CINEJ CINEMA JOURNAL
ISSN 2159-2411 (PRINT) ISSN 2158-8724 (ONLINE)

Childhood Trauma, Repression, and Feminist Reimagining Behind Locked Doors: *The Witch*, a film by Erman Bostan

İrem Çoban, Istanbul Bilgi University, irem.coban@bilgi.edu.tr

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

Abstract

The Witch (Tr: *Cadı,* Erman Bostan, 2024), loosely adapted from Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar's 1912 novel, reimagines the witch not as a supernatural being but as a cultural construct shaped by superstition, trauma, and gendered subjectivity. This study argues that the film transforms the witch into a symptom of male repression and a site of female agency. Drawing on Freud and Lacan's theories of repression and subject formation, Jung's archetypal symbolism, and feminist film theory (Kristeva's abjection, Creed's monstrous-feminine, Mulvey's gaze), the study conducts narrative and character analysis. By reframing the witch through psychoanalytic and feminist perspectives, *The Witch* shifts the Turkish horror genre from external demonology to internal psychopolitical structures, opening new feminist interpretations by a male director.

Keywords: Turkish cinema; witch figure; repression; trauma; gender; psychoanalytic film theory; feminist film theory; Erman Bostan

This journal is published by Pitt Open Library Publishing.

Article History

Received: 9 October 2025

Accepted: 30 January 2026

Published: 4 June 2026

Childhood Trauma, Repression, and Feminist Reimagining Behind Locked Doors: *The Witch*, a film by Erman Bostan

İrem Çoban

Introduction

The witch figure has endured across cultures and historical periods as a symbolically charged archetype and a potent instrument of othering women. From the witch hunts of medieval Europe to Ottoman beliefs in supernatural beings in daily life and in fairy tales, the witch has embodied societal anxieties about female subjectivity, sexuality, and resistance to prescribed norms. In this role, the figure has functioned as a mechanism of patriarchal control, marking women who resist domestic or moral expectations as dangerous or deviant. As Silvia Federici (2009) emphasizes, the witch became a disciplinary mechanism through which patriarchal and capitalist structures regulated women's bodies and reproductive capacities, while Barbara Creed (1993) identifies her as a cinematic incarnation of *the monstrous-feminine*, embodying both fear and desire.

The Witch (2024), Erman Bostan's first feature film and loosely adapted from Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar's late-Ottoman novel of the same name (1912/2021), engages with this archetype in distinctive ways. Diverging from the recent dominance of Islamic eschatology and jinn-centered narratives in Turkish horror, the film blends the witch motif with suspense,

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

mystery, psychological drama, and elements of gendered subjectivity. To contextualize this positioning, it helps to trace the genre's history in Türkiye from a contemporary perspective on the late Ottoman era. Turkish horror cinema first emerged with early productions such as *Scream* (*Çığlık*, Aydın Arakon, 1949) and *Dracula in Istanbul* (*Drakula İstanbul'da*, Mehmet Muhtar, 1953), but remained sporadic and marginal for decades (Koçak, 2012, p. 95; Özkaracalar, 2006, p. 293). The 1970s offered a brief revival with Metin Erksan's *The Turkish Exorcist* (*Şeytan,* 1974), a local adaptation of William Friedkin's *The Exorcist* (1973); though imitative and inconsistent, these works still marked the period. The genre did not re-emerge significantly until the 2000s, when drastic political changes towards neo-conservatism emerged in Türkiye, and horror found renewed expression in Turkish cinema. Orhan Oğuz's *Dark Spells* (*Büyü*, 2004) was among the first examples of a new wave of jinn-centered narratives rooted in Islamic eschatology. This turn not only endowed the genre with a distinct identity but also broadened its thematic scope to encompass superstition, religious fears, and gendered anxieties (Özdemir, 2019).

The selection of *The Witch* as a case study lies in its capacity to reposition the witch concept in Turkish cinema. It reduces the figure to neither a narrative of demonic possession nor to an exoticized spectacle of the supernatural. Instead, it frames the witch as a socio-cultural

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

construct rearticulated through a character-driven, introspective narrative. This approach distinguishes *The Witch* within the limited history of Turkish witch representations. It allows for a nuanced feminist reading that foregrounds female agency, unconscious processes, and the negotiation of social norms. This article does not attempt a comprehensive novel-to-film comparison or a broader genre analysis. However, it references the source text only when its differences are relevant to the feminist reading. These limits sharpen the focus on the film's psychoanalytic and feminist dimensions, ensuring the argument remains anchored in its gendered and psychological reframing of the witch motif.

