel invented thaumatrope. This device is a toy consisting of a round plate with a picture of a bird on one side and a cage on the other. The illusion that the bird was in the cage was created when it was rotated with the ropes it was tied to. Faraday's wheel and Simon R. Von Stampfer's stroboscope came immediately after this invention (Abisel, 2003, p. 15).

Belgian physicist Joseph Plateau invented the phenakistoscope in 1832. This device had two disks attached to a hub. The lower disc featured drawings simulating a movement. There were various slits in the upper one. An illusion of motion was created when the discs were rotated and viewed through the slit. In 1851, Jules Duboscq developed a device called the stereoscope, using photography instead of drawing. In 1853, Uchatius combined the magic lantern and phenakistoscope and projected moving images onto a screen. This idea was later developed by Bourbouze and Heyl in 1870 (Betton, 1990, p. 5).

In 1877 Émile Reynaud developed the device called praxinoscope. This device that created the illusion of motion combined Faraday's wheel and thaumatrope. Reynaud founded the Théâtre Optique (Optical Theater) in 1892 with the system he developed. He became the first person in the world to earn money in this way with his performances on the screen. Later, celluloid photographic stripes were used in place of his pictorial belts. More and more the invention of cinema was approaching (Abisel, 2003, pp. 17-18).

Returning to the invention of photography; two Frenchmen, Jacques M. Daguerre and Nicéphore Niépce, were able to detect images projected from the dark chamber on sensitive plates. This invention was introduced at the French Academy of Sciences in 1839. The exposure time of this first photo was about fourteen hours. This

time was down to half an hour and then twenty minutes. However, ten more years had to pass before this period could be expressed in seconds (Teksoy, 2005, pp. 21-22).

In the following period, British photographer Eadweard Muybridge's work on "movement" paved the way for cinema. California Governor Leland Stanford made a bet with the thought that his feet were completely off the ground while a horse was galloping. He asked Muybridge's help to prove this idea. Muybridge set up a mechanism to take photos just in time by placing 24 cameras in the horse's movement area. As a result of this experiment in 1877, it was proved that the horse's feet were off the ground and a very important step was taken on the way to motion picture (Özuyar, 2017, p. 15).

Hannibal Goodwin used celluloid film roll instead of the glass plate in photography for the first time in 1887. George Eastman created the film reel and released it under the name Kodak. (Abisel, 2003, p. 14)

Thomas Alva Edison and William K. L. Dickson acquired the copyrights of the kinetograph in 1892. This first film camera to record motion could be viewed with a device called the kinetoscope. However, this device could not project the image onto a screen. Instead, it consisted of a box that rotated the film under a magnifying glass. It could be watched by a single audience at the same time. No matter how hard Edison tried, he was unable to reflect these images on the screen. (Betton, 1990, p. 6)

The French photographer brothers Louis and Auguste Lumière are considered the pioneers of cinema today. The Lumière Brothers owned a factory producing photographic materials in Lyon. In 1895, they invented the cinématographe in just six months, studying the work of Edison and his predecessors. For the first time, the camera and projection could be combined and watched by dozens of people on the

screen at the same time. The first demonstrations made to invited experts were made public on December 28, 1895. 35 people attended this premiere at the Grand Café on Capucines Boulevard. The audience entered by paying 1 franc each. The audience, watching the movie “L’Arrivée d’s train en gare de La Ciotat”, frightened from the train that came over them, tried to hide and escape. Although the first movie that was screened was not planned to be like that, it caused horror in the audience. Among these early audiences was Georges Méliès, who would later transform cinema from a technical invention to a true art form (Özuyar, 2017, pp. 17-19).

2.4.2. Classic horror movies

The history of horror films can be equated with the history of cinema, even though it was not yet called by that name until the 1930s. The Lumière brothers' L’Arrivée d’un train en gare de La Ciotat (1895) and Porter's The Great Train Robbery (1903), without any special effort, aroused feelings of terror in the audience. In the performances with Magic Lantern, one of the pioneers of cinema, stories that evoke a sense of horror were told on the audience. Already coming from a magical tradition, cinema, with its unusual nature, gave the audience the most basic component of the Horror genre (Abisel, 1995, pp. 137-138).

Georges Méliès used the art of cinema to take his previous illusion shows on the stage to the next level. While Méliès was shooting on a street, his camera malfunctions. When he repairs and continues shooting, an impressive illusion of change occurs in the image. Inspired by this experience, he started to do camera tricks. Although it is said that he gave the first examples of the horror genre along with the fantasy and science fiction genres in cinema, the effect he wanted to create was never in the horror category. Instead, he preferred a fantasy that surprises and entertains the audience. Generally, Le Manoir du Diable, made in 1896, is considered

the first horror film. The film features an old castle that becomes haunted by a ghost when a man feasts on the devil's food. He is left with long, black fingernails as a result of his sin; he is soon killed by the devil after attempting to warn others about his encounter. On the other hand, the closest to the horror genre of Méliès' films is Le Diable au Couvent from 1899 (Scognamillo, 2014, pp. 254-255).

With these experimental films, Méliès paved the way for the exploration of the technical possibilities of cinema and its use as a true storytelling tool. Other filmmakers who followed in his footsteps also sought ways to surprise the audience. This situation started the adventure of horror and other fantastic genres in cinema (Abisel, 1995, p. 138).

One of the first examples of horror in American cinema, Edison's Frankenstein (1910) is the first film adaptation of Mary Shelley's novel of the same name. It follows various adaptations of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in America and Europe. Then come the Edgar Allan Poe adaptations. This and similar early films aimed to convey a moral message in a didactic way rather than creating a real sense of horror on the audience (Jones, 2005, pp. 185-186).

However, German silent films, fed by the Expressionism movement, started the horror genre and determined its course. This trend has developed as a result of Germany's defeat in World War I and the resulting uncertainty. These films, which manifest themselves with gloomy environments, crooked decors with distorted reality, and exaggerated make-up, made the audience experience the horror of the unknown for the first time. Among the first films that come to mind here are Der Student von Prag (1913), Der Golem (1914), Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari (1919), Nosferatu (1922), Dr. Mabuse (1922), Orlacs Hände (1924), Das Wachsfigurenkabinett (1924),

Faust (1926) and Metropolis (1927). After these films, which gave the genre its original identity and expanded its repertoire, the horror movie classics made by the American Universal Studios in the 1930s came (Abisel, 1995, p. 139).

Universal Studios' first major actor was Lon Chaney, referred to as The Man of a Thousand Faces. Chaney has taken on many different roles throughout her career and has been a well-known figure in American horror cinema. His first films that come to mind are The Phantom of the Opera (1925) in which he appeared in horrible makeup, The Monster (1925) and London After Midnight (1927). With the migration of German artists to Hollywood, components of Expressionist cinema enter American cinema. Paul Leni, who previously directed the movie Das Wachsfigurenkabinett, also directs The Cat and the Canary (1927) in America. Das Cabinet des Dr. Conrad Veidt, known for his role in Caligari, is outside the horror genre. He portrayed the character Gwynplaine in The Man Who Laughs (1928), which would later inspire the memorable comic character Joker (Scognamillo, 2014, pp. 265-267).

With the transition to sound cinema, American Horror films also begin to experience their Golden Age. Dracula (1930) with the character Count played by Hungarian actress Bela Lugosi, Frankenstein (1931) with Boris Karloff's make-up that gives the character his unchanging appearance, and Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1932) is the beginning films of this period. These films are followed by a series of new movies, sequels, and remakes. Characters are brought face to face by sharing a common universe. After all, the years of World War II come, and Universal Studios films drain their energy. The horror characters have lost their seriousness and become parodies of themselves (Scognamillo, 2014, pp. 267-273).

At a time when horror films are in a vicious circle, the company RKO (Radio-Keith-Orpheum), produced by Val Lewton, emerges with innovative horror films. Director Jacques Tourneur and screenwriter DeWitt Bodeen also contribute to many films. The Cat People (1942), The Leopard Man (1943), I Walked with a Zombie (1943), The Curse of the Cat People (1944), The Body Snatcher (1945), Isle of the Dead (1945), and Bedlam (1946) brings his films to life. They also include well-known horror stars such as Bela Lugosi and Boris Karloff. They have an understanding that is minimalist and values the imagination of the audience (Jones, 2005, pp. 208-209).

The British Hammer film company began making remakes in the late 1950s, buying the rights to classic horror movies from Universal. These new versions of films such as The Curse of Frankenstein (1957), Dracula (1958) and The Mummy (1959) feature more brutality, more gore and sexuality themes. In addition, Hammer films highlight themes such as sexual roles, traditional lifestyle and social life determined from a more conservative perspective (Abisel, 1995, pp. 141-142).

In the 60s, this strategy pursued by Hammer films brought about a counter stance. Horror films questioning traditional values, official institutions and, most importantly, the "family" are brought to life. In the process that began with Alfred Hitchcock's thrillers, characters who were visible, self-evident and whose evil was reflected in their outward appearance were replaced by characters who looked like us. Psycho (1960), based on the novel by Robert Bloch, tells the story of a young woman who is murdered by a motel owner suffering from a split personality. Norman Bates is an ordinary-looking man, never thought to be a killer until he commits the murder (Cherry, 2009, p. 174).

More realistic, more critical films were produced in this period. With two films released in 1968, Night of the Living Dead and Rosemary's Baby, the modern era in horror cinema began. In this period, the interaction between the killer and the victim was redefined and horror penetrated daily life and the ordinary. Night of the Living Dead (1968) directed by George A. Romero: This film is considered a classic of the zombie subgenre and is notable for its social commentary on racism and consumerism (Abisel, 1995, pp. 142-143).

The 1960s also witnessed the emergence of a new genre of horror film in Italy, the giallo. Mario Bava's The Girl Who Knew Too Much (1963) is remembered as the first giallo film. It was followed by Blood and Black Lace (1964), The Young, the Evil and the Savage (1968), The Sweet Body of Deborah (1968), Orgasmo (1969), One on Top of the Other (1969) and A Quiet Place to Kill (1970). However, it was Dario Argento's first feature film, The Bird with the Crystal Plumage (1970), that made the genre internationally recognized. Giallo films were characterized by their graphic violence, stylish visuals and focus on mystery and the identity of the killer. They also often featured a twisted, convoluted plot and a killer who was usually revealed at the end of the film (Jones, 2005, pp. 165-168, 233).

2.4.3. Modern horror movies

With the death of Alfred Hitchcock, thriller cinema also began to decline and became increasingly irrelevant. Classic horror films, which were mostly based on literary sources, disappeared and were replaced by clichés and raw gore. In this period, killers preying on their victims with gory and disturbing atrocities, sudden shocks and unthought-out scenarios became common. With the development of special effects technology, things that could not be shown before could be shown. In the films of this period, everything is presented to the audience in a clear way and the

imagination of the audience begins to be put on the back burner (Scognamillo, 2014, pp. 284-286).

Censorship regulations were effective in this change in horror films. In 1968, as a result of the decisions taken by the MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America), horror films were included in the "R" (restricted) category, thus appealing to a limited age group. This decision changed the face of the movies by paving the way for disgusting, violent, sexual, etc. elements. In the following period, horror cinema began to appeal to more and more young audiences (Bailey & Blake, 2013, pp. 4, 99).

The Exorcist (1973), directed by William Friedkin, was adapted from the novel by William Peter Blatty. This movie tells the story of a girl possessed by the devil and the exorcism ritual to save her. The film's success was largely due to its emphasis on psychological horror and its ability to tap into viewers' deepest fears and anxieties (Jones, 2005, pp. 92-94).

The 1970s also saw the emergence of "body horror", a new genre of horror film that emphasized the graphic depiction of physical mutilation and transformation. David Cronenberg's Shivers (1975) and Rabid (1977) are important examples of this subgenre, exploring the fears associated with the loss of control over one's body and the monstrous potential of science (Cherry, 2009, pp. 120-124).

In addition to its emphasis on psychological horror and body horror, horror cinema also addressed social issues such as the Vietnam War, the rise of consumerism and the erosion of traditional values. For example, George A. Romero's Dawn of the Dead (1978) is a critique of consumerism and the insensitivity of modern society,

while Wes Craven's The Hills Have Eyes (1977) is a commentary on the fears and anxieties of the Cold War era (Bailey & Blake, 2013, pp. 22-23, 79).

In the 1970s, films with creatures as antagonists were made. One of the most important films is undoubtedly Alien (1979) directed by Ridley Scott. Combining science fiction and horror genres, the film spawned a series of alien films throughout the 1980s. The alien design in Alien is one of the most successful since 2001: A Space Odyssey (Abisel, 1995, pp. 145-146).

One of the most important films of the 1970s was The Texas Chain Saw Massacre (1974) directed by Tobe Hooper. This film is considered a turning point in the history of horror cinema and had a great influence on the slasher genre that would emerge in the 1980s. The film tells the story of a group of teenagers brutally murdered by a cannibalistic family and uses a gritty, realistic style to create an intense sense of dread and unease (Jones, 2005, pp. 156-158).

The 1980s was an important decade for the horror genre in cinema, characterized by the emergence of new subgenres and the mainstream commercial success of horror films. One of the most important sub-genres to emerge during this decade was the slasher film. Typically featuring a masked killer stalking and murdering a group of teenagers, the slasher film was popularized by films such as Halloween (John Carpenter, 1978), Friday the 13th (Sean S. Cunningham, 1980) and A Nightmare in Elm Street (Wes Craven, 1984). These films, and the countless imitators that followed them, moved away from the psychological horror of the 1970s and emphasized graphic violence and brutality (Cherry, 2009, p. 174).

The Shining (1980), directed by Stanley Kubrick, was based on the novel by Stephen King. It is considered a classic of psychological horror and is notable for its

use of symbolism and exploration of themes such as mental illness and the dangers of isolation (Bailey & Blake, 2013, p. 31).

Another important sub-genre that emerged in the 1980s was the splatter film. Splatter films such as The Evil Dead (1981) and Re-Animator (1985) were characterized by their emphasis on shock value as well as over-the-top violence and brutality. These films were often derided by critics but were popular with audiences. Clive Barker's Hellraiser (1987) and its sequels are also important in this period (Scognamillo, 2014, pp. 284-288).

One of the most important sub-genres to emerge in the 1990s was the "torture porn" sub-genre, typically featuring graphic violence, torture and sadism. Films such as "Hostel" (2005) and Saw (2004) marked a departure from the more traditional slasher films of the 1980s, emphasizing a more visceral and disturbing form of horror (Church, 2010, pp. 237-238).

The 1990s also saw the emergence of the "found footage" subgenre, which typically features a first-person perspective and uses found footage to tell the story. The Blair Witch Project (1999) is a notable example of this sub-genre, made possible by the advancement of digital technology that allowed for a more realistic and intimate form of horror (Cherry, 2009, pp. 186, 190-194).

Modern horror cinema has undergone a significant evolution in recent years, with a new wave of films pushing the boundaries of the genre and challenging audiences in new and exciting ways. These films aim not only to scare audiences, but also to explore complex themes and social issues. The movie Get Out (2017) is an important example of this subgenre, often dealing with themes such as race, class and family dynamics. Written and directed by Jordan Peele, the 2017 film Get Out tells

the story of a young African-American man named Chris (Daniel Kaluuya) who visits the family of his white girlfriend Rose (Allison Williams). As the weekend progresses, Chris begins to suspect that something is wrong with the family and their community. The film explores themes such as racism, exploitation and the dangers of remaining indifferent in the face of oppression (Reisdorf, 2020, p. 9).

Other notable recent films include The Conjuring (2013), The Babadook (2014), The Witch (2015), It Follows (2015), The Wailing (2016), It (2017), Hereditary (2018), A Quiet Place (2018), Mandy (2018), Annihilation (2018), Midsommar (2019) and Us (2019).

Modern horror cinema is undergoing an evolution. The horror genre continues to evolve and push boundaries, with a new wave of films blending the genre's traditions and exploring complex themes. The rise of streaming platforms and an emphasis on diversity and inclusivity also contribute to the genre's richness. Horror cinema continues to evolve with innovative films.

2.4.4. Subgenres of horror films

Horror movies include many sub-genres. These subgenres include psychological horror, slasher horror, gore, body horror, found footage, monster horror, paranormal horror, science fiction horror, thriller/crime, and comedy horror. This is because horror films do not have a specific formula or method for how they are made, so they cannot be categorized into a single genre. There are an unlimited number of horror movie genres. Horror is a genre where you can go anywhere from silly comedy to serious drama. There are also an infinite number of horror protagonists and antagonists, which makes it seem like there is always a new horror story.

Psychological horror films are a subgenre of horror films that rely on psychology and mind games played with characters rather than gore, violence or other effects to scare audiences. Evil comes from within, not from an external force. Psychological horror films often deal with characters driven to madness, obsessed with a particular action or idea, or committing crimes as a result of being psychologically damaged. The characters are often unsettled by other characters they encounter. The stories can take the form of a thriller or drama. The aim of these movies is to keep the audience on their toes and keep them guessing what will happen next. Psychological horror films can be subtle and make viewers think or shock them with graphic violence and gore. Examples include The Shining, The Silence of the Lambs, Psycho, and Repulsion (Kawin, 2012, p. 115).

Slasher horror films are less psychological than other films and focus on a killer who stalks and violently kills his victims, usually with a durable weapon such as a knife or dagger. The killer's main goal is to kill. The plot may or may not involve characters running away from the killer, but typically does not depict the killer's motives beyond killing people. These films are normally low budget and made for entertainment value rather than realism. Examples include Halloween, A Nightmare on Elm Street, Friday the 13th, The Texas Chainsaw Massacre, and Scream (Kawin, 2012, pp. 192-195).

Gore horror films are based on graphic and realistic violence and often depict dismemberment, mutilation, blood, brutality, torture, rape and cannibalism. It refers to the vulnerability of the human body. The aim of these films is to disgust and frighten the viewer. Examples include The Evil Dead, A Serbian Film, Old Boy, Battle Royale, Saw, and Hostel (Kawin, 2012, pp. 163-164).

Body horror films depict the mutilation of body parts and organs of the main characters to show the fragility of the human body. These films usually focus on internal organs rather than external organs. They are designed to make viewers uncomfortable because viewers are afraid of their own bodies. Examples include The Fly, The Thing, Videodrome, Antichrist, Teeth, and The Exorcist (Kawin, 2012, pp. 165-171).

Found footage horror films emerged in the late 1990s and are famous for being shot with video cameras. There is no set plot and it is left to the audience to decide what happens. These films typically feature single or multiple characters using the cameras as a source of information. Viewers feel uneasy with the video footage. Examples are Cannibal Holocaust, The Blair Witch Project, REC, Paranormal Activity, Cloverfield, and The Last Exorcism (Kawin, 2012, pp. 204-206).

Monster horror films are about monsters attacking humans. It is one of the oldest subgenres of horror cinema. These films focus on blood and horror rather than story. They are gory and sometimes contain elements of science fiction and fantasy. Examples include Night of the Living Dead, Resident Evil, Dawn of the Dead, Jaws, Godzilla, Frankenstein, Dracula, The Mummy, Alien, Blade, The Thing from Another World, and King Kong (Kawin, 2012, p. 91).

Paranormal horror films are supernatural ghost stories, often based on myths of haunted places, evil spirits and witchcraft. They often involve ghostly apparitions and demonic forces tormenting or killing people, making them believe that the stories are true. These movies deal with paranormal themes such as ghosts and demons. They include supernatural phenomena such as lightning strikes, telekinesis, demonic possession, animal possession, evil spirits, witches, curses and vengeful spirits in the

afterlife. Sample films include The Exorcist, Paranormal Activity, The Conjuring, The Amityville Horror, The Omen, Carrie, and Poltergeist (Kawin, 2012, pp. 110-117).

Science fiction horror movies are based on beliefs in extraterrestrial life or alien contact. They are usually set in space and often involve mysterious objects with immense power to destroy worlds, people and even life on earth. The purpose of these films is to frighten and shock the audience because they believe that science can be used for good or evil. Examples include Prometheus, Alien and The Thing (Kawin, 2012, pp. 73-79).

Thriller/crime horror can be seen as a combination of both horror and suspense genres. They usually focus on events related to crime or mystery. Most of the time the protagonist is the killer or the victim of a murder. Examples include Don't Breathe, The Conjuring 2, and Silence of the Lambs (Kawin, 2012, pp. 152-153).

Comedy horror films are sometimes referred to as "black comedies". They are distorted versions of comedy and horror. The films often focus on black humor, irony and satire. Some horror comedies are made to mock the genre. Examples include Scream, The Cabin in the Woods, Shaun of the Dead, Evil Dead, Zombieland, Gremlins 2: The New Batch, and Braindead (Kawin, 2012, p. 198).

Turkish cinema has also been experiencing a very active period in terms of horror films, especially after 2000. Before talking about horror films in Turkish cinema, it is useful to briefly look at the history of Turkish cinema. This issue will be discussed in the next part.

2.5. Historical Development Of Turkish Cinema

Turkey, which was introduced to cinema at an early stage, was late in establishing its own artistic tradition. One of the reasons for this was the Turkification of the patterns taken from the West and the failure to create original structures. It was only in the so-called *Directors Period* that films that drew nourishment from their own past and social reality and emphasized the true qualities of the art of cinema could emerge.

2.5.1. Turkish cinema in the Ottoman era

The early developments that emerged in the process until the invention of the Cinématographe found a place in the Ottoman Empire as well. Beyoğlu (Pera), a cosmopolitan district, and Cadde-i Kebir (now İstiklal Caddesi), where entertainment and cultural activities are concentrated, were the places where these developments were presented to the public. Ottoman society was also no stranger to the development of cinema (Özuyar, 2017, p. 20).

Sultan Abdulhamid II's daughter Ayşe Osmanoğlu, has said that the first cinema screenings held in Yıldız Palace in Turkey in the years 1896-97. A French named Bertrand went to France every year with the Sultan's permission and brought various inventions with him. In this way, cinema was recognized by the royal family. Around the same time, the first public screening was made by photographer Sigmund Weinberg, a Romanian Jew. Weinberg is the Istanbul representative of the French company Pathé. In the hall of Sponeck beer house in Galatasaray, Lumière brothers' L'Arrivée d'un train en gare de La Ciotat was shown. In 1895, the same reaction that the Lumière brothers got in France, that is, the audience's fear of the train coming on them, was experienced here (Scognamillo, 1987, pp. 11-12).

In the following period, many different people made cinemas in different places. However, Sigmund Weinberg was the most prominent among them. Weinberg started operating the Pathé Cinema in Tepebaşı in 1908. This cinema closed in a few years. It was later reopened as Pangaltı (or Asaduryan) Cinema. Cinema's entrance to the historical peninsula was later. Like every innovation of European origin, it took a while for cinema to be adopted in conservative circles. However, the Ottoman people, who were familiar with shadow plays like Karagöz, also accepted this innovation. The first screenings were made in temporary venues by the Psihuli brothers and Sigmund Weinberg. The first movie theater operated by the Turks was the Milli Sinema (National Cinema) opened by entrepreneurs named Murat and Cevat in 1914. In the following period, Istanbul and other developed Ottoman cities met with cinema with the cinema halls opened one after another (Gökmen, 1989, pp. 15-17).

In 1914, Kemal and Şakir Seden brothers and Fuat Uzkınay opened the Ali Efendi Cinema in Sirkeci. The name Fuat Uzkınay is important because he was the first Turk to shoot a movie. The same year, the monument from the Russo-Turkish War (1877-1878) in Yeşilköy (formerly Ayastefanos) was demolished and these important moments were documented by the camera operated by Uzkınay. However, this movie is missing and its existence is still controversial. Until that date, all cinema shootings carried out in Turkey by foreigners (Scognamillo, 1987, p. 21).

In addition, Macedonian Manaki brothers, who are citizens of the Ottoman Empire, though not of Turkish origin, shot various films in the early 1900s. The most famous one is the documentary "Sultan Mehmed Reşad's Visit to the Manastır", shot in 1911. This movie is not lost. For this reason, there is a debate about the beginning of Turkish cinema. However, the officially accepted date is Fuat Uzkınay's filming on November 14, 1914 (Özgüç, 2012, p. 11).

On the other hand, the Ottoman Empire was in the First World War. Turkey, which is allied with Germany began to invest in the field of cinema for propaganda purposes. As a result, the Military Office of Cinema (Merkez Ordu Sinema Dairesi) was established. Sigmund Weinberg was appointed as the director of the institution and Fuat Uzkınay was appointed as his assistant. The institution, which originally only produced propaganda films, started to shoot two feature films in 1916 (Leblebici Horhor and Himmet Ağanın İzdivacı). Meanwhile, Turkey declares war on Romania. As a result, Weinberg was forced to leave Turkey. Uzkınay is appointed as the director of the institution. However, when he and the actors join the battle, the films are left unfinished (Scognamillo, 1987, pp. 21-22).

In 1917, *Pençe* (Claw) and *Casus* (Spy) are the first feature films completed in Turkey directed by journalist Sedat Simavi. In 1919, Ahmet Fehim directed the films *Mürebbiye* (Governess) and *Binnaz*. The *Bican Efendi* film series, based on a Charlie Chaplin-like character played by Şadi Fikret Karagözoğlu in a theater play, is the first comedy films in Turkish cinema (Özgüç, 2012, p. 15).

Kemal and Şakir Seden Brothers, who previously started cinema theater management, established their company called Kemal Film to bring films from abroad. In the following period, World War I ended and the Ottoman Empire lost the war. Turkey's War of Independence began and ended successfully. Muhsin Ertugrul in 1922, returned to Turkey and started filming in agreement with Seden Brothers. This process was the beginning of the Thespian Period in Turkish Cinema (Onaran, 1994, pp. 17-21).

2.5.2. Thespian period (1923-1939)

Thespian Period (1923-1939) is the period when a single artist, theater actor Muhsin Ertuğrul, completely dominated Turkish Cinema. Born in 1892, Ertuğrul started theater at a young age and wrote reviews for the nascent cinema. During his life in Europe, he had his first experiences in the cinema industry. After living for a while in France and Germany he began to make films directed back to Turkey. His films could not be separated from the theater and were influenced by the West too much. Ertuğrul has made many first examples in Turkish Cinema. It's like the first sound film, the first co-production, the first village movie, the first color film (Scognamillo, 1987, pp. 38-40).

Muhsin Ertuğrul made an agreement with Kemal Film in 1922 to shoot the movie İstanbul'da Bir Facia-ı Aşk. Then came the films Boğaziçi Esrarı (1922), Kız Kulesinde Bir Facia (1923), Ateşten Gömlek (1923), Leblebici Horhor Ağa (1924) and Sözde Kızlar (1924). For the first time, Muslim Turkish actresses (Bedia Muvahhid, Neyyire Neyyir) starred in the film Ateşten Gömlek. This was not allowed before. Except for İstanbul'da bir Facia-i Aşk, which was inspired by a real event, all the remaining films were adaptations. The most important of these films is Ateşten Gömlek, which is the first film to tell the Turkish War of Independence (Onaran, 1994, pp. 22-26).

As a result of a dispute between Kemal Film and Muhsin Ertuğrul, the company closes. Ertuğrul, who went to Russia in 1925, was influenced by the Soviet cinema there. Additionally, he directs three films. These films; Tamilla (1925), Beş Dakika (1926), and Spartakus (1926). Ertuğrul, who could not create a true cinema school with the films he made in Germany or Russia before, did nothing but film the theater. Ertuğrul, who agreed with the newly established İpek Film after his years in

Russia, directed Ankara Postası (1928). The film called Smugglers, which started shooting in the same year, was left unfinished as a result of a traffic accident (Scognamillo, 1987, pp. 41-48).

In 1931, he made the first Turkish sound film Istanbul Streets. This film is also the first co-production (Turkey, Greece, Egypt). Filming takes place in these three countries. Sound editing is performed in France. After the success of this film, Ertuğrul convinces İpek Film to establish a sound studio. The sound film era begins in Turkey (Onaran, 1994, p. 28).

In 1932, Bir Millet Uyanıyor was shot, again focusing on the Turkish War of Independence (such as Ateşten Gömlek and Ankara Postası). Although the film could not produce a successful script, it was met with great interest during its release. Higher levels of the state, especially Mustafa Kemal, also liked the film (Scognamillo, 1987, pp. 51-52).

Then the musical films Karım Beni Aldatırsa (1933), Söz Bir Allah Bir (1933), Cici Berber (1933), Milyon Avcıları (1934), Leblebici Horhor Ağa (1934) and the co-production of Greece "O Kakes Dhremos" (Bad Road) (1933) is shot. After these films, Muhsin Ertuğrul stopped working with İpek Film due to the commercial failure of Leblebici Horhor Ağa and started producing films (Onaran, 1994, pp. 29-30).

Bataklı Damın Kızı Aysel (1934), known as the first village film, was adapted from a story by Selma Lagerlöf. This movie brought the famous actress Cahide Sonku to the leading role. Ertuğrul, who re-established a partnership with İpek Film in 1938, he directed the films Aynaroz Kadısı (1938), Bir Kavuk Devrildi (1939), Allah'ın Cenneti (1939), Tosun Paşa (1939), Şehvet Kurbanı (1940), Akasya Palas (1940),

Nasreddin Hoca Düğünde (1940), Kahveci Güzeli (1941) and Kıskanç (1942). After these films, her partnership with İpek Film completely ends and she is away from cinema for four years (Scognamillo, 1987, pp. 56-64).

Returning to the cinema in 1945, Ertuğrul starts working with Halk Film. His other movies are Yayla Kartalı (1945), Kızılırmak-Karakoyun (1947), Evli mi Bekar mı? (1951). He directed Halıcı Kız (1953) the first color film of Turkish Cinema. Halıcı Kız is also the movie in which Ertuğrul ends his career (Scognamillo, 1987, p. 64).

The permanent director of photography of Ertuğrul's team was Cezmi Ar. Many of his scripts were written by the poet Nazım Hikmet (under the pseudonym Mümtaz Osman). Nazım Hikmet, who previously directed several short films, made his first feature-length film with the movie Güneşe Doğru (1937), with the support of Muhsin Ertuğrul (Özgüç, 2012, pp. 15-17).

Muhsin Ertuğrul is a theater player who has made cinema. He never really used the method of cinema, but instead saw cinema as the recording of the theater. Therefore, it is accused of leaving Turkish Cinema without qualifications and alternatives. It has also affected future generations after it. In addition, Turkish Cinema witnessed a Transition Period until it raised real filmmakers. Faruk Kenç was the initiator of this process (Scognamillo, 1987, pp. 64-65).

2.5.3. Transition period (1939-1952)

The Transition Period (1939-1952) name is used to express the time period between the Thespian Period and the Directors Period. Faruk Kenç, who was educated in the West and was the first director to come from outside the theater, was the initiator of this period. In 1939, he directed the movie Taş Parçası. The lead actor was

Suavi Tedü, who was not from Muhsin Ertuğrul's team. Although Faruk Kenç is remembered as the first true filmmaker director, his films did not completely break with theatricality. One of the most important features of Kenç's films was that he transferred talented actors from outside the theater (such as Oya Sensev, Sadri Alışık, Ayhan Işık, Belgin Doruk, and Mahir Özerdem) (Özgüç, 2012, pp. 17-18).

Since this period coincided with the Second World War, there was a stagnation in importing motion pictures from European countries. For this reason, US and Egyptian films, which are neutral countries, have been effective in Turkish Cinema. In his second film, Faruk Kenç made the transition to detective work, a genre that will be used in Turkish cinema in the future. The name of the film, which revolves around an American-style police detective, is Yılmaz Ali (1940) (Scognamillo, 1987, pp. 75-76).

This period, when many different artists began directing films, was a literally transitional period. The directors who continue the Ertuğrul legacy are Talat Artemel, Refik Kemal Arduman, Hadi Hün, Ferdi Tayfur, Kani Kıpçak, Sami Ayanoğlu, Kadri Ögelmen and Mümtaz Ener. Although they cannot completely break with the thespian tradition, other directors who made films include Adolf Körner, Baha Gelenbevi, Şakir Sırmalı, Vedat Örfi Bengü, Turgut Demirağ, Seyfi Havaeri, Çetin Karamanbey and Aydın Arakon (Özgüç, 2012, p. 18).

Baha Gelenbevi, who was educated in Europe like Kenç, is the second important director in this period. Dertli Pınar (1943) was his first film in his career, which he started as a director of photography. Then he switched to directorship and directed the movie Deniz Kızı (1944). More experiments are made in this period,

which does not bring great innovations to Turkish cinema. There is a tidal period between cinema and theater (Scognamillo, 1987, p. 77).

Vedat Örfi Bengü, whose family origins are in the Ottoman military, is also one of the founders of Egyptian cinema. The effects of Arab cinema are seen in his films (Özgüç, 2012, pp. 18-19).

Turgut Demirağ, who studied cinema at the University of California, directed the movie Bir Dağ Masalı (1947). Refik Kemal Arduman and Mümtaz Ener, who come from the Thespian tradition, shoot the movie Köroğlu (1945). Hürriyet Apartmanı (1946), directed by Talat Artemel, Yuvamı Yıkamazsın (1947) directed by Kani Kıpçak, and Harmankaya (1948) directed by Sami Ayanoğlu are among the notable films (Scognamillo, 1987, pp. 77-78).

During this period, Lütfi Ö. Akad has been instrumental in Turkish cinema's transition to the *Directors Period* (1952-1970) by completely getting rid of the theatrical influence.

2.5.4. Directors period (1952-1970)

The state of Turkey between the years 1947-1953, provides a discount to movie theaters that broadcast Turkish films. As a result, there is a decrease in foreign films. In addition, many new people get into cinema production. Thus, qualified works are given among the Turkish films whose number has been increased. The most important films of this period are *Vurun Kahpeye* (Strike the Whore, Lütfi Ö. Akad, 1949), *Yüzbaşı Tahsin* (Captain Tahsin, Orhon Arıburnu, 1950), *Vatan İçin* (For the Homeland, Aydın Arakon, 1951) and *Efelerin Efesi* (Şakir Sırmalı, 1952) (Scognamillo, 1987, p. 105).

Lütfi Ö. Akad's first film was Strike the Whore, a 1949 film. After he shot three unqualified films (*Lüküs Hayat, Tahir ile Zühre, Arzu ile Kamber*) for Erman Film, his film *Kanun Namına* (In the Name of the Law, 1952), which he directed, marks the beginning of the Directors Period (Onaran, 1994, p. 53).

In the movie *In the Name of the Law*, Akad tells about city life by using natural spaces. In 1955, he turned to rural life in the movie *Beyaz Mendil* (White Handkerchief). These films are followed by *İpsala Cinayeti* (Murder of Ipsala, 1953), *Öldüren Şehir* (Killing City, 1954), *Meçhul Kadın* (The Unknown Woman, 1955), *Ak Altın* (White Gold, 1957), *Meyhanecinin Kızı* (The Innkeeper's Daughter, 1958), *Zümrüt* (Emerald, 1959), *Yalnızlar Rıhtımı* (Wharf of the Lonesome, 1959) and *Üç Tekerlekli Bisiklet* (Three Wheel Bicycle, 1962). Akad's films are a combination of American film noir and French poetic realism (Onaran, 1994, pp. 56-60).

As in the previous period, actors from outside the cinema begin to increase even more in this period. Muzaffer Tema, Sezer Sezin and Mesiha Yelda were the first to come to mind among the actors who entered the cinema in this period. Tema, trying to resemble American actors, was considered the first star of Turkish cinema (Özgüç, 2012, pp. 20-21).

Other important directors of the Directors Period include Metin Erksan, Atıf Yılmaz, Osman Seden, Memduh Ün, Nevzat Pesen, Orhan Elmas, Ertem Goreç and Muharrem Gürses (Onaran, 1994, pp. 60-61).

Metin Erksan enters the cinema with *Karanlık Dünya* (The Dark World, 1953), which tells about Turkish traditionally singer-poet Aşık Veysel's life. He continues his village film line with *Yılanların Öcü* (Revenge of the Snakes, 1962) and *Susuz Yaz* (Dry Summer, 1964). He won the Golden Bear award at the 14th Berlin

International Film Festival with *Dry Summer*. He started the social realism movement in Turkish cinema with *Gecelerin Ötesi* (Beyond the Nights, 1960), a city movie. Other important films of Erksan are *Acı Hayat* (Bitter Life, 1962) and *Sevmek Zamanı* (Time to Love, 1965) (Özgüç, 2012, pp. 22-23).

The first generation of filmmakers of the 1960s are most important in terms of their influence on the Turkish cinema. The motion picture, which was up until then a cultural entertainment medium, starts to be considered as an important and necessary art form. At the end of the 1950s, when the cinema started to show more foreign films, they are concentrated on censorship problems. The most common and most influential topic in this period is censorship. The censors were so critical that they often informed producers and directors about their intentions before they were sure about watching a movie themselves (Özgüç, 2012, pp. 23-24).

The 1970s is an important decade in terms of the establishment of distribution companies. In this period, especially Yeşilçam films or Turkish popular films are distributed by many national and foreign firms. This phenomenon makes the exchange between cinema and television much easier. The most successful genre of Turkish popular cinema is melodrama.

2.5.5. New Turkish cinema

New Turkish Cinema (1970-present) makes efforts to reach new reality, social and economic problems. Directors that belong to this period are Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Zeki Demirkubuz, Derviş Zaim, Ezel Akay and Yeşim Ustaoğlu. The directors of this period have explored the real problems and issues in Turkish society. In addition, they have made movies reflecting their problems, life and feelings.

This period is considered a turning point in Turkish Cinema because the films pertaining to this period are more realistic than the previous ones. In addition Nuri Bilge Ceylan and Yeşim Ustaoğlu are two of the most important directors for introducing this period with their successful films. Nuri Bilge Ceylan has been focusing on human problems. Especially in his movies he tries to depict the most realistic and objective image of human beings. His best-known movies are Kasaba (The Town, 1997), Üç Maymun (Three Monkeys, 2008) and Bir Zamanlar Anadolu'da (Once Upon a Time in Anatolia, 2011). Yeşim Ustaoğlu makes movies that are rooted in social issues. She is known for his movies Güneşe Yolculuk (Journey to the Sun, 1999), Bulutları Beklerken (Waiting for the Clouds, 2003) and Pandora'nın Kutusu (Pandora's Box, 2008).

2.6. Turkish Horror Cinema

Turkish horror cinema, especially after 2000, has become widespread and has a large audience. Many Turkish horror films deal with the conflict between traditional, rural society and the modern, urban world. These films often depict the intrusion of malevolent supernatural forces into the lives of ordinary people and represent the chaos and confusion that can result from rapid social change. The films use Islamic motifs to a very large extent. Therefore, it can be said that the Turkish horror tradition is largely fed by religious fear.

2.6.1. Turkish horror movies before 2000

The Turkish film industry, which has been producing films since very early periods, has not paid the attention it deserves to genres such as horror and science fiction. While genres such as comedy and melodrama, which have proven to be well-received by audiences, have been mass-produced, the horror genre in particular has been neglected. Nevertheless, according to Scognamillo and Demirhan (2005, pp. 63, 77), it can be said that the content of Turkish fantasy films, which were widespread in the 1960s and 70s, contained plenty of horror themes. However, the rise of horror as an independent film genre only took place in the 2000s. The themes in Turkish horror cinema are always fed by an Islamic background. The invading beings are not aliens, but the "jinn" mentioned in the Quran. This insistence on adhering to religious motifs has created a vicious circle in Turkish horror cinema over time. For this reason, the vast majority of the films produced are like copies of each other (Özpay, 2019, p. 558).

Bülent Oran argues that the reason why the horror genre has not developed in Turkish cinema is that the audience needs to identify with the protagonist. Since they could not do this in horror films, such films did not develop. According to

Özkaracalar, however, this is not true because one can also empathize with the protagonist of a horror movie. The reason for this possible lack of empathy on the part of the audience may be that Turkish screenwriters and directors of those years did not know how to ensure identification in horror films (Özkaracalar, 2013).

The Turkish cinema industry, especially before the 1980s, was characterized by technical inadequacies and high costs as the equipment was imported from abroad. For these reasons, producers did not want to make films in the horror genre in Turkish cinema due to technical difficulties and found it risky. Since the audience's reaction cannot be predicted in advance, movie genres that have been tried before and found reliable are preferred instead. Although there were some attempts, the failure of these films prevented the formation of a horror cinema tradition in Turkey. One of the main reasons for this was that the visual effects required for horror films could not be produced in Turkish cinema. The most important reason for the failure was that the examples taken from foreign films were processed in a non-creative way by directly borrowing elements from Islam, the most common religious belief in Turkey (Şimşek, 2012, p. 73).

The first horror film made in Turkey was *Çığlık* (Scream, 1949) directed by Aydın Arakon. Very little is known about this lost movie (Özpay, 2019, pp. 558-559). Unable to fully convey the feelings of tension and fear, this film is considered a failed first example (Şimşek, 2012, p. 73).

Filmed in 1953, *Drakula İstanbul'da* (Dracula in Istanbul) was seen as a relatively successful work. Adapted from Ali Rıza Seyfi's The Vlad the Impaler (1928), the film is an abridged version of Bram Stoker's Dracula (1897). Despite its technical difficulties, the film, which can be considered quite successful in terms of

world cinema, contains many firsts. Count Dracula shows his fangs for the first time here. His connection with Vlad the Impaler is also confirmed for the first time in this movie. Also, for the first time in a vampire movie, scenes that can be called erotic were tried by actress Annie Ball. It is interesting to note that not all filmmakers, from the producer to the screenwriter, had seen the American-made Dracula (1930) (Scognamillo & Demirhan, 2005, pp. 63-71).

Directed by Yavuz Yalınkılıç in 1970, *Ölüler Konuşmaz ki* (The Dead Don't Talk) is a film essay that utilizes traditional horror motifs. The film, which remained hidden for a long time, was discovered and published by cinema researcher Sadi Konuralp. According to Konuralp, the film is the first Turkish horror film to feature Islamic motifs and the theme of ghosts (Özpay, 2019, p. 559).

After the success of The Exorcist (1973) in America, producer Hulki Saner contacted the famous director Metin Erksan. A remake of the movie is made. The original movie has not yet been released in Turkey (it was released in 1980). This movie, titled *Şeytan* (Satan, 1974), did not achieve the expected success. Because Christian elements are randomly replaced with Islamic motifs in the movie. This situation prevented the successful adaptation of the movie and the novel it was adapted from (Scognamillo & Demirhan, 2005, pp. 71-74).

After Dracula in Istanbul, another vampire film attempt was made in 1994. This was Kutluğ Ataman's *Karanlık Sular* (The Serpent’s Tale), which attracted attention at many festivals. It adds class, cultural and period conflicts to a vampire story. However, this movie also failed to attract the attention of the audience (Şimşek, 2012, p. 75).

2.6.2. Turkish horror movies after 2000

After 2000, the number of horror films in Turkish cinema started to increase. One of the reasons for this increase is the rising interest in domestic films in Turkey and the improvement of technical facilities. On the other hand, the conservative ideology of the new government that came to power in those years fueled the interest in horror films based on religious beliefs. After a few successful examples in the early years, horror films with Islamic references became a fad that continues to have an impact today (Özpay, 2019, pp. 561-562).

There are two successful horror films made in Turkey in 2004. These are The Taylan Brothers' "Okul*"* (School) and Orhan Oğuz's "Büyü*"* (The Spell). After the great success of these films at the box office, horror films started to be produced in Turkish cinema. Okul is an attempt at a horror-comedy and a first for Turkish cinema. Targeting a young audience, the movie uses the university admission exam as an object of horror with a story that progresses through the students. Büyü (The Spell) is about a team of archaeologists who come to a cursed region in southeastern Turkey and are attacked by malevolent goblins. This is the first film to draw its narrative entirely from Turkish culture and the Islam. After the release of Büyü (2004), horror films revolving around the theme of genie became widespread (Şimşek, 2012, p. 75).

In addition, there were some accidents during the filming of this movie (Büyü) and a fire broke out during the premiere. The movie, which came to the agenda with these events, was referred to as cursed at that time. Of course, there is a high probability that all this was a marketing strategy (Özpay, 2019, p. 562).

With "D@bbe*"* (2006) directed by Hasan Karacadağ, goblin movies became the cornerstone of Turkish horror cinema. After the success of the first movie, it

turned into a movie series. The movie takes its name from an entity that, according to Islam, will appear near the apocalypse. This malevolent entity and the Jinn who serve him use communication tools such as radio, television, telephone and internet to drive ordinary people to suicide. The movie claims that scientific methods are inadequate and gives the message that the way to salvation lies in religious beliefs. It claims that technological progress will only bring destruction for people (Özpay, 2019, pp. 562-563).

*"*Gen*"* (Gene), also released in 2006, takes a mental hospital as its setting. It also contains detective elements by focusing on the murders that take place here. "Araf*"* (The Abortion, 2006), directed by Biray Dalkıran, also features Islamic motifs. Eda became pregnant years ago as a result of an illicit relationship and had her baby aborted. After a while, Eda remarries and becomes pregnant again, and is left alone with the desire for revenge for her aborted baby that came out of purgatory (Şimşek, 2012, p. 76).

The 2006 film "Küçük Kıyamet" (The Little Apocalypse), also directed by The Taylan Brothers, focuses on the theme of earthquake. Another horror film that feeds on Islamic motifs is Alper Mestçi's 2008 film "Musallat" (Haunted). Musallat uses the theme of jinn haunting. This film was more critically acclaimed for its script and use of visual effects. Hasan Karacadağ made his second movie "Semum" in 2008. This film is also referred to as the first creature feature in Turkish horror cinema (Topal, 2020, pp. 24-25).

"Gomeda" (2007), written and directed by Tan Tolga Demirci, is set in Cappadocia. After their car breaks down, five young people take refuge in a cave where they experience various hallucinations. Films belonging to the horror-comedy

genre include “Kutsal Damacana” (Sacred Demijohn, 2007), a satire of The Exorcist starring Şafak Sezer, "Destere" (2008), a parody of "Saw" (2004), and "Hababam Sınıfı Üç Buçuk” (The Class of Chaos Three and a Half, 2006) (Şimşek, 2012, p. 77).

Other important films of Turkish horror cinema include "Ada: Zombilerin Düğünü" (2010), "Üç Harfliler: Marid" (2010), "Cehennem 3D" (2010), "Ses" (2010), "Karadedeler Olayı" (2011), "Helak: Kayıp Köy" (2015) and "Baskın: Karabasan" (2015). In particular, the movie Baskın: Karabasan directed by Can Evrenol is important for this thesis. This movie, which tells the horror experienced by five police officers in an abandoned police station, contains Lovecraft references.

2.7. Semiotics In Cinema

Semiotics is the branch of science that studies signs. It deals with every meaningful structure created for communication in the context of signs. Languages, advertisement posters, movies, graphic designs, musical works, traffic signs, gestures, mimics, etc. fall within the field of study of semiotics (Barthes, 1979, pp. 26-27)

The term semiotics (semiology) comes from the Greek word "semeion" meaning sign. Many ideas on the nature of signs have been put forward throughout the history of philosophy since ancient times. At first, it was mostly used to predict diseases and take precautions (Yakin & Totu, 2014, pp. 4-5)

Semiotics was named after the English philosopher John Locke. He first used the term "doctrine of signs" for semiotics in his Essays Concerning Human Understanding (1690) where he used the term "semeiotike" (Çeken & Arslan, 2016, p. 509).

The American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce and the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure are considered the founders of modern semiotics. Both worked on semiotics at the same time in the early 20th century, unbeknownst to each other. Peirce's name for this science was "semiotics". Saussure used the term "semiologie". Today these two names are used interchangeably between the American and European continents. Saussure analyzes signs in a binary structure as signifier and signified (Moriarty, 2005, pp. 228-229).

Peirce examined the branch of science he called "semiotics" on the plane of logic. He focused on human behavior by excluding language from this field. Saussure, on the other hand, saw the branch of science he called "semiology" as a part of social life. According to Saussure, language is a part of semiotics but has a privileged place.

Saussure states that the sign is formed by the signifier and the signified. In daily life, people communicate with each other by attributing meanings to objects through these signs (Yakin & Totu, 2014, pp. 5-7)

Roland Barthes, influenced by the tradition of Ferdinand de Saussure, mostly analyzed popular culture products. The method of structural analysis developed by Barthes does not include a reporting purpose, but also includes meaningful phenomena (clothes, furniture, etc.). All these are connected to semiotics with the concept of sign. Every meaningful whole (sign) is analyzed in two stages: the denotation, which is seen at first glance and does not contain any subtext, and the connotation, which is constructed by the society in which the person lived in the past. Roland Barthes calls the "denotation" and "connotation" stages the first stage. Apart from these, there is a second stage. This is called the "myth level". The connotation is only related to the consciousness of the person who sees it. It is limited to that person's knowledge and worldview. In myth, above all, the cultural, social and political message to be conveyed is addressed (Barthes, 1979, pp. 26-27).