While retaining key elements of the novel (particularly its critique of superstition and gender norms in daily life), the film reshapes the narrative around buried childhood experiences, the return of the unconscious, and the emergence of feminine agency in the leading male character. This shift transforms the story from a social satire of superstition into an intimate exploration of identity formation and psychic struggle, culminating in a final reversal that subverts audience expectations. In doing so, the film situates the witch not only as a folkloric remnant but as a complex figure of gendered otherness within the unconscious.

To elucidate these dynamics, this paper asks how this film reinterprets the witch motif through the entanglement of trauma, repression, desire, and female subjectivity, and how it

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

negotiates the intersection of psychoanalytic and feminist theory. Sigmund Freud's theory of repression (1914) and Jacques Lacan's concept of subject formation (1966/2006) illuminate the film's engagement with the unconscious. At the same time, Carl Gustav Jung's notion of archetypes (2003) helps frame the witch as a recurring cultural symbol. Creed's monstrous-feminine (1993) and Julia Kristeva's concept of abjection (1982) underscore her role as a figure of fascination and exclusion. These perspectives are brought into dialogue with feminist approaches, particularly Laura Mulvey's theory of the male gaze (1975), through a scene-based analysis of *mise-en-scène* and spatial thresholds, addressing how the film constructs the witch as a symptom of patriarchal control and a site of resistance. At the methodological level, the study applies narrative and character analysis to examine how *The Witch* (2024) constructs meaning. Narrative analysis highlights the organization of plot, temporality, and spatial thresholds as metaphors of repression (Bordwell, 1985; Chatman, 1978), while character analysis focuses on motivations, conflicts, and symbolic roles that embody psychological and ideological positions (Smith, 1995/2022). These approaches are combined with feminist and psychoanalytic theory to reveal how the film repositions the witch figure as a psycho-social construct shaped by repression, trauma, and gendered subjectivity.

The paper demonstrates how the witch archetype acquires new resonance in

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

contemporary cinema by situating *The Witch* in global and Ottoman contexts. It argues that the film's narrative, which pivots on psychic conflict and the reemergence of the feminine, challenges dominant conventions of Turkish horror and opens a space for reconsidering how female subjectivity is represented on screen. Through its intersectional use of psychoanalytic and feminist theory, this paper intervenes in broader debates on the persistence of the witch figure, showing how her cinematic return speaks to unresolved cultural anxieties around gender, power, and identity.

To ground this analysis, it would be appropriate to first examine the witch's historical definitions and cross-cultural symbolic functions. The following section outlines the witch figure in global and Ottoman traditions, establishing the cultural frameworks through which *The Witch* can be more fully understood.

The Witch Figure in the Context of Global and Ottoman Traditions

Historically, a witch has been defined as a woman believed to harm others, bring misfortune, or influence events through supernatural means (Needham, 1978). This idea is rooted in ancient worldviews that revered the Earth as a life-giving feminine deity, embodied in goddess figurines symbolizing fertility and abundance (Altunay, 2020, p. 32). Over time, some female deities, such as Hecate, became central to mythologies of sorcery and witchcraft

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

(Ertan, 2023, p. 22).

The English word *witch,* of Germanic origin, derives from the Old English *wicca* (male) and *wicce* (female), originally denoting individuals possessing knowledge or magical abilities (Oxford University Press, n.d.). However, within the Christian context, it became increasingly associated with *maleficium* (harmful magic) and heresy (Bever, 2008; Nahya, 2011). This demonization, reinforced by feudal decline, urbanization, inquisitorial torture, and control over women's bodies, was codified in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (1486). For centuries, courts executed large numbers of women whose knowledge or autonomy challenged patriarchal and economic order (Burns, 2003, p. 108). Also, over time, the witch became a recurring figure in popular culture, as seen in Halloween imagery and celebrations (Jensen, 2006), and in Gerald Gardner's Wicca, a contemporary pagan occult (Altunay, 2020, p. 39). While the witch hunt entered the political arena, as seen in the 1950s with McCarthyism in the USA (Pufong, 2023), it was also used as a feminist symbol within feminist movements (Davy, 2006, p. 148).