With the semiotic analysis method developed by Roland Barthes, visual materials are analyzed in the triangle of sign, signifier and signified. It can be used in advertising posters, movies, graphic designs, etc. Apart from the visible meaning that is recognized at first glance, there is another meaning that emerges as a result of the connotative meaning that changes due to reasons such as the past experiences, ethnicity, world view, and educational level of both the image maker and the recipient (Moriarty, 2005, pp. 231-232).

Signs that regulate the transmission of meaning in the art of cinema are divided into two as denotation and connotation. Denotation is the meaning recognized

at first glance. It refers to what is seen without looking for any connotations. For example, a man is walking down the street in the rain. In the literal sense, it is taken without any addition. However, the mood of the man walking down the street may come into play. In this case, rainy weather can mean that the man is going through a depressive period in his life (Agocuk, 2014, pp. 169-170).

Cinema has a unique style of expression compared to other branches of art. Character design, space editing, shooting scales, camera movements, color and editing, etc. enable cinema to produce many connotations. Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis examines these connotations and discusses them in the triangle of sign, signifier and signified.

In the narrative analysis method put forward by the Russian linguist Propp in the 1920s, hundreds of folk tales were analyzed and common structures were revealed. Propp divides the narrative structure into six stages: preparation, surprise, separation, struggle, return and re-recognition. In fairy tales, generalizations emerge through repetitions between the events that follow one after the other. Propp defines 31 functions from the narrative units under these six headings. According to Propp, the characters and action areas in fairy tales form the basis of the narrative (Şakı Aydın & Gülçur, as cited in Parsa, 2012, pp. 21-23, 2018, p. 5).

According to this, all narratives actually progress according to the same pattern. According to the Hero's Journey proposed by Joseph Campbell, every story goes through the same archetypal stages. All mythological stories of the past come from a single monomyth (Sonnenburg, 2017, pp. 1-2).

In the verbal example put forward by Algirdas Julien Greimas, the action of the person is analyzed rather than what the person is. Greimas tries to explain the way

the narrative unfolds through a single pattern. The fact that he gives central importance to the concept of meaning in semiotics and bases his method on the search for meaning distinguishes Greimas from others (Cited from Çakmak Duman, 2017, p. 2, Şakı Aydın & Gülçur, 2018, p. 6).

3. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF LOVECRAFTIAN COSMIC HORROR MOVIES AND AN EVALUATION OF HORROR GENRE IN TURKISH CINEMA

3.1. Research

3.1.1. The aim and scope of the research

Horror movies have been in existence for more than 100 years. They are inspired by religion, superstition, and folklore. A sense of fear based on the unknown is essential to this genre. Horror literature and Gothic literature, whose origins date back to the eighteenth century, have also had fundamental influences on horror films. There are also numerous subgenres of horror. One of these is cosmic horror, also known as Lovecraftian horror (named after the author H. P. Lovecraft). Cosmic horror involves the fear of extraterrestrial life, outer space and the universe. The main themes of this subgenre are menace, death, isolation and depression. These themes have been used over and over again in horror films.

This study focuses on the development of cosmic horror from literature to cinema. A key element of cosmic horror is his use of mythology as a setting for telling stories. A number of ancient gods are represented in these fictions. These ancient gods are not planning for the good of humans. Their purpose is the conquest of the world. In the stories, the protagonists lose their minds as a result of the hidden information they reach.

This subgenre matured with the works of American writer H. P. Lovecraft and was further expanded by the work of many filmmakers. In this thesis, H. P. Lovecraft's literary career is detailed and his contributions to cosmic horror are

explained. The aim of this thesis is to present a clear picture of the development and characteristics of cosmic horror through literature and film studies.

In the meanwhile, this thesis examines the adaptations of films inspired by Lovecraft's stories. Several directors are included in the study: Ridley Scott, John Carpenter, Andrew Leman, Frank Darabont and Denis Villeneuve. A film by these directors belonging to the cosmic horror genre was selected. These films are subjected to semiotic analysis and the connection between them and the themes of cosmic horror are discussed. At the beginning of the analysis, a summary of the films is provided to help the readers understand the plot of the films. Then, the films are analyzed visually and a conclusion is reached.

In this thesis, there is also an evaluation of the perspective on horror and science fiction genres in Turkish cinema. In Turkish cinema, genres such as horror and science fiction were not preferred as much as other genres. This is mainly due to budget shortfalls and risk-averse filmmakers. This conclusion was reached by analyzing the horror films produced in Turkish cinema over the years. The analyzed films are Dark Waters - The Serpent's Tale (1993), The Secret File (1998) (TV Series), D@bbe (2006), Karadedeler Olayı - The Karadedeler Incident (2011) and Baskın: Karabasan (2015). In order to make a more professional evaluation, Turkish artists (writers, screenwriters, directors, etc.) who produce in the horror genre were contacted. Eighteen open-ended questions were asked online to eligible artists and asked to answer them. Afterwards, an evaluation letter was written based on the answers given and a conclusion was reached.

3.1.2. Importance of the research

This thesis focuses on the cinematic reflections of the horror subgenre known as cosmic horror or Lovecraftian horror. This subgenre is an example of speculative fiction where humanity goes beyond the boundaries of the world known to it, where it is often targeted by malevolent aliens from another world or dimension. The person who identified with this subgenre and gave its name to the genre is the American horror writer H. P. Lovecraft.

H. P. Lovecraft is one of the writers who contributed the most to the formation of modern horror literature by using the legacy he received from the Gothic tradition. He has been a source of inspiration for many writers who came after him, and many films have been brought to life by being inspired by the works he created. There are many films that use Lovecraft's themes, as well as films that directly adapt his fictions. These themes are called Lovecraftian themes considered in cosmic horror.

In the researches carried out during the preparation of this thesis, it was seen that there is no study focusing on Lovecraftian films in the Turkish academic literature. In addition, the lack of films that can be considered within the limits of cosmic horror in Turkish horror cinema was considered as a problem. Assuming that Turkish horror cinema is in a vicious circle, an evaluation was made with professional artists working in this field. This thesis has been put into practice in order to guide the future works of art in Turkish cinema.

3.1.3. Limitations of the research

Some limitations were encountered while writing this thesis. Initially, it was decided to semiotic analysis of films based on H. P. Lovecraft's stories. However, this choice was abandoned as it was seen that there were films that were not direct Lovecraft adaptations and successfully reflected cosmic horror. Instead, films that are different from each other in terms of visuality and processing but embody cosmic horror were chosen. Because these films were too long, the entire film was not included in the analysis. Semiotic analysis was performed on certain scenes reflecting Lovecraftian horror. These scenes featured characters making contact with extraterrestrial creatures. With this limitation, scenes directly related to cosmic horror themes are included in the thesis.

In the evaluation made on Turkish horror films, the artists working professionally in their fields were contacted. However, not all of them responded. Two artists (a writer, a director) who responded were asked to answer eighteen predetermined open-ended questions. The biggest limitation was that the thesis coincided with the pandemic period that affected the whole world. Another limitation was the density of the artists. Since most of them were working on a project, they refused to meet face-to-face or simultaneously online. Instead, determined questions were answered at a desired time. A general evaluation of the horror genre in Turkish cinema was made with the questions asked to the participants. Then, how cosmic fear, which is the main subject of this thesis, can find a place in Turkish cinema is discussed.

3.1.4. Method of the research

In this thesis, Lovecraftian films are selected for semiotic analysis: These films are Alien (1979), In the Mouth of Madness (1994), The Call of Cthulhu (2005), The Mist (2007), Arrival (2016), The Serpent's Tale (1993), The Secret File (1998), D@bbe (2006), The Karadedeler Incident (2011), Baskın: Karabasan (2015). Selected films are analyzed according the qualitative research method, semiotics method of Roland Barthes. Pivotal scenes of the movie reflecting the cosmic horror genre are chosen and analyzed by semiotic technic. The scenes are studied frame by frame and their conceptual background meaning are highlighted through myth level explanation.

In the meanwhile, an evaluative study on Turkish horror cinema was conducted in this thesis. Turkish screenwriter and author, expert in their fields, are contacted in order to realize interviews. These interviews are realized on digital platform through e-mail and 18 open ended questions are adressed to interviewees.

The questions include information gathering about Turkish cosmic horror genre development processes, its comparison with international arena and H. P. Lovecraft’s influence in worldwide and Turkey. In the meantime interviewees discussed and shared their ideas about the future of Turkish horror and sci-fi genre.

3.2. Semiotic Analysis Of Lovecraftian Cosmic Horror Movies

Table 1

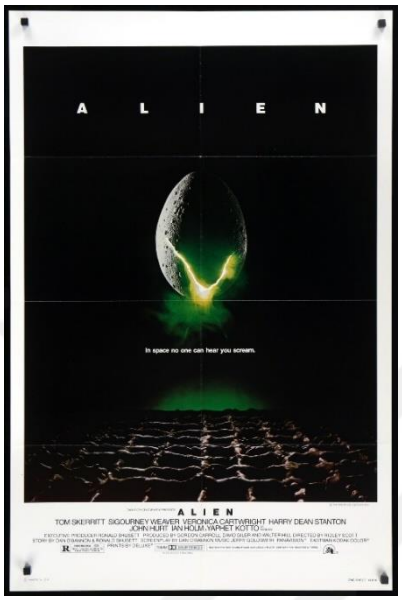
Essential Info About the Selected Films

Movie title	Directed by	Produced by	Screenplay by	Release Date
Alien (1979)	Ridley Scott	Gordon Carroll David Giler Walter Hill	Dan O'Bannon Ronald Shusett	May 25, 1979 (United States)
In The Mouth Of Madness (1994)	John Carpenter	Sandy King	Michael De Luca	December 10, 1994 (Italy) February 3, 1995 (United States)
The Call Of Cthulhu (2005)	Andrew Leman	Sean Branney Andrew Leman	Sean Branney based on "The Call of Cthulhu" by H. P. Lovecraft	June 6, 2005 (United States)
The Mist (2007)	Frank Darabont	Frank Darabont Martin Shafer Liz Glotzer	Frank Darabont based on “The Mist” by Stephen King	November 21, 2007 (United States)
Arrival (2016)	Denis Villeneuve	Shawn Levy Dan Levine Aaron Ryder David Linde	Eric Heisserer based on "Story of Your Life" by Ted Chiang	November 11, 2016 (United States)

3.2.1. Semiotic analysis of Alien (1979)

Figure 1

The Poster of Alien



Alien is a 1979 British-American science-fiction horror film directed by Ridley Scott, and starring Tom Skerritt, Sigourney Weaver, Veronica Cartwright, Harry Dean Stanton, John Hurt, Ian Holm, and Yaphet Kotto. The screenplay was written by Dan O'Bannon and Ronald Shusett. The plot follows the crew of the commercial spacecraft Nostromo, who encounter a deadly alien creature that begins to kill them one by one.

Figure 2

Alien Movies

Note. Source: https://lebeauleblog.com

This movie tells the story of the crew of the commercial towing space vehicle Nostromo as they struggle against the Alien (or Xenomorph). The 1979 film became a cult movie upon its release and was later turned into a movie franchise. The design of Alien, which gives the movie its name, is the collaborative work of several artists. The visual design, based on the evil elements of human nature, is still mesmerizing to audiences today.

Figure 3

The exterior of the Nostromo

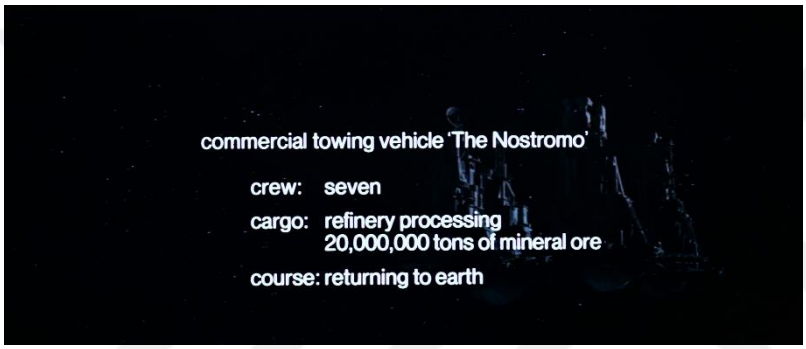


Figure 4

The interior of the Nostromo

At the beginning of the movie there is an image of space and the spaceship Nostromo moving forward. From the text that appears above the image, information such as the name of the ship, the number of crew, the cargo it carries and its course can be obtained. Despite its gigantic exterior, the interior of the ship is quite narrow. The camera creates a claustrophobic effect as it moves through the thin and flat

corridors. Everything functions, but there is a sense of abandonment. The dim lights and silence suggest that there is no life on board. The crew is absent. The camera moves around the ship and introduces us to the environment.

The ship's computer system activates and reveals that the crew is in hypersleep. The Nostromo's computer system, called MOTHER, wakes them up. The crew members are in a chamber dominated by shades of white. This color scheme symbolizes innocence. Like a mother caring for her children, Nostromo's computer system protects and cares for the crew. However, as will be realized later in the movie, this is an illusion. The crew members are made into targets with a pseudo-protectionism.

Figure 5

Kane wakes up from hypersleep

Figure 6

Kane's awakening

The sleeping crew members are semi-naked. As an allegory of childbirth, each of them is woken up by their "Mother" from their placenta-like biobeds. Executive Officer Kane is the first one to wake up from his hypersleep. He is freed from the electrodes attached to his body. His first awakening has a symbolic meaning. Like a savior, he is the first to encounter the Alien and become its prey.

Table 2

Alien 1

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Furniture placed in the chamber.	The pods where the crew members sleep.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Sleeping chamber in white color.	Innocence, trust, comfort, protection.
Sign (2) – Myth	
The choice of a dominant white color creates calmness and protectiveness. The crew members, who are unaware of everything, have absolute trust on the ship's computer system. Referring to the computer as the MOTHER is very meaningful. Furthermore, the white color contrasts with Alien's black skin tone.	

Table 3

Alien 2

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
White color.	Simply decorated.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Biobeds.	Placenta.

Sign (2) – Myth

The biobeds, in which the crew members are in hypersleep, outwardly resemble a placenta. The placenta protects, cares for and nourishes the baby in the womb. Similarly, these biobeds are responsible for the survival of the crew members who go to sleep for long time periods. It is understood that the crew trusted the spaceship's computer like a mother and surrendered their lives.

Figure 7

Exterior of the Alien spaceship

Figure 8

Alien spaceship, Derelict

The environment of the alien spacecraft, which the crew reaches as a result of a mysterious signal, is quite foggy and dark. The limited visibility creates a claustrophobic and uncanny effect. The uncertainty of the next moment increases the tension. Although not specified here, it is referred to as Derelict in the later films and in the novelized version. Several concept designs were made for the spacecraft, eventually Giger, who had also designed Alien, was assigned by director Ridley Scott.

Giger designed a spaceship that was biologically grown rather than built. It references Lovecraft very heavily with the theme of inhuman technology created by ancient alien creatures. Outwardly wishbone-shaped, gigantic and asymmetrical, the ship evokes the uncanny with its inhuman form.

The music playing in the background warns of approaching danger. As the research team (Dallas, Kane and Lambert) pass through the rocks, Ash is in contact with them from the ship. The fact that Ash is the only one who can hear them indicates that he has control over them. Ash is actually an android that the company has placed on the Nostromo. His only purpose is to obtain the alien life form that the research team will find. For this purpose, he turns all of the crew members into a prey of the Alien.

Table 4

Alien 3

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Spacecraft in the fog	Limited visibility.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Derelict.	Uncertainty, danger, fright.

Sign (2) – Myth

The fog that settles around the place suggests that something is lurking, a mystery. There is a darkness completely opposite to the white tones in the sleeping chamber. Limited visibility causes the crew to be unsure of what they are dealing with. As a result, there is a fear and uncanniness. Giger, who designed the craft, intended it to be a biological being. Therefore, he designed a spaceship that looks like it was grown rather than built.

Figure 9

Interior of the Alien spaceship

Figure 10

Alien spaceship

The internal walls of the alien spacecraft look like they are made of bones. It looks like the inside of the skeleton of a giant animal. Furthermore, in a symbolization that is more relevant to the plot of the film, the interior of the spacecraft resembles a womb. The asymmetrical tunnels of the spacecraft and the Alien eggs hidden inside it remind us of the womb of a female being. The amorphous structure of the ship's corridors confirms the idea that the ship is not man-made. The darkness of the interior suggests that the ship has been uninhabitable for a long time. These elements enhance the mystery and horror of the unknown.

Table 5

Alien 4

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Narrow hallways.	Claustrophobia, uncanny, inhumanity.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
The interior of the spacecraft.	The maternal womb.
Sign (2) – Myth	
The interior of the alien spacecraft resembles the inside of a living being. Bone-like shapes in the surroundings suggest savagery. It clearly looks like a mother's womb with the Alien eggs inside the spaceship. The womb shelters the baby and prepares it for birth. Similarly, in the movie, the ship contains eggs that are waiting for their new victim.	

The alien corpse that the crew members discover on the ship is enormous when compared to human size. This is a reference to his belonging an ancient race, older than humanity. They were able to travel in space by creating advanced technology well before humanity. The crew does not find any other alien body except the corpse they discover. This suggests that he was the spaceship's pilot. The body of the alien pilot is fossilized and integrated with his seat. This indicates that he has been here for a very long time. Maybe thousands, maybe millions of years.

Figure 11

The alien corpse

Figure 12

The alien's chest wound

The alien pilot's physical condition suggests that he died unexpectedly. The engineer's chest seems to have been split into pieces by an impact. Strangely, this impact came from inside of his body. It looks like something has come out of his body and burst through his chest. This image has to be seen as an early reference to the Chestburster, the newborn Alien that bursts Kane's chest in later scenes.

Table 6

Alien 5

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
A humanoid figure seen in the dark.	An alien was damaged and died.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Fossilized alien body.	Danger, vulnerability, ephemerality.

Sign (2) – Myth
The alien fossil evokes a sense of strangeness with its larger size compared to humans. The fact that the alien is in its seat indicates that it died unexpectedly. The shattered rib cage signals that there is an attack.

Table 7

Alien 6

Signifier (1)	Signified (1)
A hole in the humanoid figure's chest.	Injury, death, fatal, assault.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Chest wound.	Chestburster, Alien creature.
Sign (2) – Myth	
The creature that gives the film its name (Alien) nests in the body of a host during its initial developmental stage. It then bursts out of the host's rib cage. This results in the host's certain death.	

Figure 13

The egg

Figure 14

The vulva-like mouth of the egg

Kane volunteers to walk inside the alien spaceship. He discovers leathery egg-like shapes in the fog. The eggs are transparent. Kane observes a moving living organism inside the egg. The egg's mouth is deliberately designed in the X-shaped. Its appearance is juicy and sticky. It resembles a vulva with this shape. The physiological developmental phases of the Alien are intentionally likened to male and female genitalia to evoke sexual apprehension.

Table 8

Alien 7

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Sticky objects.	Alien's eggs.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Leathery eggs.	Birth, reproduction, feminity.
Sign (2) – Myth	
The message that is intended to be conveyed by the shape and structure of the egg is strangeness and aggression. It implies sexual aggression towards men with its similarity to the female genitalia.	

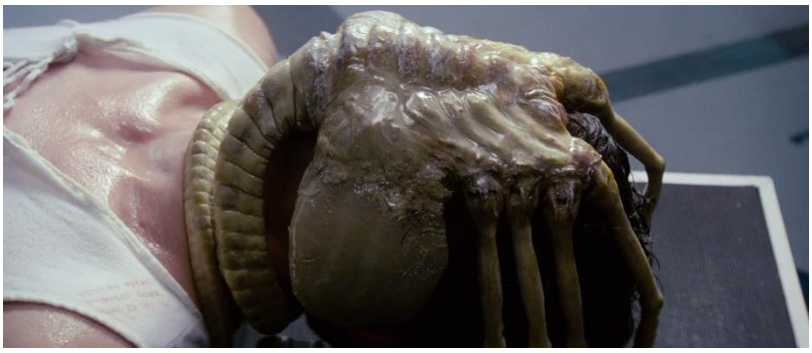
During the writing process, screenwriters Dan O'Bannon and Ronald Shusett came up with a design that highlighted sexual themes as a contrast to the traditional depiction of aliens. By emphasizing the subject of sexual violation, they intended to terrify male and female audiences at the same time. The fact that the Facehugger hatches from the egg and clings to Kane's face connotes sexual assault. O'Bannon and Shusett added the sexual assault of a male crew member to the film as a deliberate response to Horror Genre's tendency to use vulnerable women as victims of sexual assault. Essentially, they wanted male viewers to have empathy as a victim of sexual assault. Many of these revolutionary additions were certainly progressive for 1979, the year of the movie's release. The movie also has Ripley as a powerful female protagonist. Throughout the movie she is in risk of being overshadowed by the men. Nevertheless, she is the only one of the crew to survive.

Figure 15

The melted helmet

Figure 16

Facehugger on Kane's face



The Alien has different phases of physical development. The offspring inside the eggs spawned by the Queen cling to the face of any life form that approaches it. This form of Alien is called the Facehugger. The Facehugger delivers its embryo through its victim's oral cavity and then impregnates them. Which is what happened to Kane. He is carried to the ship by his crewmates and transferred to the lab. Ash and Dallas remove the melted helmet from his head and recognize that the alien has completely covered Kane's face. When they attempt to pull it off, the alien clings more tightly to Kane's face. The Alien paralyzes Kane, but allows him to continue living by protecting his breathing passage. It is using him as an incubator. The Alien is also utilizing its victim's DNA as it progresses to the next physical phase.

Table 9

Alien 8

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Sticky, leathery alien.	An alien clinging to Kane's face.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Facehugger.	Aggression, danger, sexuality.

Sign (2) – Myth

When facehugger bursts out of the egg and clings to Kane's face, he performs an oral sexual assault on Kane. In the following scenes, its egg-laying inside (i.e. impregnating) Kane supports this. The fact that it is a man who gets pregnant is a reaction to the powerless and passive portrayal of women in movies.

Figure 17

Facehugger's knuckles

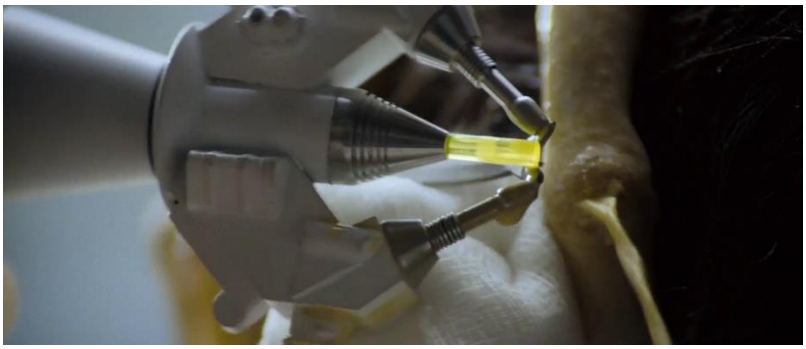


Figure 18

Damage of acid on the ground

When Ash attempts to cut one of Facehugger's knuckles, its blood, consisting of corrosive acid, flows to the ground. The acid begins to melt the ground. It is such a corrosive liquid that it succeeds in fully penetrating the ground and passing downstairs. The Alien's blood is completely acidic. This acid is capable of melting any surface, including metal. For this reason, it is impossible to separate it from the victim's face. Alien has an excellent defense mechanism. Although its blood is harmless to itself, it is extremely destructive to any other surface. As such, it is completely inhuman.

Table 10

Alien 9

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Acid.	Melting, damaging.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Melting at the floor of the ship.	Spread, death, irresistibility.
Sign (2) – Myth	
The liquid from the creature's body burns a hole in the floor of the ship. The acid continues to flow and damages other floors. In this situation, the crew members are completely helpless. Just as they will be completely helpless when the Alien appears.	

Figure 19

Facehugger's body

Figure 20

Facehugger's body

After a while, Ash announces that the Alien has left Kane's face. While Dallas, Ripley and Ash are looking for the creature in the lab, the deceased Facehugger drops from the ceiling to the floor. Ripley's character represents the common sense on the spaceship. Therefore, she warns of the danger of the Alien and says that they must destroy it. However, Ash says that the Alien must be brought to the Earth for scientific research. This is the company policy. Dallas is persuaded by this opinion. But Ripley refuses, she is capable of defying authority for the sake of what she believes is right when necessary. When later Ash is revealed to be an android, it is clear that he has been manipulated by Mother, the Nostromo's computer. For scientific exploration, human life has been put on second place.

Figure 21

The crew's having supper

Figure 22

Kane's getting sick

The crew is eating with pleasure after Kane is rescued from the Facehugger and regains his health. Everyone, including the audience, thinks the threat has been eliminated in a friendly atmosphere. However, just then suddenly Kane gets sick. His stomach is in pain. He begins to shake in agony. While the crew attempts to help him, Kane's chest explodes and the newborn Alien (Chestburster) bursts out.

Figure 23

Ash

There is a contrast between the horrifying incident that happens next and the peaceful supper of the crew. In this scene there is a similarity with Jesus' last supper. The last supper is the last meal Jesus had with his disciples before his crucifixion. At this supper, Jesus reveals that one of his disciples (Judas) will betray him. In Picture 1, it is clear that Ash is separate from the other characters. Like in Leonardo da Vinci's famous painting, Ash stands in the shadows as the betrayer among the crew. His facial expression in close-ups reveals that he is hiding something. He is the collaborator who, sacrificing the crew's lives, allows the company to capture the Alien. Kane explodes in the chest as though someone stabbed him in the back.

Figure 24

Kane and Chestburster

Figure 25

Chestburster

The Chestburster bursting out of Kane's chest is clearly an allegory of childbirth. It is obvious that birth can be extremely painful and bloody for women. It is significant that this event occurs to a man in the movie. It is intended for the male audience to empathize with the reality of childbirth.

In the following scenes, Alien is called "son of Kane" by Ash. This is a reference to the subtext of Cain and Abel. Cain committed a great sin by killing his own brother, and his descendants will continue to carry this evil within them. The similarity between Kane and Cain is not accidental. The Alien's desire to simply kill and maintain its own existence is analogous to Cain's murder in disobedience to God.

Table 11

Alien 10

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
The alien that burst out of Kane's body.	Harm, danger, uncontrolled.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Chest burst.	Birth, motherhood.
Sign (2) – Myth	
The alien bursting out of Kane's ribcage is an allegory of birth. Kane carried him inside, raised him and brought him into the world. This leads to the assumption that the Alien is not independent of man.	

Figure 26

Giger's Necronom IV

The Alien becomes an adult after the phases named Facehugger and Chestburster. The visual design of Alien is based on a drawing of Necronom IV from the book Necronomicon, a collection of illustrations by Swiss surrealist artist H. R. Giger, published in 1977. As its title reveals, this book includes artwork inspired by the fiction of H. P. Lovecraft. Sexual symbols are the main theme of these

illustrations. The infernal illustrations had been shown to director Ridley Scott by screenwriter O'Bannon during the production of the film, thereby clarifying the visual representation of the Alien (Star Beast, the Alien Quadrilogy boxset).

Figure 27

Facehugger

Figure 28

Chestburster

Figure 29

Xenomorph

The adult version of Alien (Xenomorph) has a black skin color. The dark color palette is in harmony with that of the entire film. Its dark skin enables it to hide undetected in the dark. This visualization gives a much mysterious look to the Alien. The Alien's head shape looks like a penis. The sexual symbolism that dominates throughout the movie is also visible here. Although the symbolism of genitalia is more obvious in Giger's illustrations, in the movie it is merely reminiscent. However, it has no eyes on its head.

Table 12

Alien 11

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Black alien creature.	Dark, scary, harmful.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Alien's black skin color.	Evil, obscurity, cruelty, danger.
Sign (2) – Myth	
Its alien appearance is designed to scare people. It is difficult to anthropomorphize them because they have no eyes. Black color is associated with evil in western culture. Because black color symbolizes uncertainty. What is incomprehensible is dangerous and therefore bad.	

Figure 30

The Alien

Figure 31

The Alien

There is another tiny mouth inside the Alien's mouth. Those mouths contain sharp teeth that look almost metallic, like they are not organic. The inner mouth moves forward and kills its victim with its sharp teeth. The Alien has no eyes, so it cannot see, but its senses are highly enhanced. It hunts down almost the entire crew of the spaceship. The Alien evokes a great terror with its eyeless head. If you cannot contact the eyes of the stranger, you gradually start to be scared. The design of the film utilizes humans' evolutionary features. Therefore, the Alien monster is one of the scariest creatures of all time. At the other hand, the Alien has quite human characteristics. It walks on two legs like humans. It has generally human physical characteristics except for its head and tail.

Table 13

Alien 12

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Sharp teeth.	Harmful, horrible, piercing, deadly.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Alien's teeth.	Savage, bestial, monstrous, alien, non-human, fangs.
Sign (2) – Myth	
Fangs suggest a wild animal ready to attack. Showing the teeth means being ready to attack. The victim will be harmed by these fangs, perhaps even lose their life. For people who had not yet developed civilization and lived in close contact with nature, one of the biggest threats was being attacked by wild animals. This feeling is still archaically preserved today.	

Most of the crew members are killed by the Alien. Only Ripley, Ash, Parker and Lambert are left alive. Lambert offers to escape the ship by shuttle to escape the Alien's attacks. However, Ripley says that there is not enough space in the shuttle to carry four people. Ripley reaches Mother, the ship's computer system, and gains new information from her. The sole purpose of the mission they are on is to bring the alien life form to Earth. If necessary, crew members will be sacrificed.

Figure 32

Ash's harassment attempt

Figure 33

Ash

Ripley, suspicious of Ash's behavior, interrogates him. Ash tries to strangle her to death. He rolls up a magazine and tries to put it in Ripley's mouth. This image is clearly an allegory of oral harassment. The subtext of the movie, in which the theme of women who are second-grounded by men, also manifests itself here. At that moment, other crew members arrive. Parker intervenes and attacks Ash. When he hits him, Ash's head is severed and it is revealed that he is an android. Ash was placed on this ship by the company for a special purpose.

In the scene where Ash is talking to Ripley, it becomes increasingly suspicious that he is hiding something. A white liquid flows from the top of his forehead. This fluid is his life fluid. Parallel to the oral molestation scene that is about to take place, one can infer from the appearance of this liquid that it resembles semen. This is just

one of the sexual themes used in the movie. After Ash's head is smashed, this liquid is seen to spread everywhere.

Figure 34

The liquid on Ash's forehead

Figure 35

The white liquid

Parker, Ripley and Lambert reactivate Ash's head and learn that he has been tasked with ensuring the Alien's survival. As an android, Ash admires the alien's psychology, unhindered by conscience or morality. He mocks the crew members about their chances of survival. The Alien is focused only on killing. He will hunt them down to survive. Ripley cuts its power so that it can't talk anymore. Parker uses a flamethrower to incinerate him.

Table 14

Alien 13

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Fluid, light colored.	Sticky, dirty, weird, messy.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
White liquid.	Male seminal fluid, semen.
Sign (2) – Myth	
The fact that Ash is an android reveals that this fluid is also a mechanical fluid. However, when the relevant scene is considered, it becomes clear that what this fluid really signifies is the seminal fluid of masculinity.	

Figure 36

Alien hiding in the shuttle

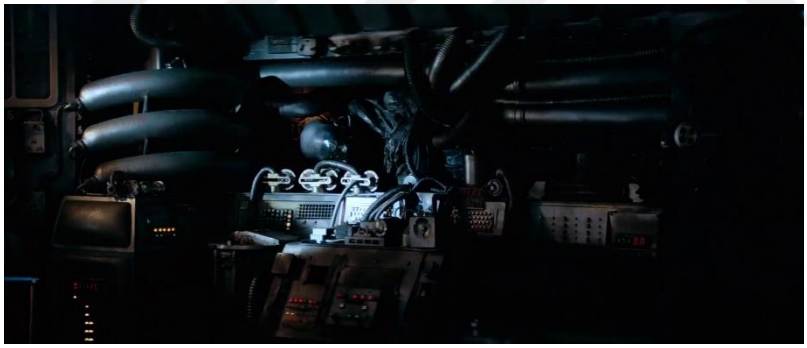


Figure 37

Alien hiding in the shuttle

With the revelation of Ash's betrayal, only three crew members remain on board, Ripley, Parker and Lambert. They decide to self-destruct the Nostromo and escape by shuttle. However, Parker and Lambert are ambushed and killed by the Alien while collecting life support supplies. Ripley initiates the ship's self-destruct sequence but finds the alien blocking the path to the shuttle. She retreats and unsuccessfully tries to abort the self-destruct sequence. Left with no choice, she escapes to the shuttle, taking Jones the cat with her, and narrowly escapes as the Nostromo explodes.

Thinking she has survived the Nostromo and Alien, Ripley prepares for hypersleep. Meanwhile, she discovers that the Alien is in the shuttle and has trapped her in a confined space. She puts on a spacesuit and uses gas to force the creature out. The creature approaches Ripley, but before she can attack it, it opens an airlock door and nearly launches her into space. However, the creature grabs the frame and holds on. Ripley shoots it with a grappling hook, but the weapon jams as the airlock door closes, tethering the alien to the shuttle. The alien pulls himself toward the engine exhaust, but Ripley fires the engines, hurling him into deep space. After recording the last journal entry, she places Jones and herself in biobeds for the journey back to Earth.

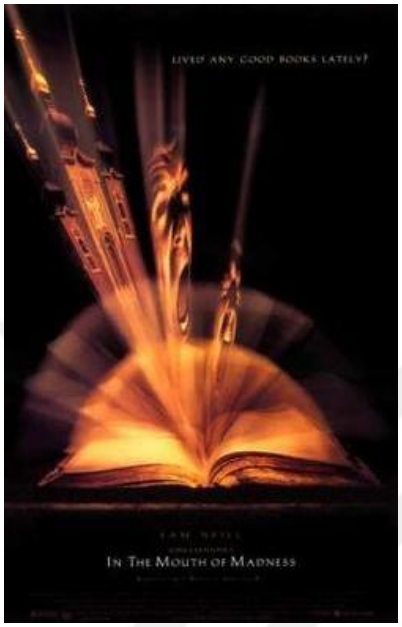
Figure 38

The end of the Alien

3.2.2. Semiotic analysis of In the Mouth of Madness (1994)

Figure 39

The Poster of In the Mouth of Madness



In the Mouth of Madness is a 1994 American horror film directed by John Carpenter. Starring Sam Neill, Julie Carmen, Jürgen Prochnow, and Charlton Heston. The screenplay was written by Michael De Luca. John Trent is an insurance investigator who aims to keep his monotonous job and earn money. One day he is hired by a publishing house. Famous horror writer Sutter Cane has disappeared with the manuscript of his final novel. Trent starts looking for him.

The film is the final installment of John Carpenter's Apocalypse Trilogy. These three films share some similar themes, but are distinct from each other. The movie references Lovecraft more than the other two films. The title In the Mouth of Madness is a reference to Lovecraft's 1936 novella At the Mountains of Madness. Apocalyptic themes are at the center of the films in the trilogy. They focus on the threat to humanity posed by aliens who seek to destroy conventional reality. All the films in the trilogy belong to the Cosmic Horror subgenre popularized by Lovecraft in the literary world. While the previous two films, The Thing (1982) and Prince of Darkness (1987), offer a tenuous salvation against the enemy that threatens humanity, In the Mouth of Madness (1994) ends in complete apocalypse.

Figure 40

Trent is brought to an asylum

Figure 41

Trent is in his cell

The film is based on the idea that the concept of madness is relative. If everyone behaves like a madman, then madness is normal. If everyone is crazy, then there is no advantage to being smart. In the first scene of the movie, the protagonist Trent is brought to a psychiatric hospital. He gives the men trying to restrain him a hard time, but he is still locked in his cell. He screams that he is not crazy, that he shouldn't be here, but in vain. There are already many prisoners who think like him. Trent's cell is covered from top to bottom with pillows. This shows that the mentally ill can hurt themselves. Cells are designed this way to protect them. As can be seen later in the movie, the madness spread by Sutter Cane's book affects a large part of society and manifests itself in widespread acts of violence.

As Trent gives up, thinking he can't get out, the lights in his cell begin to flash. At that moment he has nightmarish visions. At first a hand knocks on the door of his cell. Then a man appears in the darkness. The man's face is invisible. But it is none other than the horror writer Sutter Cane. Trent tells him that he is unhappy with his situation, that he thinks this is the end. Cane hints to him that he has not reached the end yet. He needs to read the whole book to finish the story. Thus he will surrender completely to madness. The book in question here is Sutter Cane's novel In the Mouth of Madness, the source of madness in society.

Figure 42

Dr. Wrenn visits John Trent

Figure 43

Drawings of the cross

Dr. Wrenn visits John Trent in his cell to hear his story. As seen in Figure 42, Trent has decorated his cell with hundreds of drawings of crosses. His own face is also covered with drawings of crosses (Figure 43). While this should be a sign that

Trent has lost his sanity, it turns out that Trent is actually faking it. There is an epidemic of insanity affecting a large part of society. Trent, however, is not yet fully affected. This is because he has not yet finished Cane's book. Trent pretends to be insane in order to stay in the safety of the asylum and not be affected by the epidemic.

Table 15

In the Mouth of Madness 1

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Drawings of the cross.	Religious symbol, religiosity.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
The Cross.	Madness, insanity, repetition.
Sign (2) – Myth	
The madness emanating from Sutter Cane's books is associated with established religions. Just as what is written in these novels confuses the minds of ordinary people, causing them to do strange things and turn to violence, so do religious teachings.	

John Trent is a freelance insurance investigator. He is hired by Arcane Publishing to investigate the disappearance of bestselling horror author Sutter Cane. Cane's novels are said to affect his readers in ways such as perception disorder, memory loss and paranoia. For this reason, certain segments of society have begun to commit acts of violence. Trent does not believe that Sutter Cane's novels are the source of this. The police take harsh action against people who have lost their minds because of the books. Trent seems rather indifferent. He says that this is a temporary situation, a case of social hysteria. Trent's indifferent attitude contrasts with the acts of violence in society.

Figure 44

Trent before the axe attack

Figure 45

The Agent's mutated eyes

Trent is sitting in a restaurant interviewing for a job when he is attacked by a man with an axe. Trent later learns that the man is Sutter Cane's agent. He is angry because he was one of the first to read In the Mouth of Madness, the novel Cane was working on. The agent's pupils appear to be split in two. They have a light blue color. In the later parts of the movie, it is seen that the eyes of all the people who go crazy under the influence of Cane's books are like this. The eyes exposed to the book react to the book. Blood comes out of the eyes of the insane people and they start to stare blankly.

Table 16

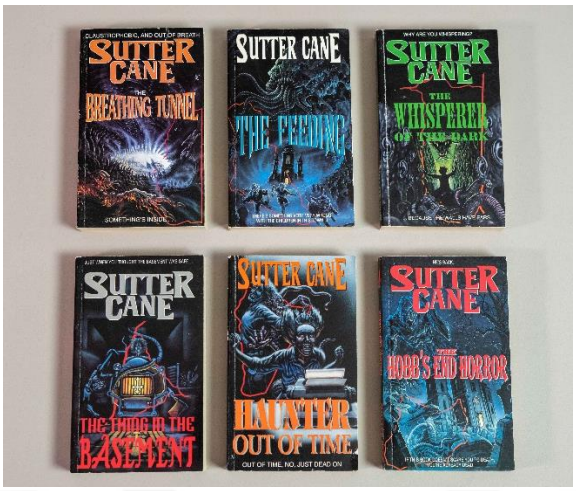
In the Mouth of Madness 2

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Pupils split in two.	Uncomfortable, strange, unhealthy.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
The Agent's eyes.	Madness, duality, seeing beyond known reality.
Sign (2) – Myth	
Those who read Sutter Cane's books realize that they are actually part of a work of fiction and start to go mad. This madness is seen in the eyes of his agent, the first person to read the author's last book.	

Trent meets with Jackson Harglow, the director of Arcane. Sutter Cane's whereabouts must be found. More importantly, the publishing house is under enormous pressure to publish Cane's latest novel, In the Mouth of Madness. Trent suspects from the first that this is a scam to boost sales, but he is nevertheless committed to the case. Linda Styles, the publishing editor, will help him in this investigation. Their goal is to learn Cane's fate and obtain copies of the new book. Visiting the publishing house, Trent examines the drawings of Cane's novels. These drawings appear in sequence on the screen.

Figure 46

The cover designs of Cane's novels



Note. Source: https://www.mopop.org

Lovecraftian themes are immediately evident in the illustrations here. In particular, the illustrations in The Feeding are reminiscent of Lovecraft's trademark Cthulhu. The drawings have a dark tone and clearly depict malevolent non-human beings. This is an indication that the aliens who are trying to take over the world have already claimed Sutter Cane's mind, as will be seen later in the movie. This is how they made him write his books. Linda advises Trent to read his books to get to know Sutter Cane better.

Table 17

In the Mouth of Madness 3

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
The cover designs of Cane's novels.	Illustrations with dark themes.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Novel covers.	Lovecraftian, cosmic horror, Cthulhu, etc.

Sign (2) – Myth

The cover designs used in the movie clearly refer to H. P. Lovecraft. Especially the top center cover clearly shows a drawing similar to Lovecraft's most well-known creation, Cthulhu.

As soon as Trent reads the books, his mind starts to be affected. He starts having nightmares as he reads the books. He loses touch with reality. As he reads the books and starts to dream, it becomes clear that Cane is slowly taking over Trent's mind. His mind now works differently. Sutter puts together the cover drawings of Cane's novels and creates a map. This is the famous town of Hobb's End, where Cane is hiding. Trent and Linda go here to find Cane.

Figure 47

Young cyclist

Figure 48

Old cyclist

The cyclist seen in Figure 47 appears at different points in the movie. While driving in the dark, Linda first sees the cyclist going in the same direction as the car. The cyclist is a young man with a suffering face. As seen in Figure 48, another cyclist appears in front of the car Linda is driving. He is moving in a completely opposite direction to the previous one. He is dressed in the same clothes as the Young Cyclist. However, this person is quite old. Perhaps he is an older version of the young cyclist. The cyclist is wearing a blue denim jacket. The older version has completely white hair. His eyes are also completely white. While the younger version seems to be suffering from the situation, the older version seems to take everything for granted. As a result of her shock, Linda hits the cyclist with her car.

Table 18

In the Mouth of Madness 4

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Young versus Old.	Ephemeral, temporality, the contrast of youth and old age, duality.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Cyclist.	Obedience, necessity, slavery.
Sign (2) – Myth	
Everything in this world is part of Sutter Cane's plot. People have to behave the way Cane writes them. That's why the Cyclist has to ride a bike all his life. The main message here is that ordinary people are in reality manipulated by the people who run society. Every individual believes that they have a free will, but is this really the case?	

The cyclist's age change shows the contrast between youth and old age. The fact that he has been cycling his whole life without any reaction because Sutter Cane asked him to (because Hobb's End is controlled by Cane) reveals the passivity of man in the face of fate. Similarly, in real life, people have to live the life that is deemed appropriate for them, do the work they have to do and be content with the money they earn.

Figure 49

Bicycle wheel

Figure 50

Weather vane

After the car accident, the audience is shown two separate frames. These are the bicycle wheel in Figure 49 and the large weather vane in Figure 50. Both are in a continuous loop. These objects remind us of Hobbs End, into which our characters will be dragged unintentionally later in the movie. Those who enter or those who are already inside cannot step out without permission from the author Sutter Cane.

Figure 51

Cyclist lying on the ground

As a matter of fact, the cyclist lying on the ground always repeats the same words: "They won't let me out!" Seeing the cyclist at different ages and always riding the same bicycle on the same road makes one feel this cycle. The cyclist always wears the same clothes. This town he is trapped in consumes his life. He has only one mission. And that is to go round and round on his bicycle. Another interesting thing in this scene is that the person playing the old cyclist is John Carpenter, the director of this movie.

Table 19

In the Mouth of Madness 5

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Spinning wheels	Continuity, cycle, sameness.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Wind rose, bicycle wheel.	Time is different in Hobbs End.
Sign (2) – Myth	
Hobbs End, created by Sutter Cane using a bicycle wheel and a windmill, is understood to continue to exist in a continuous time cycle. He emphatically expresses this by showing us these items just before our lead character enters Hobbs End and just after he leaves.	

Figure 52

Linda is exposed to the book

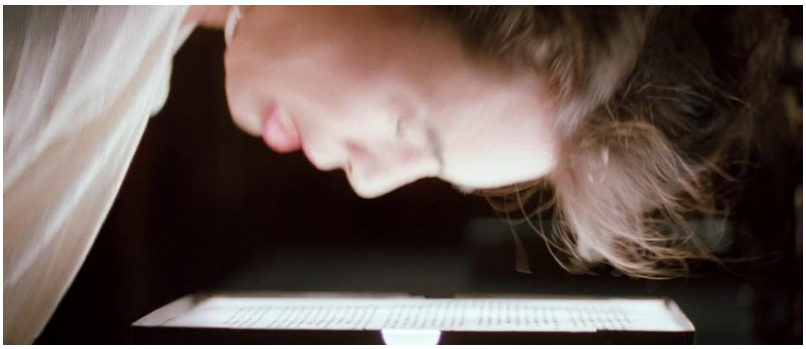
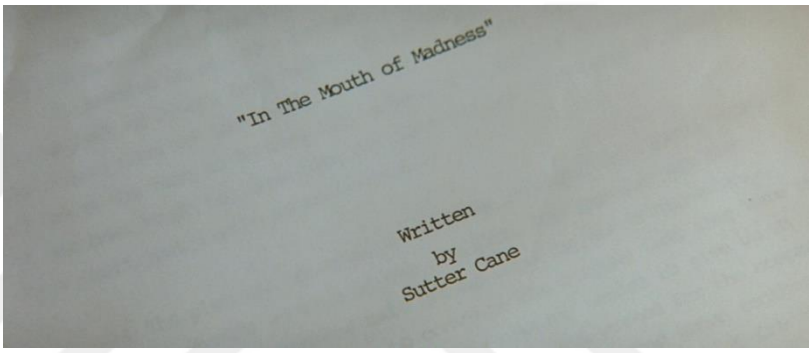


Figure 53

In the Mouth of Madness



Linda goes to the church where Sutter Cane was found and finds him working on his latest novel. The church is very dark and devoid of people. The walls appear to be covered with sticky liquids. All these signs indicate that the church has not been used for a long time. Cane has closed this church for himself. The liquids seeping through the walls and doors suggest that it has been occupied by a malevolent force. In the room where Cane was found, there is an old wooden door. This door is soaked with a bloody, sticky and filth-like substance. The door creaks constantly. From inside, the voices of terrible aliens can be heard. They want to get out. They are trying to go back to the world.

Figure 54

Wooden door

The door seen in Figure 54 symbolizes a transition. In religious narratives, the Virgin Mary is referred to as the "Gate of Heaven". Passing through this gate leads to salvation. Blessings are gained. This symbolism may be linked to the Mother Goddess motif. The Mother Goddess is a symbol of sexuality, fertility and prosperity. The door symbol used here can also be associated with the female genitalia. The blood-like sticky liquid flowing over the door makes this association even stronger. The blood seen here symbolizes virginity and birth.

In ancient myths, the door always exists with its protector. The strong hero comes to a door after various adventures. Sometimes the guardian of the gate gives him a task. Sometimes he asks a question. The hero passes through the gate and completes his initiation. Again, in various myths, the gate is used to keep evil spirits in the afterlife. It is used in the same way in the movie.

Cane tells him that what he writes is not fiction but reality. Extraterrestrials make his writings real for him. Cane says quite assertively that his books are a new Bible, a new holy book. The aliens will first settle in the minds of humans through these books and then return to earth. This sheds light on how revolutions that affect the world first sprout in the minds of individuals.