In Eastern traditions, from Taoism in China to Muism in Korea and Zoroastrianism in Iran, witchcraft and magic were closely tied to healing, divination, and cosmological balance (Harper, 2013; Kendall, 2009; Korkmaz, 2012). The *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, a collection of ancient Greek magical spells, hymns, and rituals from Graeco-Roman Egypt commonly

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

referred to as the *magical papyri*, also illustrates how magical practices were embedded in cultural and religious life (Betz, 1986). With Islam's spread, magic was redefined, distinguishing *Qur'an*-based legitimate practices from prohibited ones involving jinn. Unlike in the Christian West, Eastern societies largely preserved magic as an integrated tradition rather than a target of systematic persecution.

The witch figure in Turkish culture has often been linked to Central Asian Shamanism, though direct evidence of witchcraft is scarce. In this worldview, the *kam* or *baksı* mediated between spirits and humans, with powers for healing or harm. Female shamans were sometimes associated with bö*kü*/*bögü* (magic), which could turn malevolent as the feared *kara kam* (dark shaman). The terms *cadü*/*cazu*, borrowed from Persian, entered Turkish through neighboring cultures and became embedded in folk belief (Karaküçük, 2010, p. 55, citing İnan). Anatolian traditions included beliefs in witches (*cadı*), the evil eye (*nazar*), and malevolent spirits such as *Alkarısı*/*Albastı*, a demon thought to attack postpartum women and infants mentioned by Dede Korkut (Ögel, 1995, p. 565).

One of the definitions provided by the Turkish Language Association (Türk Dil Kurumu [TDK], n.d.) for a witch is a ghost that roams the night and harms people. In Ottoman culture, the concept of a witch aligns with this definition. During the Ottoman period, in accordance

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

with Ottoman policy of expansion through conquest, elements of old beliefs, Islamic doctrine, and Balkan-Anatolian folklore combined, resulting in a hybrid witch figure (Aycibin, 2008, p. 56). In Islam, magic is explicitly forbidden in the *Qur'an*, particularly in Surah al-Baqara (Qur'an, n.d., 2:102–103), and its practice is condemned, with both learning and teaching deemed *haram* (Doğan, 2013, pp. 223–224). The Ottoman witch was thus a layered construct, linked in Islamic terms to magicians or malevolent individuals, yet also merging with vampire-like revenants (*obour*) from Slavic traditions (Yaltırık, 2013, p. 213). In frontier regions of the Ottoman Empire, such as Rumelia, Slavic vampire myths (*upir, lampir*) fused with local beliefs, producing the notion that *cadı* or *obur* could rise from graves to harm the living, drink blood, or perform harmful magic, with remedies including staking, decapitation, and burning. From the mid-16th century, *fatwas* by the şeyhülislams (chief muftis) sanctioned such measures, particularly in non-Muslim villages (Sariyannis, 2013).

Narratives in Evliyâ Çelebi's *Seyahatnâme* illustrate Ottoman perceptions of supernatural entities and the protective measures taken against them. Çelebi describes *oburs* as corpses rising from their graves to drink human blood, engaging in nocturnal aerial battles (sometimes between Abaza and Circassian *oburs*), riding various objects, and shapeshifting (Öztürk Bitik, 2011, pp. 64-65).

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

By the 19th century, state-paid officials known as *cadıcı* or *cadı üstadı* (witch hunter) were reportedly tasked with neutralizing alleged witches or revenants based on public reports (Aycibin, 2008, p. 64). Aycibin argues these practices reflected not only superstition but also state policies to curb migration and maintain order (2008, p. 67). Cem Doğan, however, questions this view, noting Aycibin's reliance on secondary rather than primary sources (2013, p. 233).