Figure 55

The blood in Linda's eyes

Figure 56

The alien face behind Cane's head

Cane forcibly exposes Linda to his latest novel In the Mouth of Madness. After this contact, Linda realizes that she is really part of Cane's fiction. She always has been. Everything seen during the movie time is composed of Cane's writings. After this shock, Linda's eyes bleed as shown in Figure 55. The realization that all her reality is a fiction leaves her exhausted. Like others who have read Cane's books, she has now stepped into madness. His behavior also changes. She is now Cane's puppet. When Linda hugs Cane to kiss him, she notices that the back of Cane's head has been replaced by an alien. This scene proves that Linda now sees things differently.

Table 20

In the Mouth of Madness 6

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
A door made of wood, covered in blood.	Passage, brutality, danger, uncanny.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Wooden door.	Female genitalia, childbirth.
Sign (2) – Myth	
In the movie, this door represents the place where an ancient alien race will pass through to dominate the world again, just like in Lovecraft's fictions. Furthermore, the bloody and sticky appearance of the door can also be associated with childbirth. The door represents the woman's genitalia and the aliens spreading through it can also bring to mind the fear of having children.	

Figure 57

Trent's car

With the whole town surrounded by madness, Trent tries to escape. But he fails and keeps going back to the point where he started. It's almost in a loop. Trent escapes the chaos and reaches Sutter Cane. Cane has a conversation with him. He explains that he and all other people are part of his fiction. Trent is so sure that he is a real person with free will that he doesn't believe it. From the first moment he arrives in town, he thinks that everything he has experienced has been a planned game.

Figure 58

Sutter Cane in the confessional

Figure 59

Trent in the confessional

It is significant that the setting in which Trent talks to Cane is the confessional in a church. In confessional booths, the priest talks to a believer who wants to confess. The choice of such a setting in the movie is related to the fact that Cane is a kind of prophet, a priest who transcribes the teachings of the Old Ones. Here Cane asks Trent to let go of all his doubts and accept that he is part of his fictional world. He tells him that his books are more influential than any other holy book in the world. Because they have been read by so many more people. This makes the Old Ones stronger and paves the way for their return.

Figure 60

Cane tearing himself up

Figure 61

Cane going through the gate

Cane entrusts Trent with his latest novel, In the Mouth of Madness. He explains to him that his mission is to get it out of Hobbs End for publication. He then stands in front of the door covered in the sticky fluids that keep the Old Ones in the afterlife. Cane tears himself like a sheet of paper, like the page of a book. On the other side of the paper are the words Cane has written. This wall is like a big version of Cane's novel. When the paper is torn and Cane disappears, a hole appears in the wall. This hole is the door through which the Old Ones will pass.

Figure 62

The gateway to the other dimension

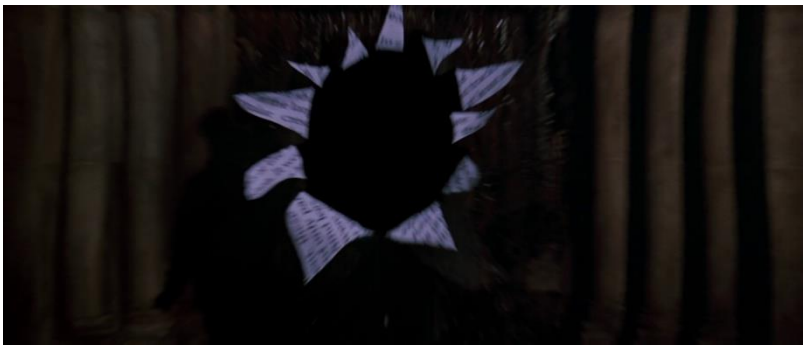


Table 21

In the Mouth of Madness 7

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
A wall torn in the form of paper.	Artificiality and surrealism.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Wall.	Transition, separation, unknown.
Sign (2) – Myth	
Sutter Cane's fictions merge with the real world. The strange alien creatures that Cane describes in his books are hiding behind a door in the church. Cane makes this door into a paper state. Freaky creatures make their way through this torn paper into the real world. The paper book represents the written, unreal things.	

The hole made by Sutter Cane looks like a wild mouth. It will allow the alien gods to pass through from the other world. Some voices are heard through the hole. The Old Ones are getting closer. When Trent realizes they are coming, he starts running along the corridor behind him.

Figure 63

The corridor

Figure 64

Cane's alien creatures

Trent wants to take Linda with him as he runs away. But this is impossible. According to Sutter Cane's fiction, she must stay here. Linda says that she has read the book to the end and cannot come. Her story ends here. This part of the movie actually witnesses the fourth wall breaking down. The characters fulfill the roles assigned to them by the movie and then become invisible. Linda seems to realize this and explains the situation to the audience.

Trent starts to run away. A group of aliens are seen running after him. They are all grotesque, strange looking. They look completely extraterrestrial. They are scaly, plastic-like and hybrid creatures like H. P. Lovecraft depicted in his fiction. Trent keeps running. But his efforts seem to fall short. When the aliens get too close, Trent finds himself in another place. This is the middle of a road. He has left Hobbs

End. It's like a deus ex machina. As mentioned above, some signs indicate that Trent is now in the real (?) world.

There is a reason behind Trent's return to the real world. His purpose is to deliver Sutter Cane's novel to the publisher for publication. Thus, the madness emanating from the book will reach all of humanity. On the other hand, in the later parts of the movie, reality and artifice, madness and sanity, all intertwine.

Table 22

In the Mouth of Madness 8

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
The creatures that possessed Sutter Cane.	Inhuman, horrible, disgusting, harmful.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Alien creatures.	Lovecraftian, tentacled.
Sign (2) – Myth	
Spreading from the church where Sutter Cane is hiding, these creatures are the epitome of madness. There are clear Lovecraftian influences in the design of the creatures.	

Trent tries many ways to get rid of Cane's book. But the book keeps coming back to him in different ways. He cannot get rid of the task of delivering the book. This is his fate, or rather Sutter Cane, the architect of the fictional world in which they live, has set him such a course. Step by step Trent becomes convinced of Cane's power. There is no escape now. Yet Trent vows to resist and not surrender himself.

Figure 65

Trent's coming out

Figure 66

A world in ruins

In a last ditch effort, Trent thinks he has gotten rid of the book and arrives at Arcane Publishing. Jackson tells Harglow to never publish Cane's book. But Harglow is surprised because Trent delivered his copy of the book months ago. The book has already been published. There will even be a movie adaptation. Trent's last remaining hopes are dashed. At this point, the movie conveys the message that no matter what one does, there is no escape from fate.

After all this, Trent pretends to surrender to the madness spreading through society and sends himself to a mental hospital. A flashback to scenes from the beginning of the movie reveals that the epidemic of madness outside has completely overtaken humanity. There is no order left. There is unconditional chaos everywhere.

Trent steps out of his broken cell door into the outside world. Madness has brought the end of many people in the world.

Table 23

In the Mouth of Madness 9

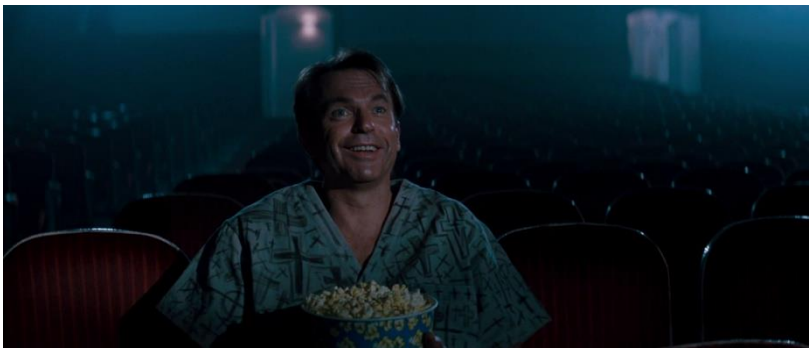
Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
The city without people.	Emptiness, calm, no people.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
The city.	Chaos, danger, madness, etc.
Sign (2) – Myth	
The epidemic of madness spreading from Cane's books has taken over the whole of humanity. People who go mad leave behind a city in ruins. This is parallel to the violent tendency that madness creates.	

Figure 67

IMOM movie poster

Figure 68

Trent in the movie theater



As an epidemic of madness sweeps the world, Trent remains the only person in the world who has not read Sutter Cane's novel in its entirety or seen the movie. The whole world is in a post-apocalyptic atmosphere. Trent enters a movie theater. He breaks the fourth wall and starts watching his own movie. The movie screen reflects the crucial scenes of the movie seen from the beginning of the movie. But it looks like a cheap parody. Trent starts laughing hysterically.

In conclusion, this movie actually gives messages about the transience and meaninglessness of human life. Many of the things that humans take seriously in everyday life are in reality considered ridiculous by superior alien beings. Life is purposeless and it is a very difficult and hurtful experience for a human being to accept this. In this way, the movie fulfills the themes of cosmic horror.

3.2.3. Semiotic analysis of The Call of Cthulhu (2005)

Figure 69

The Poster of The Call of Cthulhu

The Call of Cthulhu is a 2005 American independent silent film adaptation of the H. P. Lovecraft short story the same name directed by Andrew Leman. Starring Matt Foyer, John Bolen, Ralph Lucas, Chad Fifer, David Mersault, and Barry Lynch. The screenplay was written by Sean Branney. The film mimics the classic silent film genre of the 1920s. Distributed by HPLHS (H. P. Lovecraft Historical Society), the film uses the Mythoscope process, a blend of modern and vintage techniques. The plot of the movie is briefly as follows: A dying professor leaves his great-nephew a collection of documents related to the Cult of Cthulhu. The nephew enthusiastically assembles the documents leftover from his uncle. The result is quite frightening.

The movie is based on the story The Call of Cthulhu by H. P. Lovecraft. It was realized with the idea of what it would have been like if the story had been adapted to cinema when it was first written. Although the movie was shot in 2005, it looks like it was made in the 1920s. Many elements such as sets, makeup and acting were created to reflect that period. While the cinematography of the film uses the cinematic style of the 1920s, modern camera angles are also used. The darkness and crampedness of the

story is conveyed to the audience by using black and white images and a square screen ratio.

Figure 70

The dream sequence

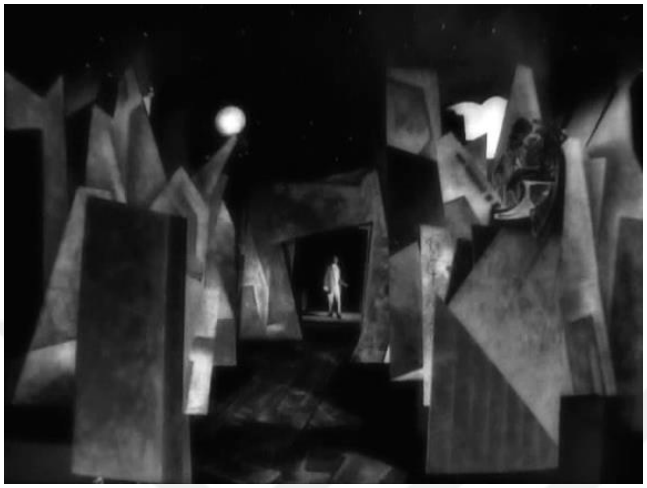


Figure 71

The dream sequence

Figures 70 and 71 show the sunken city of R'lyeh where Cthulhu sleeps. A clearly distorted style is adopted here. The configuration used is merely angular and lacks symmetry. This is indicative of a meeting with non-Euclidean geometry, as described in the story by H. P. Lovecraft. The aim of this depiction is to achieve an image that is not man-made and that challenges human perception. The filmmakers

kept the same vintage style when visualizing this scene. They also used visual effects to enhance the strangeness and impressiveness of the scene.

R'lyeh is a sunken city where the cosmic entity Cthulhu has slept for millions of years. R'lyeh appears in Henry Wilcox's dreams at the beginning of the movie (Figure 70 and 71) and at the end when the crew of the Emma ship arrives at the sunken city. Cthulhu is linked to the pantheon known as the Great Old Ones. As described in Lovecraft's works, the Great Old Ones came from outer space and ruled the Earth millions of years ago. These beings will resurrect and rule the Earth.

Figure 72

City of R'lyeh

Figure 73

City of R'lyeh

Lovecraft's stories were long considered unfilmable because of their content. This is because what Lovecraft really wanted to convey in his stories is the crisis experienced by helpless characters who are always confronted with certain realities beyond the human mind. For this reason, most of the adaptations made over the years could not adequately reflect Lovecraft's themes. This 2005 film, the first adaptation of the story of the same name, takes the set design of 1920s German Expressionist films as a model. The set design features intertwined, intricate and angular sets. Especially the set designs of Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari (1920, Picture 72) and Nosferatu (1922) directly inspired the film.

Figure 74

Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari

German Expressionism is a cinema movement that emerged after the First World War. Experiencing economic difficulties, German cinema created a unique style by using symbolism in order to compete with its American counterparts. In the films of this movement, absurd and unrealistic sets, distorted perspectives, exaggerated use of light and shadow stand out. The movement generally dealt with pessimistic themes. This movement later inspired film noir and horror cinema (Badley, Palmer and Schneider, 2016).

Table 24

The Call of Cthulhu 1

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Angular structures.	Cloustrofobia and stuckness.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Angular stage design.	Strangeness, alienation.
Sign (2) – Myth	
Non-Euclidean geometry is a form of description that Lovecraft uses to describe extraterrestrial structures in his stories. In the movie, an angular and asymmetrical stage design was made to depict the sunken city of R'lyeh, where Cthulhu was sleeping. This design style brings to mind the German Expressionist films of the 1920s. Repetition, vicious circle.	

Figure 75, 76 and 77 represent the mythical creature Cthulhu. In Lovecraft's fiction, Cthulhu is described as follows: "A monster of vaguely anthropoid outline, but with an octopus-like head whose face was a mass of feelers, a scaly, rubbery-looking body, prodigious claws on hind and fore feet, and long, narrow wings behind." (Lovecraft, 1928).

Figure 75

The Cthulhu

Figure 76

The Cthulhu

Figure 77

The Cthulhu

Table 25

The Call of Cthulhu 2

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Cthulhu's body.	Horror, inhumanity.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
The Cthulhu.	Cosmic horror, alien fear.
Sign (2) – Myth	
The creature of Cthulhu seems to have been formed from the combination of several different creatures. Its scaly structure increases its sense of alienation. The design of the character creates a cosmic horror on the audience, revealing the anxiety about the unknown.	

Cthulhu in the movie was animated using stop-motion. During the construction of the puppet, a style was adopted to match Lovecraft's depiction. The size of the creature is enormous. It is even bigger than a sailor's ship. This represents its inhuman and ruthless characteristics. Cthulhu is in a gloomy environment. There are heavy waves and a storm. The lightning that illuminates the environment reveals its face. This gives it a very impressive appearance.

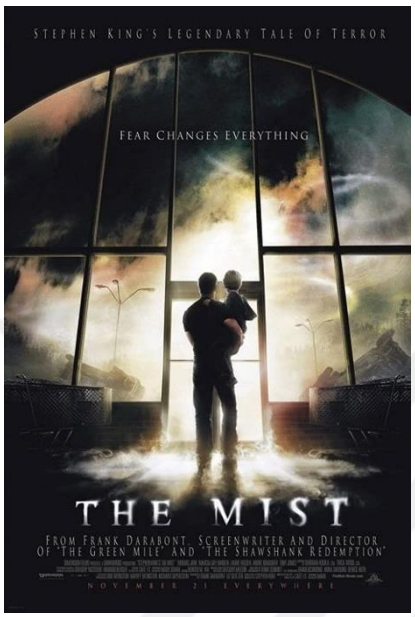
The character of Cthulhu (not by Lovecraft himself, but later used by August Derleth to name the mythos) is an ancient god who sleeps on a lost island in the Pacific Ocean. When the time comes for him to awaken, some people around the world begin to have various dreams about him and the city of R'lyeh where he sleeps. Cthulhu feeds on these visions and is empowered to come back to life. At the end of the story, Cthulhu is temporarily defeated, but his reawakening is imminent.

Since ancient times, different cultures have told stories of gigantic sea monsters living in the depths of the sea. One of the inspirations for Cthulhu is the Kraken, a sea creature from Norse mythology. With its giant size, the Kraken sinks ships and drags sailors to their deaths. Lovecraft's choice of an island in the middle of the ocean as the location of Cthulhu and a ship as the victim reveals the parallel between the two. The only survivor of the ship is a Norwegian. Lovecraft used sea creatures in many stories other than Cthulhu (Ashley, 2007, pp. 441-459).

3.2.4. Semiotic analysis of The Mist (2007)

Figure 78

The Poster of The Mist



The Mist (2007) is based on Stephen King's 1980 psychological horror novella of the same name. The film is directed and written by Frank Darabont. The cast includes Thomas Jane, Marcia Gay Harden, Laurie Holden, Andre Braugher, Toby Jones, William Sadler, Jeffrey DeMunn, Frances Sternhagen, Sam Witwer, Alexa Davalos and Nathan Gamble.

The opening scene of the movie introduces the protagonist and his family. David, who lives a normal life with his family in a rural area, is a painter and movie poster designer. While working on a movie poster, a violent storm hits the town and the power goes out. David's studio looks quite ordinary and cozy. The poster he is working on is a reference to Stephen King's Dark Tower series, from which the screenplay for this movie is adapted. The drawing on the frame is actually by the famous movie poster designer Drew Struzan. His poster designs throughout his career can be seen in the background.

Figure 79

David works on a poster design

Figure 80

A tree felled by a thunderstorm

The communication with the outside world is cut off. This indicates that the characters are slowly passing into an uncanny dimension. Isolation is one of the main themes used in horror films. David takes his family to the basement to protect them from the thunderstorm. Meanwhile, a tree in the garden falls and crashes into David's studio, smashing the movie poster he was working on. This heralds an unexpected and shocking invasion into David's ordinary life from outside.

Figure 81

The fallen tree and the mist

Figure 82

The mist over the lake

The following day, David and his family check the storm damage to their home. They see that a large tree has fallen over the boathouse. In many cultures, trees are a symbol of life. In this scene, the fall of the tree is an ominous sign. It signifies impending danger. David and his family notice a strange mist over the lake (Picture 79). As in many horror and thriller films, the mist signifies the approaching danger, the unknown, the uncanny. The mist creates a limited field of vision and increases uncertainty. Uncertainty brings with it a sense of fear. There is a strangeness in the appearance of the mist. It is as if it was artificially placed there. Family members find

this mist on the lake strange. They have never experienced this phenomenon before. David offers his own scientific explanations, but he is not sure what he is saying.

Table 26

The Mist 1

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
A tree that has fallen down.	Disaster, danger, harm.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Fallen tree.	Disruption of life.
Sign (2) – Myth	
The tree is associated with life in many cultures. It is a symbol of life, of continuity. For this reason, the fall of the tree after the storm is a disruption in the continuity of life.	

Table 27

The Mist 2

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
A weather phenomenon that obstructs vision.	Unknowing, invisibility, blindness.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
The Mist.	Danger, the unknown, alien attack, disruption of reality.
Sign (2) – Myth	
The mist that begins over the lake and spreads across the town hides dangerous alien creatures. It is claimed that this mist is the result of an experiment conducted at a	

nearby military installation. Because the soldiers have opened a door to another dimension.

Figure 83

Military vehicles are passing by

Figure 84

David and Mr. Norton

David goes with his neighbor Mr. Norton and his son Billy to the supermarket in the center of town to buy groceries and the action begins. As they drive down the road into town, several military vehicles pass them at high speed. These vehicles are carrying personnel from nearby military installations. They are not worried about this because of the thunderstorm. As Mr. Norton and David talk about the installation, it becomes clear that it is unclear what is going on there. There are several speculations about what is happening at the installation, but nothing concrete. This therefore creates a mystery. Military activity signals a serious problem.

Table 28

The Mist 3

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Green colored off-road vehicles.	Authority, seriousness, violence.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Military vehicles passing by.	Danger, threat, fear, uncertainty.
Sign (2) – Myth	
The passing of more than one military vehicle in a single line indicates impending danger. The fact that all military vehicles are green indicates that they have received orders from the same source in harmony.	

There is a very crowded atmosphere in the supermarket. Because of the storm, everyone has come to buy groceries. The electricity is out in the supermarket as in the whole town. David entrusts his son Billy to Mr. Norton and tries to make a call from a pay phone. But this phone line is also out of service. While they are shopping, some soldiers come to the supermarket. These soldiers work in the military installation. They are planning to leave town for vacation, but a Military Policeman arrives and informs them that their leave has been canceled.

Figure 85

The soldiers of the installation

Figure 86

People from the supermarket

Police and fire trucks pass by on the road. It is clear that there is military activity. A strong siren is heard. Sirens are the most common way to signal danger by sound. Sirens are used to warn all over the world. The first improved siren was built in 1819 by Baron Charles Cagniard de la Tour and named after the Sirens of mythology because it could produce sound underwater (de la Tour, 1819). In mythology, Sirens are described as beings that seduce sailors with their beauty and drag them to their death. With the warning sounds, a panic starts in the supermarket.

Table 29

The Mist 4

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Loud noise-making device.	Danger, warning.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Siren.	Mythological creatures.
Sign (2) – Myth	
In Greek mythology, the creatures that fascinate sailors on the sea with their songs and drag them to the rocks and cause their death are called Siren. Sirens have the appearance of beautiful women and live on the islands. Developed by de la Tour in	

1819, the alarm was given this name because it symbolized danger and could make a noise under water.

A terrified civilian run into the supermarket while the whole crowd looks on in curiosity. The frightened man's face is covered in blood. This means that he has escaped from a dangerous situation. He shouts and warns the crowd. He says there is something dangerous in the mist. This thing hunts people who go into the mist. At first no one believes him and one man goes out despite the warnings. By the time he reaches his car, the mist is all around him. As the man disappears into the mist, his scream is heard. Like the siren, the scream symbolizes danger and warning. It is not clear what happened to the man lost in the mist, but this is enough for civilians to close the doors and take refuge in the supermarket.

Figure 87

The panicked civilians

Meanwhile, there is a violent tremor. Civilians taking refuge in the supermarket are terrified. They have no information to understand what has happened. Uncertainty brings with it fear. As in Lovecraft's stories, a threat from beyond the limits of human understanding has destroyed normality. There are people from different backgrounds and levels of education trapped in the same place against an external threat. The setting of the story is therefore a supermarket. A place that seems

so ordinary to most of us suddenly turns into a place where supernatural events take place. There is a transition to a level of reality beyond the limits of human understanding. Meanwhile, some of the civilians embrace conspiracy theories, some believe in religious narratives and some cling to scientific arguments. Mrs. Carmody preaches that this is the wrath of God, that the Day of Judgment is approaching, while others blame Arrowhead Project, allegedly being carried out at the military installation.

Figure 88

The spreading mist

Table 30

The Mist 5

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Shopping center.	Ordinary, everyday, supplies.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
The supermarket.	A small reflection of the world.
Sign (2) – Myth	
This rather ordinary-looking supermarket environment represents the world. People from all kinds of backgrounds are here and they clash with each other, just like in the real world.	

Figure 89

Norm is captured by a creature

Figure 90

The creature's stingers

The supermarket's customers and employees begin to use it as a refuge. They are desperately waiting for the mist, which holds a mystery, to dissipate. David goes to the back room of the supermarket and hears a noise coming from outside. He believes that some kind of creature is crawling in the mist. He tries to explain this to the supermarket employees, but they don't believe him. David protests, but the employees open the door to the back room and look into the mist. Meanwhile, a creature emerges from the mist and grabs Bagger Norm by the leg. David and Ollie's efforts fail, Norm is pulled into the mist and hunted by the creature.

The use of tentacles in the visual design of the creature directly evokes the stories of H. P. Lovecraft. The creature's body is scaly and tentacled. Stingers emerge

from its tentacles and tear the skin of its victim. It is extremely powerful. The authors who produced early examples of Weird Fiction, such as Victor Hugo, Jules Verne and H. G. Wells, introduced the "tentacle" element into their works, which was absent in European folklore and Gothic literature, and this element has been developed by Lovecraft and his contemporaries (Miéville, 2009). The tentacles give more extraterrestrial and grotesque qualities to the creature.

Figure 91

David trying to rescue Norm

Figure 92

Norm is drawn into the mist

The creature's tentacles contain stingers that can be pulled in and out. These stingers spring out when it wants to harm its victim, inflicting physical damage. The stingers are found in insects and arthropods and can be used to pierce the skin and inject venom. Although there is no poisoning during this scene of the movie,

Scorpion-Flies emerges in a later scene and attacks the civilians, causing one of them to be poisoned to death.

Figure 93

Tentacles resembling female genitalia

There is another interesting symbolism that can be identified in the visual design of the creature. The tentacles, seen in Picture 93, clearly resemble the shape of female genitalia. Therefore, the stingers on the edges of the tentacles also resemble a tooth. In folk legends from around the world, there is a belief in a so-called vagina dentata, or toothed vagina. According to this belief, the female genitalia contain teeth and the men who have sexual intercourse with her threaten to be injured and be castrated. The castration anxiety is one of Freud's psychoanalytic theories. This anxiety, which is linked to the Oedipus complex and emerges during the phallic stage of development, is realized when the boys discover the genitalia of the opposite sex and they think that they are castrated because they lack a penis (Woolf, 1955). The anxiety of castration defines a psychological apprehension as well as a physical anxiety. It is the reaction of men when they feel worthless, and think that they are under domination. In this scene of the movie, precisely such a subject is depicted. Three male employees who don't believe David's assertion impulsively sends one of them to his death. It is obvious from the dialogues of the characters that this metaphor

is intended to be portrayed. The creature that is hunting Norm is threatening the men who are eager for domination as being like a vagina dentata.

Table 31

The Mist 6

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Scaly and tentacled.	Nonhuman, wild and dangerous.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
The creature in the mist.	Female genitalia, vagina dentata.
Sign (2) – Myth	
Aliens with tentacled limbs appear in many Lovecraftian stories. These creatures exhibit strange characteristics that humans do not always see in nature. They are quite ruthless and superhuman. They destroy the normal living conditions of humans in an instant. The creature's limb is somewhat similar to female genitalia. However, this organ appears to have teeth.	

Figure 94

The alien insects in the window

Figure 95

The Scorpion-Fly

Photosensitive Scorpion-Flies come to the supermarket at dusk. These creatures look like a combination of a scorpion and a wasp. But they are much bigger and alien-like. It is not clear whether they are insects transformed from our world or whether they come from another world. The shell covering their bodies protects them from the elements. The venom in their stingers has a lethal effect on their victims. During their attack on the supermarket, they poison one of the employees, Sally, causing her to swell up and die. As the quote from Mrs. Carmody suggests, the creatures emerging from the mist clearly refer to the Book of Revelation. Locusts with the power of scorpions are mentioned as a sign of the End Times, and these locusts come out of the smoke to persecute all who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads (Revelation 9:3-4). There is a Scorpion-Fly that lands on Carmody but leaves without harming her. This is interpreted by some to mean that she is protected by God.

Figure 96

The hive burned by a soldier

Figure 97

Mrs. Carmody

Initially, the glass covering the front of the supermarket prevents the Scorpion-Flies from entering, but the Pterobuzzards (pterodactyl-like creatures) that come after them to hunt them cause problems for the civilians. At the end of the movie, when the army takes control, a soldier burns a hive tied to a tree with a flamethrower. It is likely that this hive belongs to the Scorpion-Flies. The burning of the hive represents the elimination of the threat by destroying the immature offspring of the Scorpion-Flies.

Table 32

The Mist 7

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
An alien creature.	Fearfulness, aggression, brutality.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
The Scorpion-Flies.	Religious, non-human.
Sign (2) – Myth	
Scorpion-Flies come to the supermarket, but they do no harm. However, they are followed by other highly aggressive creatures. The subtext here is that some people may not be what they seem. Every person wears a mask to society. It would be right to analyze people sufficiently before fully trusting them.	

Pterobuzzards are flying creatures that follow Scorpion-Flies to hunt them. At first they do not intend to attack humans, but one of them attacks a Scorpion-Fly, breaks a window and enters a supermarket. Another Pterobuzzard comes after it and attacks a civilian. Pterobuzzards are similar in appearance to pterodactyls. They have a hooked beak and four membranous wings. Two of the wings are used as arms and the remaining two are on the back and used for flight. They have a dark pinkish skin. Their legs are double jointed. They are frightening because of their appearance. Their fast movements frighten all civilians as soon as they are seen. They usually feed by hunting Scorpion-Flies. However, they can also target humans when they get close enough and cannot find another victim. Pterobuzzards, like Scorpion-Flies, are nocturnal creatures. They emerge from the mist at night and terrorize their surroundings.

Figure 98

A Pterobuzzard

Figure 99

Pterobuzzard in close-up

Table 33

The Mist 8

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
A flying alien creature.	Aggressor, enemy, danger.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Pterobuzzard.	Ancient, extinct creature.

Sign (2) – Myth

The alien's design is similar to that of a pterodactyl, a type of dinosaur. This is the return to earth of a creature that has long been extinct. It is meant to show how powerless humans actually are.

Figure 100

A person covered in cobwebs

Figure 101

Spider eggs

The group, led by David, goes to the nearby pharmacy to buy supplies. They find bodies covered in cobwebs. Among them is the Military Police who came to warn the soldiers of danger in the opening scenes. Along with other civilians, he was ambushed by the Gray Widowers. They realize that his whole body is covered in cobwebs (Picture 97). He is still alive, not dead. Gray Widowers are spider-like creatures about the size of a dog. They have eight spiny legs. Their skin is grayish in color. Their skull has a humanoid shape with large fangs. Gray Widowers weave their webs just like spiders. However, their webs are corrosive. In physical contact they can seriously injure a human body.

Figure 102

Gray Widowers

David and his group try to remove the webs to help the MP (Military Police). These nets are very strong. They free him from the webs and realize that his whole body is full of spider eggs. His body is covered with dozens of swollen boils. When Military Police falls to the ground, the boils burst and release numerous offspring. Gray Widowers can use the bodies of captured humans as living hosts. This is how they reproduce. However, this function does not appear in the novel from which the movie is adapted. Given the corrosive webs that spiders have and the fact that they consume the bodies of their hosts and produce their eggs, there is a direct reference to the Alien movie franchise.

Table 34

The Mist 9

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
A spider-like alien.	Strange, powerful.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Gray Widowers.	Possessive, dangerous, alien, predator.

Sign (2) – Myth

These creatures completely neutralize their prey and turn it into a host to lay their own eggs. Gray Widowers attack their victims with searing spider webs. This indicates that they are extremely dangerous. The creatures' ability to produce acid and their use of their victims' bodies for spawning is a reference to the 1979 movie Alien.

Figure 103

Spider web

Figure 104

The searing web

Gray Widowers attack them by throwing their webs. The webs are much stronger than a normal spider web. They are also corrosive. The group members drop their weapons on the ground. The Gray Widowers burn the clothes of some of them,

damaging their bodies. When the group realizes that they cannot deal with these spiders, they decide to leave quickly. They leave with some casualties among them.

Figure 105

The Arachni-Lobster

Figure 106

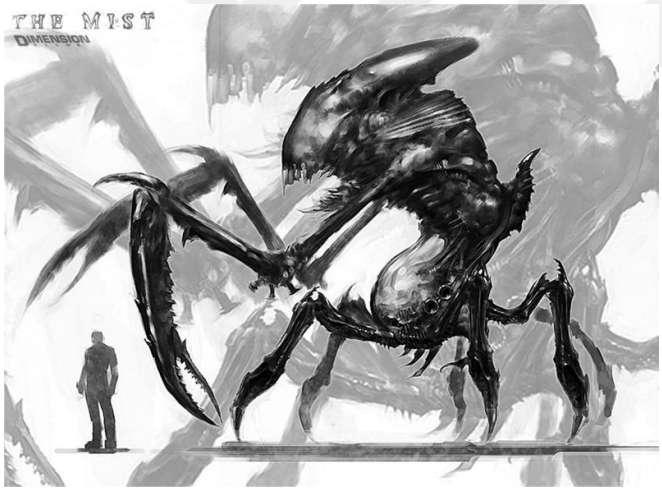
Ollie's end

In the first scenes, after Norm is hunted by a tentacled creature, David explains the situation to the civilians in the supermarket. But some people don't believe him. One of them is David's neighbor, Mr. Norton. Norton leads a group of people who decide to go out and walk through the mist. Everyone else tries to warn them that it is dangerous, but Norton and his group ignore them. David offers to tie a rope around the waist of one of them to see how far they can go. But this offer is rejected. Among the civilians, a biker decides to go out to retrieve a gun found in one of the cars. He accepts David's offer to tie a rope around his waist.

Norton's group disappears into the mist. The biker is also moving forward. After a while, the rope he is tied to begins to shake. When it stops swinging, they pull it back and see the biker's body torn into two pieces. Although not visible in this scene, in the following scenes this creature emerges from the mist. This creature is an Arachni-Lobster. The Arachni-Lobster is responsible for the deaths of two other people besides the biker. These people are Jessup and Ollie. Jessup is thrown into the mist by angry civilians who blame him for an experiment at a military installation suspected of causing the disaster. Ollie is hunted by the creature while escaping from the supermarket.

Figure 107

Arachni-Lobster's sketch



Note. Source: https://stephenkingsthemist.fandom.com

The Arachni-Lobster is always seen in silhouette throughout the movie. It has a giant scorpion-like body and lobster-like claws. And it has six legs. The top of its head is curved over its back. The Arachni-Lobster kills its victims who enter the mist by slashing them with its claws. Like tentacles, claws are a type of limb more commonly seen in sea creatures. In cosmic horror, the appearance of sea creatures is often used to depict extraterrestrial aliens. This is because sea creatures have evolved

differently from terrestrial creatures. They look much more extraterrestrial because they have gone through different evolutionary processes.

Table 35

The Mist 10

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Lobster-like creature.	Giant animal, hybrid.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
The Arachni-Lobster.	Alien life form, Lovecraftian.
Sign (2) – Myth	
Alien designs similar to sea creatures are widely used in cosmic horror stories. The Arachni-Lobster is one of them.	

Figure 108

The survivors see Behemoth

A gigantic creature passes over them as the survivors of the disaster are driving in a car (Picture 106). This creature is called by the Behemoth's name mentioned in the Book of Job. It is also known as "The Impossibly Tall Creature". Behemoth resembles Lovecraftian aliens with its six jointed legs, tentacled head and trunk that look like giant trees. It causes strong tremors in the ground it walks on. Behemoth flattens utility poles under its feet. However, it is not aggressive. It doesn't

take any hostile action against humans. This is due to its enormous size. It is massive that it doesn't see the little ones beneath its feet. This reminds of the alien gods of H. P. Lovecraft, who are superior to humans and consider humanity to be completely insignificant.

Figure 109

The Behemoth

Table 36

The Mist 11

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
An alien.	Giant, very big, great.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
The Behemoth.	Religious, divine, sacred.

Sign (2) – Myth

The Behemoth is one of the giant creatures that carry the world in sacred narratives. The name given to the giant alien seen in the finale of this movie is a reference to this religious narrative.

3.2.5. Semiotic analysis of Arrival (2016)

Figure 110

The Poster of Arrival

Arrival is a 2016 American science fiction drama film directed by Denis Villeneuve. Starring Amy Adams, Jeremy Renner and Forest Whitaker, it is based on the 1998 short story "Story of Your Life" by Ted Chiang. The film tells the story of a linguist who works with the military to communicate with an alien lifeform after twelve mysterious spacecraft appear around the world.

The movie begins with twelve extraterrestrial spacecraft landing in different parts of the world. These spacecrafts are called "Shells". To understand the significance of this name, one should look at the definition of the word in the Oxford dictionary. The first definition given for the word "shell" is "the hard protective outer case of a mollusc or crustacean". This is in line with the fact that the aliens the characters will interact with take their visual inspiration from sea creatures. The second definition given is: "an explosive artillery projectile or bomb". This description is also linked to the speculation that the aliens coming to Earth are dangerous and want to destroy humans.

Figure 111

The Shell

Figure 112

The Shell close-up

Spacecrafts that appear to be smooth and symmetrical are actually quite disproportionate. This suggests that the spacecraft are not perfect. The shell is surrounded by an alienation. It is covered with a dark colored substance. This color reveals a mysterious, unknown feeling. The sudden appearance of the shells on the Earth's surface is a shock for people. From a distance, this vehicle resembles an egg. The egg symbolizes rebirth, transformation.

Table 37

Arrival 1

Signifier (1)	Signified (1)
Egg-shaped spacecraft.	Uncertainty, uncanny and strangeness.

Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	Signified (2), Connotation
The Shells.	Change, knowledge and development.

Sign (2) – Myth

Reflections of the theme of aliens coming from a different planet and providing information to people are also found in the myths of ancient civilizations. The extraordinary development of humanity is always seen as dependent on outside intervention.

Figure 113

The interior of the Shell

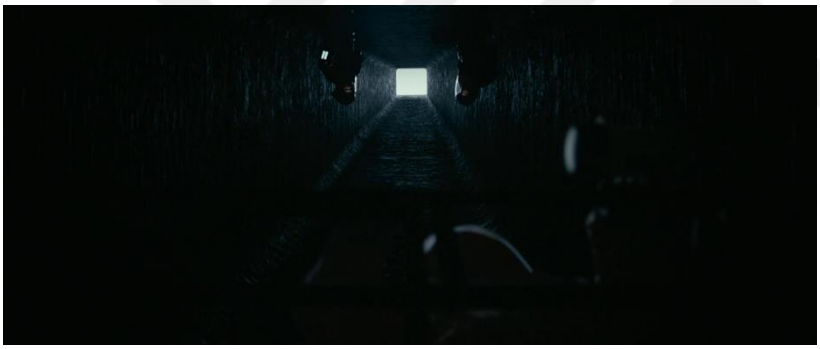


Figure 114

The interior of the Shell

When the research team reaches the Shell, a hole opens underneath and the team ascends with the help of a crane. As they ascend, the laws of physics inside change and gravity shifts. As seen in Pictures 109 and 110, in these scenes the actors

are deliberately shown from upside-down angles. This reveals the difference in the laws of physics inside the Shell. Dark color tones dominate the interior of the spacecraft. The environment is deliberately decorated in shades of black and white. This visuality creates an uncertainty. It symbolizes man's unfamiliarity with this alien life form that he encounters for the first time.

This theme has similarities with Lovecraft. In H. P. Lovecraft's 1928 story The Call of Cthulhu, the crew of a ship adrift in the ocean sets foot on an island where the alien god Cthulhu sleeps. From the moment they set foot on the island, they begin to encounter structures outside the known laws of physics and soon lose their sense of direction. Similarly in Arrival, the characters' sense of direction changes when they enter the Shell.

Table 38

Arrival 2

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
An environment dominated by shades of black and white.	Danger, strangeness and neutrality.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
The interior of the spacecraft.	Uncertainty, strangeness, inhumanity.
Sign (2) – Myth	
Dark color tones always evoke the ambiguous, the unknown. Here, too, the interior of the spacecraft is deliberately adorned with black-white and bluish tones. People always see darkness as dangerous. When they don't have a clear enough vision, they become self-preserving.	

Figure 115

Hazmat suits

The dark tones that dominate the scene are disrupted by the hazmat suits worn by the research team. This orange color, in stark contrast to the setting, immediately attracts attention. This color choice also reveals the unsuitability of the research team members for this environment. The dark-bluish color palette that dominates the scene is in harmony with the orange color of the hazmat suits. Orange is the color of autumn leaves. It represents change, death and resurrection. It symbolizes the interaction of humans with this alien life form that will eventually take them to the next level.

Hazmat suits fulfill the characters' need for protection from this unfamiliar environment. Maybe these aliens are dangerous, maybe they are friendly. In the beginning, there is complete uncertainty. It is the sense of curiosity that encourages the characters to go into this uncertainty.

Table 39

Arrival 3

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Orange, oddly shaped.	Protection, isolation.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
The hazmat suits worn by the research team.	Disfiguring, striking, bright.

Sign (2) – Myth

Humans interact with an alien lifeform for the first time. A color was chosen that distinguishes them from the color that dominates the interior of the spaceship. Also, orange is the color of leaves that fall in the fall. After this experience, humanity will be reborn like autumn leaves.

Figure 116

Heptapods first appearance

Figure 117

Heptapods last appearance

In the 30th minute of the movie, the aliens appear from behind a glass-like structure. In the movie, these aliens are referred to as 'heptapods'. This word means seven-legged in Greek. This name was given by physicist Ian as a superficial description of the appearance of the aliens. Only part of the aliens can be seen at first. The aliens look like cephalopods with tentacles arranged in a radial pattern. In this

way, it can be said to have a very Lovecraftian appearance. H. P. Lovecraft often visualized the aliens he created in his fiction inspired by sea creatures.

Louise first chooses to use a verbal method to communicate with the heptapods. However, they make no progress with this method. Short sessions are organized every day at certain times. These sessions are led by aliens. This reveals that the aliens, not the humans, are in control. Louise then tries to communicate with them using her own alphabet. The heptapods then respond with their own alphabet. In this way, progress begins to be made. As Louise masters the alphabet used by the aliens, she begins to have visions. These are visions about her daughter. The happy moments she spends with her daughter and the feeling of helplessness when she learns that she is sick.

Table 40

Arrival 4

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Alien life form.	Tentacled, peculiar, articulated.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Heptapods.	Cephalopod-like, with seven tentacles.
Sign (2) – Myth	
In appearance, he resembles the aliens of H. P. Lovecraft, especially Cthulhu. Unlike Cthulhu, it is malevolent and harmful to humans, while Heptapods aim to improve humans.	

Figure 118

Human alphabet

Figure 119

Alien alphabet

Heptapods have a starfish-shaped limb at the end of each tentacle. They communicate with their own alphabet by spraying an ink-like substance from these appendages. The shapes it sprays have rounded outlines. It appears to have a cycle of its own. This is because the heptapod language can change the perception of time. When the heptapod language is learned, time ceases to be linear. In other words, the past, present and future can be known simultaneously. Time is perceived as complementary cycles rather than a linear flow. Classical physicists have always defined time as constant and linear. According to the General Theory of Relativity developed by Einstein, the perception of time varies according to the observer. Moreover, time and space are not separate from each other and one cannot speak of a linear time. Louise's visions belong to her future, not her past. This is skillfully concealed from the audience until the end of the movie.

Table 41

Arrival 5

Signifier (1)	Signified (1)
Formed with an ink-like substance, rounded.	Cyclic, round, different.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Heptapod alphabet.	Circularity, interpenetration, infinity.
Sign (2) – Myth	
It shows that time flows differently for aliens. People who learn this alphabet begin to perceive time differently. In parallel with the cyclicity of the alphabet, time also becomes cyclical. Past and future intertwine. This situation is similar to quantum mechanics.	

Figure 120

Angular structures

Figure 121

Angular structures

From the beginning of the film, angular structures are frequently seen in settings such as Louise's home and her office at the university. These visualizations refer to the fact that people's perception of time is fixed and monotonous. Humans are trapped in an angular perception of time due to their limited level of consciousness. The spacecraft the aliens are in, the alphabet they use and even their own limbs are round, not angular. This visualization is adopted to emphasize the contrast between them and humans. While humans have a shallow and monotonous perception of time, heptapods are the opposite.

As the story progresses and Louise's perception of time begins to change as a result of her contact with the aliens, the visual style of the movie changes. Plans with more rounded objects are preferred. Angular structures create a sense of finality. These shapes appear to have a beginning and an end. Although this beginning and end vary according to one's perception, they exist. Round shapes are in a cycle. When looking at them, a logical beginning and end point cannot be assigned.

Figure 122

Angular structures

Figure 123

Angular structures

Furthermore, angular and rounded lines evoke masculinity and femininity. Since ancient times, angular shapes have been associated with the male gender and round shapes with the female gender. Angular shapes create more aggressive, masculine feelings, while rounded shapes create feelings of trust, loyalty and motherhood. This is indicative of the speculation throughout the movie about whether the aliens are here for peace or war. While almost everything human is angular, the aliens are the opposite.

Figure 124

Bird cage

Whenever the research team visits the aliens, they bring a bird in a cage. It is never explained why this bird is there, what it is doing. The bird symbolizes humans. Their perception of time is being trapped in a cage. The future is unknown. The only moment that can be dominated is the present. The past that is left behind is fading

away. Although scientific theories are developed against the monotony of time, it is difficult for ordinary people to grasp this situation. In moments such as dreams, déjà vu, etc., where this established perception of time goes a little out of the norm, the human mind gets the feeling that something surreal is happening. He feels himself in an uncanny environment because he is out of the norm. This discussion on the reality of time in the movie creates a Lovecraftian atmosphere. In H. P. Lovecraft's fiction, extraterrestrials override the laws of physics that humans have adopted and cause them to go mad. Instead of going mad, Louise, the protagonist of Arrival, strives for humanity to enter a new evolutionary process thanks to the aliens.

Table 42

Arrival 6

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Angular structures.	Quadrangular, sharp.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Shapes.	Limitation, closure.
Sign (2) – Myth	
In contrast to the alien alphabet, these shapes are very angular. This is because humans have a limited perception of time, which is symbolized by these shapes.	

Figure 125

Louise and her daughter

Figure 126

Louise and her daughter

At the beginning of the movie, the protagonist Louise is introduced and a slice of her life is shown. Louise had a daughter, loved her and spent time with her, but her daughter died as a result of an illness. These scenes let the audience know that Louise is deeply traumatized and is trying to overcome it. In a traditional movie, this is the only thing these scenes can convey. In Arrival, however, it is different. As the movie progresses, Louise's perception of time changes and she starts to experience the future as the present. In other words, all the scenes about her daughter that are shown throughout the movie will actually take place in the future. It hasn't happened yet.

Louise's awareness that her daughter will die does not stop her from marrying Ian and having children. Even though she knows that her daughter will die at a very young age, she does not want to be deprived of the time she will spend with her and makes this decision. When Ian learns this truth, the couple fall out. This is how Louise pays the price for getting rid of the time limit.

3.3. An Evaluation Of Horror Genre In Turkish Cinema

In this part, four feature films and a TV series realized in Turkish horror cinema are analyzed. These are Karanlık Sular - The Serpent's Tale (1993), Sır Dosyası – The Secret File (1998) (TV Series), D@bbe (2006), Karadedeler Olayı - The Karadedeler Incident (2011) and Baskın: Karabasan (2015).

Table 43

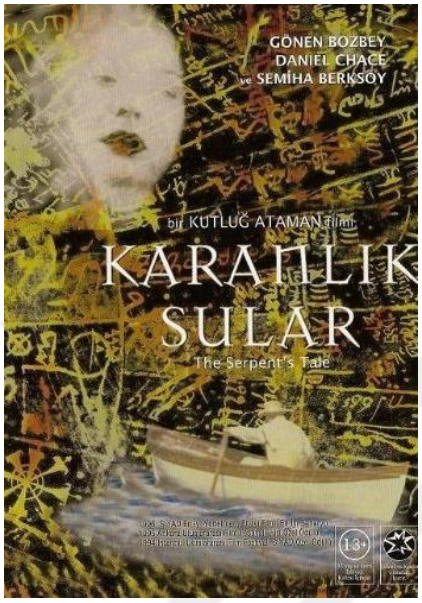
Essential Info About the Turkish Horror Films and TV Series

Titles	Directed by	Screenplay by	Subgenre
Karanlık Sular – The Serpent's Tale (1993)	Kutluğ Ataman	Kutluğ Ataman	Experimental, Vampire
Sır Dosyası – The Secret File (1998) (TV Series)	Yağmur Taylan Durul Taylan	Yağmur Taylan Durul Taylan	Paranormal, Thriller/Crime, Sci-fi Horror
D@bbe (2006)	Hasan Karacadağ	Hasan Karacadağ	Slasher, Religious, Apocalypse
Karadedeler Olayı – The Karadedeler Incident (2011)	Bağbakan Brothers	Bağbakan Kardeşler	Found Footage, Folk Horror
Baskın: Karabasan (2015)	Can Evrenol	Oğulcan Eren Akay Can Evrenol Erçin Sadıkoğlu	Gore, Body Horror

3.3.1. Semiotic analysis of The Serpent's Tale (1993)

Figure 127

The Poster of The Serpent's Tale



The Serpent's Tale (Karanlık Sular) is a 1993 Turkish horror/mystery film directed by Kutluğ Ataman and starring Gönen Bozbey, Metin Uygun, Daniel Chace, Eric Pio, Haluk Kurdoğlu, Semiha Berksoy and Cevat Kurtuluş. The screenplay was written by Kutluğ Ataman. The plot revolves around an enigmatic American, Ritchie Hunter, who is on the trail of an ancient and mystical scroll found by Lamia's lost son.