Unlike early modern Western witch trials, where women were the primary targets, accusations in the Ottoman Empire could be directed at both genders (Doğan, 2013, p. 229). The absence of systematic witch hunts stemmed from charges tied to local disputes, personal hostilities, unexplained events, or political motives framed as state necessity. Witchcraft alone was insufficient for conviction. It had to be combined with other offenses under the habitual offender category, with capital punishment applied only when accompanied by crimes such as cursing the *Qur'an* during magical practices, under the sultan's political authority (Sariyannis, 2013, pp. 206–207). Although the Ottoman witch figure rested on different theological foundations than the demon-centered witch of the West, it fulfilled a similar symbolic function in reinforcing social order and moral norms (Berber & Gülen, 2018, p. 72).

This cultural-historical background highlights the specificity of the Ottoman witch and

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

provides a foundation for examining how trauma and gendered issues are addressed in cinematic representations of *The Witch*. In this context, it is necessary to utilize psychoanalytic and feminist film theories to analyze unconscious processes and character formation along gendered axes when analyzing *The Witch*.

Psychoanalytic Theory

Psychoanalytic theory offers essential tools for understanding the structure of unconscious processes and character development. The fundamental goal of Freud's approach is to uncover the unconscious conflicts that lie at the root of mental illness and bring them to the conscious level. He argues that much of human behavior is driven by unconscious mental processes (Barry, 1995). The unconscious is shaped by repressed wishes, traumas, and conflicts, particularly in childhood. Repression is a fundamental concept of this approach (Freud, 1914, p. 24). Repression operates through retroactive, anticipatory, and contemporaneous hidden memories (Freud, 1914, pp. 57-68).

In understanding trauma, Freud focused on external events (e.g., childhood sexual abuse) early in his career, but later shifted to emphasizing internal psychic reality, unconscious fantasy, and drive conflict (Fletcher, 2013, pp. 36-56). Howard B. Levine (2014) highlights the ambiguities inherent in the concept of trauma. The impact of trauma is influenced by factors

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

such as developmental stage, ego capacity, cultural context, and deferred action (*Nachträglichkeit*) (Levine, 2014).

Freud's concept of *Nachträglichkeit* explains how experiences that exceed representational capacity at an early age acquire traumatic meaning later (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1973). Jean Laplanche (1999/2005, pp. 264-269) developed this process with the concept of afterwardness, explaining how enigmatic signifiers from the adult other enter the child's world and are repressed because they cannot be fully translated. The subject is shaped by latent material from the past and its reinterpretations.

According to Freud, the ego is a structure that mediates between the id's drives and the superego's prohibitions and operates through defense mechanisms (Freud, 1939, p. 184). The superego, based on the fear of socially derived punishment, "is the representative for us of every moral restriction" (Freud, 1933, p. 4676) and plays a decisive role in the mechanism of repression (Boag, 2006, p. 78). While preserving Freud's structural model, Lacan redefines subject formation and the language, image, and desire axes. In his theory of *the mirror stage*, the infant identifies with the integrated image they see in the mirror, in contrast to the fragmented bodily experience (Lacan, 1966/2006, pp. 75-81). This is the formation of the ideal self. However, this wholeness is illusory. The ego is a defensive construct masking the

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

unconscious. Lacan positions the father figure in Freud's Oedipus complex as the *Law of the Father* in a symbolic function; this law, which puts the child into the Symbolic Order by limiting the mother's desire, centers on the incest prohibition and makes the subject a signifier of the object of power and desire by ensuring its inclusion in the cultural-linguistic structure (Lacan, 1966/2006; Murray, 1995).

Jung expanded the concept of the unconscious to a collective dimension, proposing that individuals inherit a collective unconscious shaped by ancestral codes. Its most explicit expressions are archetypes, symbolic forms, and potentials, not concrete content. In *The Four Archetypes* (2003), Jung examines the mother, rebirth, spirit, and trickster. The mother archetype, central to gender discussions, embodies both nurturing and protective qualities as well as seductive and destructive ones. Its impact on the child extends beyond the biological mother to these archetypal meanings. Through *the mother complex*, Jung argues that childhood experiences under maternal influence can generate identity and sexual difficulties later in life (Jung, 2003, p. 19). Likewise, his concepts of anima and animus bridge conscious and unconscious: in possession, traits of the opposite sex emerge (Jung, 2003, p. 67).