The movie begins with Lamia Köprülü, who comes from an aristocratic family, learning that her son Haldun, whom she thought had died in a maritime accident a few years ago, is actually alive. This news is brought to her by Ritchie Hunter, an American who claims to have seen Haldun after a movie screening. Haldun has taken possession of a mysterious scroll. It is understood that Ritchie Hunter is after this scroll through the international company he works for. Moreover, Lamia's chauffeur is planning to make a copy of the same scroll and to unlock the secrets of the universe with the sect he belongs to. Throughout the movie, various vampire stories also contribute to the story. The movie, which progresses in an experimental way, ends ambiguously. The subtext of the film is a criticism of a hollowed-out modernity that tries to replace the old and meaningful world.

Figure 128

Mysterious scroll 1

Figure 129

Mysterious scroll 2

This mysterious scroll, the main point of progression of the movie story, is said to provide access to all the secrets of the universe. It consists of two pieces, which when unfolded and joined together form a circle. When these pieces are rolled up, they form a cone. The scroll has an ancient appearance with its color and texture. There are messages written on it in an unknown alphabet. Lamia takes it to her friend Stephane, an expert in ancient languages, to solve the mystery of this scroll. The text was written by its author not to be read. Those who manage to read the text, even if only a little, go insane and go to their own deaths. This scroll motif used in the movie evokes cosmic horror stories.

Table 44

The Serpent's Tale 1

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Figures on an old piece of paper.	An old written documentation.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Scroll.	Mysterious, ancient, hidden knowledge, secrets, etc.
Sign (2) – Myth	
This scroll, said to be written in an unknown language, is said to contain the secrets of the universe. The scroll was written by its author so that it could not be read. Those who manage to read a few words become increasingly insane and eventually lose their lives. This theme parallels the theme of mind-destroying knowledge in cosmic horror stories.	

Figure 130

Historical structures 1

Figure 131

Historical structures 2

Various historical structures of the city of Istanbul are seen throughout the movie. These buildings are dilapidated and worn out. On the other hand, new constructions are also visible. The protagonist Lamia criticizes the hollow modernity with the meaningful integrity of the past, drawing parallels with herself in doing so. This is because she is the last living representative of an aristocratic family that has lost its influence and wealth. Lamia's husband Haşmet and Ritchie Hunter's company modernize historical buildings by combining them with new additions. This reveals how the modern world recklessly rises on the ruins of the past. Throughout the movie, the old-new conflict is frequently brought up.

Table 45

The Serpent's Tale 2

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Architectural structures.	Buildings constructed in the past.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Historical structures.	Old-new conflict, outdatedness, ruins, etc.

Sign (2) – Myth

The movie uses the city of Istanbul as its setting to address the conflict between the old and local culture and the modern and global culture. Modern culture has emptied every concept and created a money-based order. The old culture is portrayed as mysterious and full of unknowns throughout the movie. The use of the vampire theme in the movie and the dilapidation of the historical buildings seen in the movie show that the traditional culture is about to die.

Figure 132

The Cultists

In the movie there is a cult and a false prophet. This cult is trying to obtain secret knowledge by capturing the mysterious scroll. They think that God will speak to them when they decipher the message on the scroll. It carries similarities with the structures of the cults in Lovecraft stories in search of ancient knowledge. Cosmic and hidden knowledge leads people to disaster.

All these motifs actually express the human fear of the unknown. Especially in ancient times, when humanity's knowledge of nature and the universe was limited, every element around them, every natural phenomenon brought about a fear.

3.3.2. Semiotic analysis of The Secret File (1998)

Figure 133

The Poster of The Secret File

The Secret File is a 1998 Turkish detective/mystery TV series directed by Yağmur Taylan and Durul Taylan and starring Taner Birsel, Mehmet Günsür, Ayça Bingöl and Zafer Ergin. The screenplay was written by The Taylan Brothers. The series focuses on the MAVI (Metaphysical Phenomena Investigation and Investigation) Bureau, a police unit established to solve paranormal forensic cases in Turkey. This series was influenced by the American series The X-Files (1993-2018).

The first two episodes of the series, which aired a total of five episodes, were selected as the sample. It was thought that the story told in these two episodes would be concluded if the series continued, but the series was canceled before this could be realized. The first and second episodes of the series present a mysterious story. Commissioner Sedat Çelik and Comm. Assist. Ayhan Yüce begin to investigate a mysterious death. There are strange disinformations on the body of the corpse. It is seen that his ears have grown above normal. The cops reach a village as a result of the investigation. However, this village has been evacuated due to rumors that it is haunted. The strange appearance of a well in the village attracts their attention. After they leave, they see a car approaching the well. Two mysterious men take a sample from the well with an interesting technological device. Sedat and Ayhan arrest the men but they are soon forced to release them. At the end of the second episode, the

message is given that this well is a gateway to another dimension and that the creatures that came to our world from here are among us.

Figure 134

The well in the village

Figure 135

Sedat and Ayhan

This well in the village is said to be a gateway to other worlds. At the end of the second chapter, the mysterious character talking to Sedat mentions the importance of Anatolian geography. This is the meeting point of different dimensions. For this reason, various states have been established and destroyed in this geography throughout history and have determined the fate of the rest of the world. The well is a

door that goes deep into the earth. The underworld harbors all kinds of strangeness. The bottom of the well is dark and invisible to the eye. For this reason, it is very suitable as a gateway.

Table 46

The Secret File 1

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
A structure.	Deep pit with water in it.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
The well.	The gate, the other world, the unknown, the non-human, etc.
Sign (2) – Myth	
The well is paired with the unknown because it goes down into the ground and makes the end invisible. The bottom of the well can contain all kinds of mysteries. Here, too, it is conceived as a gateway, a door to other worlds.	

Figure 136

The man who possessed

Figure 137

Shapeshifting man

Three friends visiting a village take turns losing their lives. All three men undergo strange physical changes before they die. The most obvious change is the growth of their ears. As Sedat investigates the case, senior officials order him to close the case. One of these officials is the man seen in Figure 150. As Sedat looks at him, his face undergoes strange deformations. This is a sign that he is not human. He looks like a human but he is not. This is a theme in many legends. Creatures such as werewolves, vampires, etc. look like humans, but they are not. There are modernizations of the same theme in today's conspiracy theories, reptilians, etc.

Table 47

The Secret File 2

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
A creature.	Someone who can change their appearance.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Shapeshifter.	Non-human, spy, etc.

Sign (2) – Myth

Mythologies and legends often speak of non-human creatures that can disguise themselves as humans. They are dangerous and wish people evil. They appear as them to gain people's trust. Today, conspiracy theories say that there are aliens who have infiltrated humans. These aliens reach important positions and decide people's fate.

Figure 138

Interesting technological device

Figure 139

Sample taken from the well

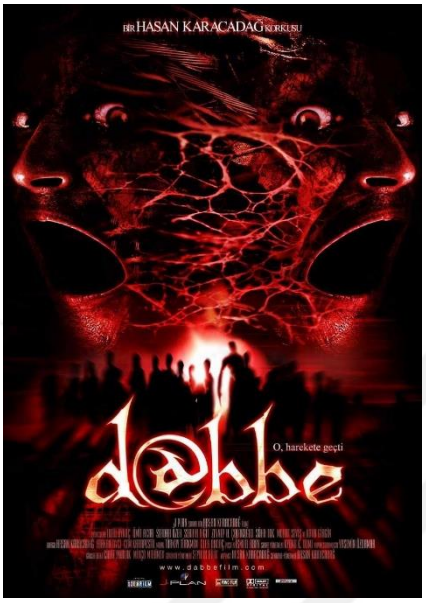
Sedat and Ayhan see two mysterious men using an interesting technological device to take samples from the well. This device is superior to human technology. It is parallel to the idea that there are very important conspiracies hidden from ordinary people. The sample taken from the well is in the form of a bright, blue gas. It can be assumed that this substance is the energy of the interdimensional gate in the well. The color blue is always associated with the strange. Because the color blue is not seen much in nature. Only the sky and the sea reflect this color. Both the sky and the seas are shrouded in a vast unknown. For this reason, the human mind has associated this color with the unknown.

The series has told the story of an interdimensional conspiracy that has been hidden since ancient times and continues to this day. Anatolia is the meeting point of cosmic forces and is very important. There are beings from different dimensions who covet this wealth. This story has never been completed as the series had to make a finale before it could progress in the direction it wanted.

3.3.3. Semiotic analysis of D@bbe (2006)

Figure 140

The Poster of D@bbe



D@bbe is a 2006 Turkish horror film directed by Hasan Karacadağ and starring Ümit Acar, Ebru Aykaç, Serhat Yiğit, Serdar Özer, Fulya Candemir and Kaan Girgin. The screenplay of the movie was written by Hasan Karacadağ. The story of the movie is based on a young man who commits suicide and the secrets he leaves behind are solved by his friends and the police. Djinns from different dimensions are spreading around the world through the internet.

The movie opens with his friends talking about Tarık, who has been absent for a long time. Then Hande goes to his house. She meets him but in the meantime she witnesses Tarık's suicide. Suleyman, the police commissioner, takes an interest in the case. Tarık's friends Hande, Sema and Cem are interrogated but no conclusion is reached. As the movie progresses, strange situations begin to emerge. "Djinns" from other dimensions come to people's world through the internet. These djinns serve the entity called Dabbe, one of the signs of the apocalypse in Islam. The place where the virtual world and the real world meet is an old tunnel. The movie tries to create a sense of fear with excessive sound effects, jump scares, digitally distorted images, etc. The story and acting are lacking. This film created a trend in Turkish horror cinema with its impact.

Figure 141 and 142

Djinns overflowing from the virtual world

Figure 143

Djinn representation in the dream sequence

The movie is based on Islamic motifs. The story revolves around the Dabbat al-Ard or The Dabbah (Beast of the Earth), an entity associated with the apocalypse in Islamic literature. The Dabbah is said to influence people by using beings called "djinn", also mentioned in Islamic sources. The jinn's way from the other dimension to the human dimension is the internet. The film associates modern technology with malevolent forces, spreading the idea that there is a social corruption. Throughout the movie, the message is given that science is inadequate and cannot cope with the concepts mentioned in religious sources. According to the philosophy of the movie, science is man-made and incomplete. Religion, on the other hand, is divine and transcendent.

In the film, jinns are associated with the color black. In some scenes they appear in the form of smoke. In scenes where human characters are possessed by jinns, the facial features of the characters are exaggerated and a monstrous visual effect is applied.

Table 48

D@bbe 1

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
An entity.	Islamic, religious, narrative, etc.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Djinn.	Malevolent, haunting, horrible, cosmic.
Sign (2) – Myth	
According to Islam's holy book, the Quran, the djinn are created from smokeless fire. They live in a different dimension from humans. They are invisible to the human eye. However, in different narratives, jinn are said to communicate with humans, marry, even have sexual intercourse and have children. Jinns are portrayed as malevolent in the movie. They serve as servants of The Dabbah, an apocalyptic entity.	

Another theme used in the movie is the theme of madness. Characters who come into contact with the jinns that spread from the virtual environment to the real world go insane. In the film, madness is visualized with the characters' fast and abnormal movements. The way they speak is also fast and strange.

Figure 144

Tarık

Figure 145

Ziya

Table 49

D@bbe 2

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
State of madness.	Being outside the usual state of mind.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Madness.	Hidden knowledge, haunting, inhuman being, transhumanism.

Sign (2) – Myth

Madness is the instinct of self-preservation that human beings enter into when their reason is insufficient. When people are confronted with a cosmic reality that transcends them, they become confused. This is called madness in the eyes of other people. This theme of madness is used a lot in cosmic horror stories.

Figure 146

The Tunnel

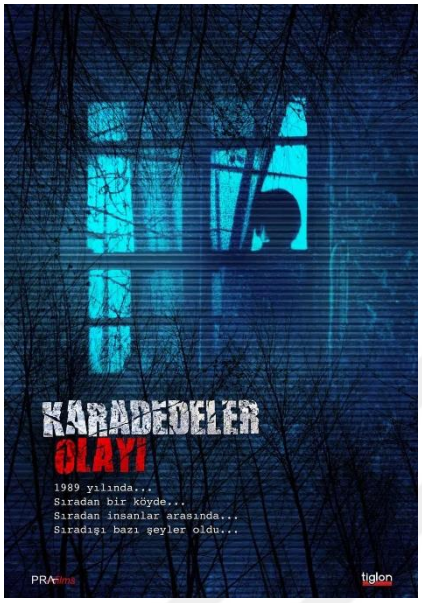
In this movie, djinns communicate with humans through the internet and other technological devices. On the other hand, there is a place where the boundaries between the other dimension and this world are weakening, a historical tunnel structure. The minds of the characters who come into contact with the jinn are trapped in this purgatory. This is a gateway to the demonic realm.

The themes used throughout the movie are the jinn, the cosmic beings that threaten humans, and The Dabbah, the entity they serve. Cinematographically, a sense of fear is created through abrupt image distortions, exaggerated sound effects and fast editing. At times this can become lazy and frustrating.

3.3.4. Semiotic analysis of The Karadedeler Incident (2011)

Figure 147

The Poster of The Karadedeler Incident



The Karadedeler Incident is a 2011 Turkish horror/found footage film directed by Bağbakan Kardeşler. The film claims to be a fictionalized version of real videotapes recorded in 1989. On the other hand, all the actors in the movie are amateurs and local people. The screenplay was also written by the Bağbakan Brothers. The film follows a journalist who goes to a village to investigate rumors of a djinn in the area. The movie also includes interviews. It was prepared in a mock documentary format.

People living in a village claim to have seen demonic beings after dark. Young journalist H. B. comes to the village to investigate. After interviewing various people, the journalist fails to capture anything strange, so he gives his camera to a boy from the village and leaves. A few days later the gendarmerie summons him to testify. The boy to whom he entrusted the camera and his family have been murdered. The camera footage reveals that the boy was possessed by demons and killed his own family. After all this, journalist H. B. goes missing. The Gendarmerie Commander commits suicide years later.

Figure 148

Fog in the village

Figure 149

Horseman riding through the fog

In the movie, when the demonic beings appear, there is a fog. This fog obscures vision, making what is seen uncertain and creating fear. In one of the scenes of the movie, a person is seen riding on a white horse in the fog. Although the journalist tries to find out who this person is, he cannot reach a conclusion. Again, in the following scenes, the boy using the journalist's camera sees a tired horse in a stable. In fact, all these motifs refer to a folk narrative. According to the narrative,

demonic beings kidnap the horses in the stable at night and make them tired by riding them until morning.

Table 50

The Karadedeler Incident 1

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
White layer in the air.	Natural phenomenon.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
The fog.	Unknowing, supernaturalism, mystery, fear, etc.
Sign (2) – Myth	
Fog obstructs visibility and increases obscurity. For this reason, it is used as an element of mystery in many horror films. Throughout history, people have tended to think that there are imaginary beings in places they cannot see well enough. Therefore, fog is likewise associated with the supernatural.	

Figure 150

Mehmet Emmi

Mehmet, one of the village elders, draws attention with his strange behavior from the moment the journalist arrives in the village. He is said to be one of the people who have encountered jinns. As the journalist tries to talk to him and record what happened in the village, he prevents him. Mehmet has gone mad under the influence of what he witnessed. He behaves strangely.

Figure 151

The djinn caught on camera

Although the film draws narratively from the Islamic tradition, its main source is folk legends. The "demonic beings" are called Karadede by the villagers in the movie. This is a local definition. According to the villagers' narration, we learn that the djinn beings are bigger than human beings and black in color. Throughout the movie, these beings are recorded only once. As seen in Figure 222, the demonic entity is visualized as tall, wearing a black robe and white skin.

The word Karadede is a combination of the words "black" and "grandpa". While black expresses its color, the word "grandpa" expresses its antiquity. In fact, supernatural beings like Karadede express human fear of the other. Unknown people,

places and situations bring with them a sense of dread. The beings mentioned in legends are also created by feeding on this feeling of people.

Table 51

The Karadedeler Incident 2

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Demonic entity.	A paranormal creature.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Karadede.	The other, the stranger, sins, etc.
Sign (2) – Myth	
The Karadede represents the other. Especially places like the village where the movie takes place are in isolated areas. There is a small population and outsiders rarely come here. The instinct of self-preservation, one of the most ancient human emotions, emerges in the face of strangers. The other is feared and must be fought. This instinct has given rise to legends throughout history.	

Figure 152 and 153

Arabic writing on the door

At the end of the movie, the character is possessed by a demonic entity and after killing his entire family, he writes an inscription on the door with their blood. This inscription is written using the Arabic alphabet. All these indicators show that the supernatural creatures in the movie are based on an Islamic background. Arabic is the language of the holy book of Islam.

It is quite common in horror films to use an obsolete language of unknown origin. This creates a sense of mystery. When characters encounter a foreign language that they do not use in their daily lives, the strangeness of the situation they are in increases. Arabic is used as an object of alienation in Turkish horror films. It is associated with magic and secret knowledge. The same motif is used in this movie.

Table 52

The Karadedeler Incident 3

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Arabic language.	A language.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Arabic.	Mystery, secret knowledge, ancient, etc.
Sign (2) – Myth	
Unknown or forgotten languages and alphabets are used in horror movies to increase the sense of mystery. The Turkish horror film tradition also uses Arabic. This is because the films are based on Islamic culture. Unknown languages are unreadable and lead to various speculations. For example, rumors may arise that reading the writing will bring a curse.	

3.3.5. Semiotic analysis of Baskın: Karabasan (2015)

Figure 154

The Poster of Baskın: Karabasan

Baskın: Karabasan is a 2015 Turkish horror film directed by Can Evrenol and starring Mehmet Cerrahoğlu, Görkem Kasal, Ergun Kuyucu, Muharrem Bayrak, Fatih Dokgöz, Sabahattin Yakut and Şevket Süha Tezel. The screenplay was written by Oğulcan Eren Akay, Can Evrenol and Erçin Sadıkoğlu. In the movie, a police team goes to a historical police station after receiving a tip-off and encounters members of a torturing cult.

This movie is based on Can Evrenol's short film of the same name. A police team patrolling a rural area in a squad car receives a call and sets out for a historic Ottoman police station building. Some strange things happen during the journey. The police station building is even stranger. It has been in ruins for years. The police team meets one of the police officers who sent the call, but he is not in his right mind. The other policemen are nowhere to be seen. The team descends to the lower floors of the building and encounters disgusting sights. This is a place where cult members from different dimensions recruit people they lure into their web. Their leader, whom they call "The Father", captures the cops and subjects them to various tortures. Throughout the movie, we wander around in Arda's mind, where we also witness his childhood traumas. Finally, he finds a way to defeat The Father and manages to escape.

Figure 155

The frog in the restaurant toilet

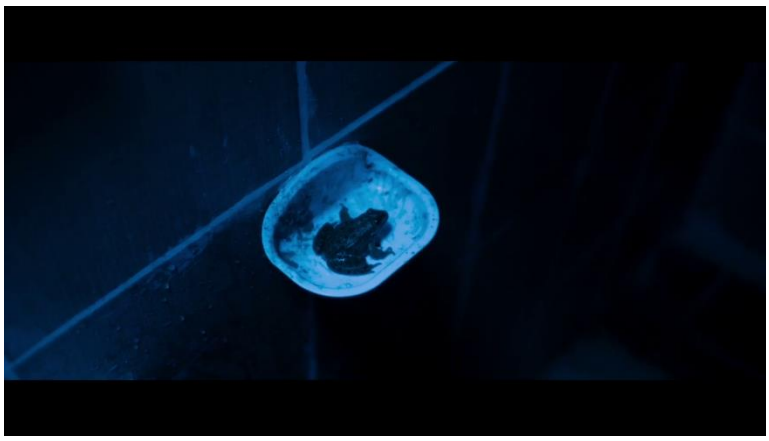


Figure 156

Frogs on the highway

Figure 157

The frog in the police station

Frogs are associated with witchcraft and evil in medieval European culture. They are also related to fertility. In this movie, they appear in abnormal situations and warn both the audience and the characters. It first appears in the restroom of the restaurant where the policemen eat. Just before the character Sabo experiences a mental crisis, he sees a frog. Then they appear on the highway just after the police patrol car survives an accident. Frogs are also seen when the police team investigates the historic police station building. Throughout the movie, frogs always serve as a warning, a danger alarm.

On the other hand, in the opposite direction, frogs can be thought of as creatures that endanger rather than warn. The fact that frogs are green and bright has an alienating effect.

Table 53

Baskın: Karabasan 1

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
An animal.	A jumping, green-colored animal.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Frog.	Magic, malevolence, danger, fear, strangeness, etc.
Sign (2) – Myth	
In the Middle Ages, water frogs were associated with sorcerers, witches and sinfulness. Toads, on the other hand, are associated with virtue (Becker, 2000). The association of water frogs with malevolent forces is linked to the fact that they live in dirty and watery places. Since their habitats are secluded places, it is parallel to the idea that sinful deeds are done in these places.	

Figure 158

Ottoman police station

Figure 159 and 160

Interior of the Ottoman police station

The Ottoman police station in the movie is a historical building. It is in a dilapidated state because it has been idle for years. There is a white coating on the outer walls and these coatings have fallen off. The environment is dark. This indicates that danger can be faced at any moment. Various ritual objects can be seen inside the police station. It suggests that a ritual was performed here. The stairs go down underground and are very deep. This suggests that this building is an allegory of the afterlife. As you descend downwards, hellish images are encountered. There are human victims caught like slaughterhouse animals. There is blood and strange liquids. It is as if the characters have fallen into the hands of a group of tormenting demons after death.

Table 54

Baskın: Karabasan 2

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
Architectural structure.	A building constructed in the past.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
Ottoman police station.	Hell, torture, fear, helplessness, the afterlife, etc.
Sign (2) – Myth	
The building has stairs leading underground. This is clearly an allegory of hell. Here one is confronted with various scenes of torture. Demons and victims are everywhere.	

Figure 161

The Father 1

The leader of the torture cult in the movie is referred to as The Father. The symbolism of father and sons is very meaningful. It is open to Freudian readings. Mehmet Cerrahoğlu, the actor who plays The Father, has GAPO syndrome. This

disease has given him an abnormal physical appearance. Can Evrenol used Cerrahoğlu in his movie to achieve the uniqueness of the character of The Father.

In psychoanalytic theory, boys see their fathers as rivals during their development and want to get rid of his authority. The father figure is oppressive. This movie speaks to the audience from the mental world of Arda, one of the policemen. It touches upon issues such as police violence, male violence-dominance through Arda. The movie suggests that men's tendency towards violence is a reflection of the pressure they experience first from their fathers and then in life stages such as school, military service and work. The only way to survive is to turn to violence when they gain enough power. Indeed, The Father in the movie is also an authority figure. He has followers who obey him without questioning. He shows false compassion to the policemen he imprisons, but he does not hesitate to inflict violence on them.

Figure 162

The Father 2

In ancient societies there is a father figure who rules the whole clan and holds all the power. He is the one who holds the fate of young men in his hands and even decides on their mating. In the last scene of the movie Arda goes on another mind journey. Here he inserts a key he obtains into the keyhole-shaped tattoo on The

Father's forehead and puts an end to his authority. When we consider the signifiers here, we can consider the key as the male genitalia and the keyhole as the female genitalia. Arda has achieved reproductive freedom by defying the Father's order. In this way, The Father is defeated.

Table 55

Baskın: Karabasan 3

Signifier (1)	**Signified (1)**
A man.	The male parent.
Sign (1) – Signifier (2), Denotation	**Signified (2), Connotation**
The Father.	Magic, malevolence, danger, fear, strangeness, etc.
Sign (2) – Myth	
The father figure represents authority. For sons, getting rid of the pressure of the father means taking a step towards individuality. Motifs such as self-determination and sexual freedom have been depicted many times in ancient narratives and mythologies. The most famous of these is the Oedipus complex.	