Feminist Film Theory

Feminist film criticism draws on psychoanalytic theory to analyze the positioning of

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

female representations within patriarchal structures. Mulvey (1975) emphasizes that patriarchal order is legitimized by representations in cinema and that dominant gazes must be questioned. Drawing on psychoanalytic theory, she argues that women serve two functions within the patriarchal unconscious: symbolizing the threat of castration posed by the absence of a penis and raising the child who compensates for this absence. This situation confines women to the position of meaning-bearer, not creator, within the symbolic order. Drawing on the ideas of Freud and Lacan, she analyzes the cinema-viewer relationship through the concepts of fetishism, narcissism, scopophilia, and voyeurism. Using the concept of *the male gaze* by drawing on psychoanalytic theory, Mulvey argues that in mainstream cinema, women are positioned as objects of pleasure and men as active viewers. To disrupt this gaze, Mulvey advocates an alternative mode of cinema that transforms female characters from passive objects into active subjects, focusing on their lives and struggles (1975).

In *The Monstrous-Feminine: Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis* (1993), Creed examines the representations of women in horror cinema in the context of psychoanalytic film theory, revealing that the *monstrous* has not only masculine but also feminine forms. According to Creed, women are represented in horror cinema not only as victims or objects of desire, but also as monstrous figures positioned as objects of threat and disgust by patriarchal ideology. These forms of representation are constructed through the fact that women's bodies, fertility, sexuality,

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

and biological functions are the sources of desire, fear, and disgust. According to Creed, *monstrous-feminine* figures such as the witch, the monster mother, the femme fatale, or the mother with a contaminated womb represent the uncanny return of feminine powers repressed by the patriarchal order; they confuse the *pure* with the *impure*, order with chaos, and threaten the boundaries of identity and order. However, this threat often ends with the destruction of the figure; thus, the discomfort created by encountering the abject serves to redraw the safe boundaries of the patriarchal system (Creed, 1993).

Kristeva (1982) conceptualizes *the abject* as forms of existence rooted in exclusion, distinct from neurotic and psychotic structures. Drawing on Freud's notion of repression, she contrasts the denial directed at the object in neuroses with the denial of desire itself in psychoses. *The abject* exceeds classical negativity, dissolving subject (object and inside–outside boundaries), where the conscious/unconscious distinction fails and discourse shifts toward aesthetic or mystical sublimation. Substances such as blood, corpses, or socially unclean figures (e.g., midwives, medicine women) exemplify this threat to identity and symbolic order, provoking disgust and fear. The witch, embodying physical and cultural boundary violations, becomes a profoundly disturbing figure in cinema (Kristeva, 1982, pp. 6–7).

Layered Representations of the Witch Figure in Cinema

The witch figure is a multilayered representation in cinema that generates fear and possesses ideological, social, and aesthetic implications[1]. It is a point at which audience identification is disrupted, patriarchal norms are challenged, and historical oppression and resistance are made visible. However, it is also a part of the patriarchal system at other times.

From *Häxan* (Benjamin Christensen, 1922), which frames witchcraft as patriarchal fear, to *The Wizard of Oz* (Victor Fleming, 1939), where a good/evil divide constrains female power, cinema has consistently tied witches to gendered anxieties. Mid-century films such as *I Married a Witch* (René Clair, 1942) and *Bell, Book and Candle* (Richard Quine, 1958) domesticate female magic within romance and confine it to the private sphere. By contrast, *Rosemary's Baby* (Roman Polanski, 1968) and *Resurrection* (Daniel Petrie, 1980) foreground the patriarchal appropriation of women's bodies, while *Carrie* (Brian De Palma, 1976) channels repressed female rage into violence, her menstrual blood exemplifying Kristeva's notion of the abject (Creed, 1993, pp. 11–14). More recently, *The Witch* (Robert Eggers, 2015) reimagines Thomasin's sexual awakening as a patriarchal threat, her embrace of witchhood transforming

[1] There have been previous, mostly descriptive, studies on witches and the monstrous-feminine in cinema, such as works of Harmes (2013), Germaine Buckley (2019), Koçer (2019), Engelbrecht (2021), Greene (2021), and Heller-Nicholas (2024).

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

the figure from victim to agent.

In Turkish cinema, the witch figure diverges from Western trial traditions, appearing in localized forms within fairy tale adaptations, children's films, and popular genres. In the 1970s, these characters often served as moral antagonists, contrasting the innocent young woman with the jealous, malicious one. Within the framework of Türkiye's Westernization efforts, the adaptation of European fairy tales became a symbolic site for negotiating modernity and tradition. This pattern is evident in the local adaptations of the Grimm fairy tale Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (Pamuk Prenses ve Yedi Cüceler, Ertem Göreç, 1970) and Turkish The Wizard of Oz (Ayşecik ve Sihirli Cüceler Rüyalar Ülkesinde, Tunç Başaran, 1971), in which the witch threatens innocence and goodness.

At the same time, some productions reflected the nationalist spirit of the period, aligning with films shaped by the Turkish-Islamic synthesis in which the Turkish component was particularly emphasized. In the popular historical-adventure films Tarkan: *Silver Saddle (Tarkan: Gümüş Eyer,* Mehmet Aslan, 1970) and Tarkan: *Gold Medallion* (*Tarkan: Altın Madalyon,* Mehmet Aslan, 1972), the witch appears as a supporting antagonist whose magic and trickery challenge the hero and must be subdued, underscoring the triumph of national strength over foreign or supernatural threats. In *Minik Cadı* (Nejat Saydam, 1975), she is

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

portrayed as well-meaning yet clumsy, with her magic serving primarily as a source of comedy. *Tatlı Cadı* (Volkan Kayhan, 1975) and *Tatlı Cadının Maceraları* (Ertem Göreç, 1975), the latter a Turkish adaptation of *Bewitched* (IMDb, n.d.), depict domesticated witches situated in modern urban settings, whose powers are employed for trivial purposes. In all these examples, female agency is confined within marital norms and social conventions, thereby stripping it of its subversive potential. By the late 1970s, however, Turkish cinema entered an industrial and thematic transformation period. The witch figure, once mobilized in nationalist allegories or comedic urban tales, gradually receded from the screen. Only decades later, in the 2000s, did she reemerge (this time indirectly) within the framework of black magic, shamanistic practices, and Islamic eschatology. Moreover, films such as *Killing in the Shadows* (*Hacivat Karagöz Neden Öldürüldü?,* Ezel Akay, 2006), The *Sijjin* series (*Siccin*, Alper Mestçi, 2014–2025), and *The Voice* (*Ses*, Ümit Ünal, 2010) engage with the witch figure only indirectly, framing it through motifs of black magic and shamanistic practices. Unlike Bostan's film, Ceylan Özgün Özçelik's *Witch Trilogy* (*Cadı Üçlemesi*, 2019–2022) deploys the witch figure to unveil patriarchal violence and gender inequality, making women's oppression its core concern.

These examples show that Turkish cinema reproduces the moral threat witch image, derived from fairy tales and folklore, along two axes: the malevolent woman opposing innocent female characters, and the domesticated figure whose power is neutralized in comedies and

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

family films. The rarity of direct witch representations in Turkish cinema also highlights a broader research gap. Despite the figure's cultural and historical weight, it has remained marginal in national film history. This scarcity makes *The Witch* (2024) significant, both as a continuation of rare local examples and as a work that reopens the figure to feminist and psychoanalytic inquiry.

The Witch Within: Repression and Trauma in Erman Bostan's *The Witch*

The Witch, a horror-thriller set in Istanbul during the decline of the Ottoman Empire, unfolds around rumors of a witch haunting the mansion where Fikriye, the third wife, lives with Mr. Naşit Nefi, whom she reluctantly marries. The film synopsis states:

> "During the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the young widow Fikriye uncovers the terrible secrets of the past as she tries to unravel the truth behind the rumors of the witch about her forced marriage to Mr. Naşit Nefi, and the mansion where he lived." (Bostan, n.d.)

This witch is identified as Nefi's first wife, Binnaz. It is believed that she returns to claim her husband after his death. According to rumors, she terrorizes the women Nefi marries, strangles those who torment their children, yet maintains her maternal role by bringing sweets to her own children every night. However, the film's progression inverts this supernatural

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

narrative. Diverging from the novel, the witch figure is revealed as a second personality born of Nefi's repressed childhood traumas. Thus, the film changes the novel's rationalist ending into a psychoanalytic drama of the inner self.