Figure 163 and 164

The Father's defeat

3.4. Findings And Discussion

The main purpose of this thesis is to obtain information about the subgenre of cosmic horror, which is thought to be missing in the Turkish academic literature. Cosmic horror is thought to have a profound impact on Horror cinema. Developed by American writer H. P. Lovecraft in the early 20th century, this subgenre has inspired many horror and thriller films. In the Research part of the thesis, selected horror films from different decades were analyzed from the perspective of cosmic horror in terms of their visuals and the symbolism they contain. Therefore, a gap in the Turkish academic literature on the semiotic analysis of horror films has been filled. The American films selected for analysis are **Alien** (Ridley Scott, 1979), **In the Mouth of Madness** (John Carpenter, 1994), **The Call of Cthulhu** (Andrew Leman, 2005), **The Mist** (Frank Darabont, 2007) and **Arrival** (Denis Villeneuve, 2016). The selected Turkish films are **Karanlık Sular - The Serpent's Tale** (Kutluğ Ataman, 1993), **Sır Dosyası – The Secret File** (The Taylan Brothers, 1998) (TV Series), **D@bbe** (Hasan Karacadağ, 2006), **Karadedeler Olayı - The Karadedeler Incident** (Bağbakan Brothers, 2011) and **Baskın: Karabasan** (Can Evrenol, 2015). It was observed that these films visually repeated certain themes.

These visual themes include: Alien life form, fog, madness, scientific approach, ancient knowledge, sticky liquid(s), dark atmosphere, passage and space. These themes are used consistently in the analyzed films. Foggy and dark atmospheres increase the dose of the unknown and reveal the feeling of fear. For this reason, it is seen that either all or certain parts of the films take place in such an atmosphere.

Cosmic horror often deals with the fear of an extraterrestrial alien life form. For this reason, some films choose outer space as their setting. The alien life form encountered in a spaceship or on another planet gives the movie characters a hard time. On the other hand, the number of cosmic horror movies set on Earth is also quite high. In these movies, aliens come and land on earth. On their way to Earth, they use either a spaceship or a passage that enables interdimensional travel. Sometimes the existence of these alien creatures is confirmed by ancient records. They have even influenced human development to the extent that people have come to see them as gods.

The description of the appearance of the aliens varies from movie to movie. In most of them, Lovecraft-influenced depictions of aliens inspired by sea creatures are preferred. Oceans and sea beds are less explored regions than the earth. Even today, they remain a great mystery for humanity. For this reason, they have always harbored amazing life forms for humans. This preference for alien depictions in cosmic horror stories and later in movies stems from the fact that sea creatures seem almost extraterrestrial. They are evolutionarily different from land creatures, or at least they appear to be. In addition to these, there are also alien characters created based on sexual themes (as in Alien).

In cosmic horror films, the anthropomorphization of aliens is avoided. The reason for this is that in these films aliens are treated as the other and human characters are not asked to empathize with them in any way. The fear and disgust of alien life forms is merely a reflection of real world prejudices, ethnic discrimination, xenophobia, racism, etc. The feeling of otherness against the different is present in all human beings. Horror movies also feed on this. Lovecraft himself is known to have had racist and xenophobic thoughts during his lifetime. Taking these feelings with

him, he reflected the hostility to the other that already existed in humans in his cosmic stories. These aliens do not look like human beings, it is very difficult or even impossible to communicate with them. The tentacle is the most used element in the depiction of these creatures. The aliens secrete strange-looking sticky fluids from their bodies.

Although there are characters in cosmic horror films who take refuge in religious teachings in the face of supernatural events, the protagonist is always someone who adopts common sense and a scientific approach. They try to shed light on extraterrestrial beings or incomprehensible events with the scientific data that humanity has reached. But success is often impossible. Because what is encountered is a superhuman phenomenon far beyond human's limited perception. Cosmic horror stories are based on, in Lovecraft's words, "a malign and particular suspension or defeat of those fixed laws of Nature" (Lovecraft, 2013).

This inconceivable incompatibility of the laws of nature drives human characters first to madness and then to death. Madness occupies a very important position in Lovecraft's fiction. The background of this can be traced back to Lovecraft's own life story. Lovecraft's father was institutionalized when he was very young and remained there until his death. His mother suffered a similar fate. There were many moments in Lovecraft's life when he had difficulty maintaining his sanity. He was easily influenced by events and overreacted. All these fragments of reality were powerful sources of inspiration for Lovecraft. Of course, this is not the only influence. The works of the writers he looked up to from an early age also gave him this vision.

Cosmic indifference is the backbone of Lovecraftian stories. The fact that they live in the vast universe without any influence on it is a painful knowledge for most readers/viewers. The values that human beings place on themselves are ludicrous. The universe shows a cosmic indifference towards them. Humanity's encounter with the being(s) superior to it will drive it out of its sanity.

A table analyzing semiotically the common visual themes used in the films is appended below. This table shows what these themes express at the level of denotation and connotation.

Table 56

Semiotic Analysis of Shared Themes

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Alien life form.	A non-human being.	A fearful Other. An unrecognized and incomprehensible life form brings with it fear. It actually touches on human problems such as racism, xenophobia, sexism and class distinctions encountered in daily life.
Space.	A vast, dark void.	It is so big that it is full of unknowns and this frightens.

Fog.	A weather phenomenon that obstructs vision.	The fog obscures many things because it reduces visibility. This creates a lack of information, which in turn creates fear.
Dark atmosphere.	A state of lack of light in which vision is restricted.	Similarly, a dark atmosphere also creates a sense of fear because it reduces knowability.
Scientific approach.	The state of looking at things objectively.	Questioning, thinking outside the box, atheism, etc.
Ancient knowledge.	Information from an ancient era.	The unknown, the ancient, forgotten knowledge, ephemerality, alien influence.
Madness.	Being outside of the usual behavioral patterns.	The limitations of the human mind, incompleteness, inadequacy, the instinct of self-preservation.
Sticky liquid(s).	A fluid and smearing liquid.	Alienation, pollution, biological matter, sexuality, etc.

Passage.	A place that provides transition from one place to another.	Change, transformation, invasion, etc.
Cosmic indifference.	A state of insignificance in the universe.	Cosmic indifference is a satire against the illusion that man has a significance in the universe in which they live. The universe does not determine a scenario for humans because they have no influence on the overallity.

Afterwards, professional artists working in the Horror genre were contacted in order to obtain information about the general situation of Turkish Horror Cinema and the reflections of cosmic horror in the films. It was tried to get information about the pros, cons of Turkish horror cinema and comparisons with other country cinemas. For this purpose, eighteen pre-prepared questions were asked to the artists. The artists were asked to answer these questions in an open-ended way by adding their personal opinions. Due to the pandemic conditions and the workload of the artists, the questions were prepared so that they could be answered at any time instead of face-to-face interviews.

It was aimed to communicate with artists who have created works in the horror genre. Electronic media (e-mail, social media accounts, etc.) were tried for this. However, contact with most of them was not fruitful. Since no response was received,

interviews were conducted with much fewer participants. Despite this, it was possible to find out a substantial amount of information about Turkish horror cinema. This information was then combined with the outputs of the Turkish horror films analyzed semiotically.

It has been determined that horror cinema has maintained its importance with small fluctuations for more than a hundred years worldwide. In Turkey, there is a long-standing oral and written horror tradition. However, the transfer of this tradition to cinema took place especially after the 2000s. The cosmic horror subgenre, which this thesis focuses on, has greatly influenced Turkish cinema as well as world cinema. This influence is often unconscious.

First, historian and writer Mehmet Berk Yaltırık was contacted. Yaltırık, who conducts academic studies in the field of history, has been publishing his literary works on various online media since 2009. His printed works have appeared in various story collections. In 2017, his first novel "Yedikuleli Mansur" was published. He has confirmed that his real name may appear in the content of this thesis. (Look at "**APPENDIX A**" to see the full text.)

Another artist contacted was journalist and writer Orkun Uçar. In 2004, he and Burak Turna co-wrote the political fiction novel Metal Fırtına, which became a bestseller in Turkey. Since 1986, Uçar has been working in the industry as a photo assistant, reporter, assistant director, comic book and script writer. He has given permission for his name to be mentioned in this thesis. (Look at "**APPENDIX B**" to see the full text.)

The participants were first asked what the genre of "horror" means to them. Yaltırık said that horror refers to a supernatural threat that drives characters to

survive. He stated that threats coming from a human source would be more appropriate to be evaluated within the thriller genre. Uçar, on the other hand, said that horror influences the audience/reader and enables identification with the characters.

When asked about the treatment of the horror genre in world cinema, Yaltırık said that there has been a diversity in recent times, especially in the Folk Horror genre. Uçar, on the other hand, stated that the long-standing history of horror cinema continues today without losing its influence.

Both authors said that H. P. Lovecraft was a great source of inspiration in their literary careers. Yaltırık defined "cosmic horror" as existential terror. He stated that it asks philosophical questions about human existence. Uçar said that cosmic horror is related to the fear of aliens, even though it is not a genre he is familiar with.

When asked about Lovecraft's influence on modern horror cinema, Yaltırık said that he inspired many works with the themes he added to the literature and brought the horror of existence to cinema. Uçar also stated that Lovecraft brought horror to the dimension of the universe. About the elements used to create atmosphere in cosmic horror films, Yaltırık said that the main point is the fear of the unknown. It does not necessarily have to be about space, and it deals with the fear of ancient and forgotten things. In parallel to this, Uçar said that it is about an ancient evil. He emphasized that the point he shed light on is the sense of evil hidden in human beings.

Both Yaltırık and Uçar said that cosmic horror is based on the human fear of the unknown, of what cannot be understood. The fear of the unknown is the earliest fear of human beings. This type of fear targets the human brain and mind before a physical threat. When asked how well cosmic horror is portrayed in cinema, Yaltırık said that there are many examples and that it has even inspired computer games. Uçar

also stated that the movie industry has developed technologically most in the horror and science fiction genres.

The participants were asked about the status of Turkish horror cinema compared to world standards. Yaltırık said that Turkish horror cinema cannot break out of certain molds. Stating that the subject of " jinn" haunting is constantly covered, the author stated that if different themes are tried, it will rise to an important position in the world. Uçar, on the other hand, said that Turkey has a very old horror tradition and that horror cinema will gradually develop.

Regarding the Turkish audience's interest in horror movies, Uçar said that the audience shows great interest in “djinn” movies. However, this situation causes the movies to confine themselves to a limited area. Yaltırık also said that interest is gradually being lost due to monotonous, repetitive screenplays. Furthermore, he said that the few quality films in Turkish horror cinema are being lost among the others.

Folk narratives are powerful sources of inspiration for horror films. The participants were asked whether horror films in Turkey also draw from these sources. Yaltırık said that they are not utilized properly and wasted. Uçar, on the other hand, stated that in addition to the now clichéd universal horror elements, Eastern narratives are also effective.

When asked about the films in Turkish horror cinema that fall within the scope of Lovecraftian horror, Uçar cited the Dabbe film series as an example. Yaltırık, on the other hand, mentioned the movie Baskın: Karabasan (2015) directed by Can Evrenol, the 1993 film Karanlık Sular (The Serpent’s Tale), a vampire narrative, and the 1998 TV series Sır Dosyası (The Secret File) directed by The Taylan Brothers, an unfinished project.

On the potential viability of space-themed horror films in Turkish cinema, Yaltırık noted that Turkey's ancient culture provides a suitable setting for this genre. Similarly, Uçar said that this genre has remained idle and should be made. The authors stated that horror filmmakers in Turkey do not want to take risks and that science fiction-horror genre works are not produced because they require extra costs and technical equipment.

Finally, the participants stated that although Turkish horror cinema emerged late, it has the potential to become an important genre in the future, but for this to happen, different sub-genres should be tried by going beyond the established lines.

According to the findings, the reflection of the cosmic horror genre in Turkish cinema is seen in themes such as "invasion of non-human beings", "ancient knowledge from the past" and "madness". These themes are often fed by an Islamic background. The invading beings are not aliens, but the jinn mentioned in the Quran. This insistence on adhering to religious motifs in Turkish horror films has created a vicious circle over time. For this reason, the majority of the films produced are like copies of each other.

Horror Cinema, which has a unique place in World Cinema, usually takes its source from literature. Europe, America, the Far East; all these cinemas would not have succeeded without a literary foundation. For this reason, the backwardness of the horror genre in Turkish Literature is parallel to the backwardness of horror stories in literature. Unless today's horror filmmakers turn to literary sources, they will not be able to build a lasting horror film.

4. CONCLUSION

This thesis analyzed exemplary films with reference to the idea that the subgenre of cosmic horror, brought to perfection by Lovecraft, has had a major influence on cinema. It was thought that the selected films would repeat certain common themes, and the semiotic analysis showed that this idea was correct. Cosmic horror films use elements of classic horror stories and deal with the fear of non-human beings. However, the most important element of fear is always the fear of the "unknown". Similar to other horror films, there is a struggle with the "other". Characters in films such as "Alien" (1979), "In the Mouth of Madness" (1994), "The Call of Cthulhu" (2005), "The Mist" (2007) and "Arrival" (2016) realize that the traditional order is no longer valid and begin to lose their sanity. While the original stories written by H. P. Lovecraft favored a pessimistic ending, cosmic horror films can have a small victory in line with the classical cinematic conception.

The cosmic horror subgenre is more philosophical than others. In these films, instead of gore themes such as blood, brutality, murder, etc., the sense of meaninglessness experienced by human beings in the process of making sense of their existence predominates. For this reason, they are more likely to go unnoticed by the mainstream audience. They appeal to a small and niche audience. On the other hand, films that incorporate slasher elements, such as Alien (1979), can gain a large group of fans.

Since the production cost and potential audience return are uncertain, there are almost no examples of cosmic horror in Turkish horror cinema. Only examples that support cosmic horror in certain aspects such as ancient mysteries and the unknown created by non-humans have emerged. These examples include "The Serpent's Tale"

(1993), "The Secret File" (1998) (TV Series), "D@bbe" (2006), "The Karadedeler Incident" (2011) and "Baskın: Karabasan" (2015). The main reason for this is the filmmakers who are afraid of taking risks and want to gain as much as possible from the established cinematic content.

It is clear that the horror film industry in Turkey has been successful in recent years (after the 2000s). However, it is also clear that the scenarios repeat each other. Films are produced mechanically in order to succeed and make profit. There are very few people in Turkish cinema who produce horror films in an original way. Since Turkish horror cinema does not make big budget films, elements such as violence, excessive sound effects and jump scare are often used to keep the audience on the screen. Although these elements keep the audience glued to the screen in the short term, they lose their effect day by day. Therefore, there is a risk that these horror films will be devalued and lose their importance over time. Unless an original cinema is built and developed by different artists, Turkish horror cinema will become a passing trend and disappear.

According to this study, to avoid the current situation, a long-term strategy is needed that takes into account all aspects of the films, including their aesthetics and ethics. It is important to take positive steps towards nurturing and developing the genre in both quality and quantity as part of a holistic strategy to bring a permanent solution instead of a temporary one. It is hoped that this master's thesis will encourage everyone who wants to make a difference in the horror genre to take action with new thoughts and new strategies.

As with any research, some limitations emerged while writing this thesis. The pandemic period during the research phase prevented face-to-face interviews with the

intended participants. Online calls for participation received very few responses. Therefore, only two participants were able to participate in the Q&A, but they still provided valuable feedback on the current state of Turkish horror cinema. The fact that both participants had common thoughts in response to the questions led to the idea that the sample was representative of the general population.

This thesis titled "Semiotic Analysis of Lovecraftian Cosmic Horror Movies and An Evaluation of Horror Genre in Turkish Cinema" can be useful for all researchers who want to work in the horror genre. It would be very valuable for researchers from different fields to analyze the Turkish horror tradition historically and relate it to horror cinema. This is because, although there are horror folk narratives from the past in Turkey, they have not been reflected in the literature at the level they deserve. For this reason, there is a lack of identity in Turkish horror cinema. If future researchers reveal this link between Turkish culture and horror tradition, they will create unique resources for filmmakers.

In conclusion, it should be said that the monotony in Turkish horror cinema should be eliminated. For this, all kinds of scientific studies in this field are important. These studies will also help to understand how to create new original horror films.

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APPENDIX A. Interview with Mehmet Berk Yaltırık (English Translation).

What is your name?

Mehmet Berk Yaltırık.

What is your profession?

Historian and Author.

Would you like your real name to be shared in this thesis study?

Yes, I do.

1. How did you start working in the field of horror? Why are you interested in this genre?

I started as an active writer in 2009, but I've been interested in it since childhood. It's all about my curiosity and interest. I can't define it exactly.

2. In your opinion, what are the characteristics of "horror" that distinguish it from other genres?

It's based on the supernatural and the uncanny, and it also incorporates a sense of fear with excitement and adventure. I think the basic element is any kind of supernatural threat to survival (thriller is a more appropriate nomenclature for more human threats).

3. How do you evaluate the work done in the field of horror in world cinema?

I'm seeing a lot of good activity in folk horror, a diversity that I like in general.

4. Who are the horror writers, directors, etc. that inspire and influence you?

Bram Stoker, H. P. Lovecraft, Stephen King, Robert E. Howard (also horror stories), Kenan Hulusi Koray, Edgar Allan Poe, Mary Shelley, Ann Radcliffe, Carl Jacobi, Perceval Landon, Marion Crawford, Algernon Blackwood, Clark Ashton Smith, August Derleth, Robert Bloch, Richard B. Matheson, Brian Yuzna, John Carpenter, Sam Raimi, Alper Mestçi.

5. What does the cosmic horror genre mean to you? How would you define it?

I define cosmic horror as "existential terror." I think it is a type of horror that has philosophical aspects about human beings.

6. What do you think about H. P. Lovecraft's influence on horror cinema? What is the difference? What has he added?

I see him as a genius who inspired many works with themes such as horrible beings from different dimensions, cursed texts and forgotten gods, etc., and opened the door to new works and pens after him. He brought a horror related to "existence" to the horror literature.

7. What elements (visual, auditory) are used in Lovecraftian horror films to create an atmosphere of cosmic horror?

The main point is the fear of the unknown. It doesn't have to be related to space in general, I think the monsters contacted through old manuscripts and relics are also the most important elements of "cosmic horror". This genre also makes use of the "old", as much as possible ancient, ancient, forgotten, alien elements increase the dose of chills.

8. What psychological weaknesses do cosmic horror films target and succeed in scaring people?

The fear of the unknown, which is as old and fundamental as the fear of the dark. It grabs the viewer directly and makes identification easier.

9. How far do you think the movie industry has developed in the field of cosmic horror?

It constitutes a broad enough field to inspire computer games and should be considered a genre in its own right.

10. In your opinion, how does Turkish horror cinema compare to world standards? Evaluate.

I think it will have an important place in the world if it overcomes certain stereotypes. I think we have a tremendous potential. But we cannot get rid of some clichés. Aside from the use of horror elements other than the Djinn, I think there is not much courage to use different Djinn motifs other than the basic haunting motif.

11. What do you think about the Turkish movie audience's interest in horror films?

The audience loses interest because they keep coming across movies with similar patterns. No matter how many different, quality productions are made, there is a high probability that they will be mixed in with the bad examples.

12. What do you think about the contribution of local narratives of Turkish folk culture to the horror genre? Do you think they make a contribution? Can it be a rich source of inspiration for filmmakers?

There is a wasted potential that has not been utilized properly. If filmmakers can get rid of stereotypes and clichés, projects that can make a lot of noise can be realized.

13. Do you think there is a film in Turkish horror cinema that can be considered Lovecraftian horror? If so, to what extent has it been able to reflect cosmic horror? What are the differences and similarities between it and its counterparts in world cinema?

Can Evrenol's 2015 film ""Baskın: Karabasan" is perhaps the only example in terms of both theme and genre. Although it has a vampire theme, I can also consider Kutluğ Ataman's 1994 film "Dark Waters" in the context of the discovery of an old horror. "'Baskın: Karabasan" may be familiar in the world, but I think it is a very original and daring attempt for the cinema of our country. As a series, Taylan Brothers' "The Secret File" in 1998 would also have been partially based on a theme related to aliens, if it could have been completed.

14. Have you been influenced by H. P. Lovecraft in your work in horror? To what extent is he an important source of inspiration for you?

He is one of my favorite writers. I was very impressed with him in the framework of exploring the fear buried in the past and with the Cthulhu mythos.

15. Can you evaluate the cosmic horror elements in Turkish horror cinema?

"Baskın: Karabasan", tortured demons living in another dimension.

16. In Western culture, cosmic horror is usually created with extraterrestrial beings, while in Turkish cinema, horror themes are represented by non-human beings (jinn, fairies, ghosts, etc.). Can space-themed cosmic horror be applied in Turkish cinema?

I think it's feasible, because the historical background here is very suitable for harboring ancient horrors from space and antiquity. In 1998, the series "The Secret File" came close to this, the theme was going to evolve into the mysteries of Anatolia and space. There is a great potential here too.

17. Why do you think space-themed horror stories are not encountered in Turkish horror cinema?

It is seen as costly, technically difficult, etc. due to the fact that it touches on science fiction, but the theme of aliens hidden in a village can also do a lot of work. Although there is no horror in our cinema, there was such a theme in Badi (1983), the Turkish adaptation of the famous E.T. (1982). It's just a matter of not daring enough.

18. What are your thoughts and wishes about Turkish horror cinema in general?

My only wish is to be bolder and approach it from a broader perspective. As long as it stays stuck in stereotypes, Turkish horror cinema is in danger of being remembered only as a period piece, just like the fantastic films of Yeşilçam and the subsequent disappearance of Yeşilçam.

APPENDIX B. Interview with Orkun Uçar (English Translation).

What is your name?

Orkun Uçar.

What is your profession?

Author.

Would you like your real name to be shared in this thesis study?

Yes, I do.

1. How did you start working in the field of horror? Why are you interested in this genre?

Because of my interest in fantasy and science fiction literature, I have also written in the horror genre, because horror is one of the basic emotions that affects people the most.

2. In your opinion, what are the characteristics of "horror" that distinguish it from other genres?

Horror grasps the reader in its rawest form. Therefore, all frightening elements should be utilized: darkness, death, loneliness. The character's struggle gives the joy of living.

3. How do you evaluate the work done in the field of horror in world cinema?

I think it's very impressive. There are horror films in the earliest history of cinema.

4. Who are the horror writers, directors, etc. that inspire and influence you?

Stephen King, H. P. Lovecraft, Edgar Allan Poe as writers. Sam Raimi, Wes Crawen as directors.

5. What does the cosmic horror genre mean to you? How would you define it?

I'm not very familiar with it, but I think it could be a horror genre where aliens are involved.

6. What do you think about H. P. Lovecraft's influence on horror cinema? What is the difference? What has he added?

It could be a good example of cosmic horror. I mean, he took horror to the dimension of the universe.

7. What elements (visual, auditory) are used in Lovecraftian horror films to create an atmosphere of cosmic horror?

I think of darkness, ancient evil, the bottomless wells inside human beings.

8. What psychological weaknesses do cosmic horror films target and succeed in scaring people?

Cosmic horror targets the human brain the most. Even before the physical danger, the brain is in danger in dimensions it cannot understand.

9. How far do you think the movie industry has developed in the field of cosmic horror?

The technological development of the movie industry is most effective in horror and science fiction.

10. In your opinion, how does Turkish horror cinema compare to world standards? Evaluate.

It is developing slowly. The horror of this country is very old.

11. What do you think about the Turkish movie audience's interest in horror films?

They are very scared. Especially movies with djinns and stuff like that.

12. What do you think about the contribution of local narratives of Turkish folk culture to the horror genre? Do you think they make a contribution? Can it be a rich source of inspiration for filmmakers?

In Turkish folk culture, there are universal horror themes as well as Eastern cultural influences. For example, djinns, ghouls.

13. Do you think there is a film in Turkish horror cinema that can be considered Lovecraftian horror? If so, to what extent has it been able to reflect cosmic horror? What are the differences and similarities between it and its counterparts in world cinema?

I am not competent in Turkish horror cinema, but the Dabbe series can be considered in that genre.

14. Have you been influenced by H. P. Lovecraft in your work in horror? To what extent is he an important source of inspiration for you?

The combination of fantasy literature in the cosmic realm is of course inspiring.

15. Can you evaluate the cosmic horror elements in Turkish horror cinema?

Djinns and religious motifs are used.

16. In Western culture, cosmic horror is usually created with extraterrestrial beings, while in Turkish cinema, horror themes are represented by non-human beings (jinn, fairies, ghosts, etc.). Can space-themed cosmic horror be applied in Turkish cinema?

It needs to be practiced because that field is very untouched.

17. Why do you think space-themed horror stories are not encountered in Turkish horror cinema?

Producers are incompetent.

18. What are your thoughts and wishes about Turkish horror cinema in general?

It's a developing genre. But even though it started late, it is developing very fast.