On a psychoanalytic level, the film constructs Nefi's childhood traumas through the repression mechanism. The father's violence and the mother's suicide are relegated to the unconscious. The witch symbolizes the anxiety-ridden and guilt-ridden return of these repressed contents. Freud's theory of repression (1914), when considered alongside the American Psychiatric Association's definition of dissociative identity disorder (DID) (2022, p. 329), helps illuminate the film's diegetic representation of dissociative splitting through Nefi as unbearable memories are relegated to the unconscious, only to return in distorted forms and multiple personalities. Therefore, the malevolent identity that manifests as the witch is not a random hallucination but a structured symptom of trauma. Nefi's self-harm and lack of memory, or his illness, are embodied manifestations of the witch. In these scenes, the camera focuses on Nefi's body, visualizing the return of repression through the body.

The use of space also cinematically reveals the dynamic of repression. At the beginning of the film, İrfan, the house steward, tells Fikriye that most rooms are locked, which seems like a Gothic element, evoking haunted spaces. However, in the dissociative scene, it is revealed

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

that these rooms are the spaces where Nefi was violated as a child. Locked doors are a concrete metaphor for Freud's concept of repression. This spatial logic also aligns with Anthony Vidler's (1992) concept of *architecture's uncanny nature*. The space becomes a veiled yet lingering trace of the traumatic.

The film's first manifestation of the witch's existence occurs in a bar scene where Nefi sees someone else sitting at the next table as himself and attacks him, as if it were part of the witch's trick. This moment can be linked to Lacan's *mirror stage* (1966/2006), in which the subject encounters his own image as an alienated and threatening *other*. The shot/reverse-shot alignment briefly confronts the spectator and the double, fracturing it. This brief scene subtly foreshadows Nefi's dissociative identity. We can find the clue to this dissociative identity when the bartender calls him by a different name (Şinasi), which makes him angry. Later in the film, we understand that Mr. Şinasi is another personality of Nefi and embodies his divided self. In the following scenes, Nefi's self-harm, shifts in voice, and subsequent memory lapses further illustrate his oscillation between alter egos.

The existence of a witch in the household is an unspoken secret, denied by Nefi. Even the children, who receive candies left by their beds each night, believe that their witch mother brings them. This is a secret known by the maids as well. When Fikriye brings it up, however,

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

Nefi immediately silences her. These candies become a shared secret, known by everyone yet never openly acknowledged. This suggests a coupling of individual trauma with collective repression. In the Ottoman context, witch rumors often spread through silence and gossip within a community (Doğan, 2013). This silence is not only a secret within the family but also reflects the fragility of the social order and the marginalized position of women during the Ottoman decline. Witch rumors carry the period's collective fears and social tensions, thus establishing a parallel between individual trauma and social uncertainties.

The séance conducted by the magnetist Mesmer in the novel is transformed into a hypnosis session in the film. Thus, the director incorporates the hypnosis method and enables Nefi's childhood traumas to emerge. Hypnosis sequences are the climax of psychoanalytic dissociation. Accompanied by dim lighting, the mirror on the table, and Mesmer's rhythmic movements, Nefi enters a trance. In this trance, the closed doors of his mind open one by one, and childhood traumas surface. Freud's concept of *Nachträglichkeit* is decisive here. Childhood trauma only regains meaning in a new context in adulthood. Nefi's recollection of himself as a five-year-old child being thrown into a well by his father indicates that the witch is not a supernatural entity but a traumatic symptom, an overprotective personality directed toward his children. In this scene, we also see a different side of İrfan, the house steward: an authoritarian figure and the keeper of Nefi's repressed memories. İrfan's resistance to the hypnosis session

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

reveals earlier tensions between the house steward and the wife (Fikriye), as Fikriye accuses her: “You are the one who nurtured the witch within us; in this house, you are not a steward, but a guardian”.

Within the framework of Freud's Oedipus Complex, paternal violence and the loss of the mother leave the classic father-son conflict pathologically unresolved. According to Freud's structural model, this conflict operates between the id, ego, and superego (1939, pp. 183-184). The id carries repressed aggressive and sexual impulses. The witch figure is the personified expression of these impulses. To adapt to social reality, the ego represses these impulses and attempts to construct a socially acceptable persona (as Mr. Naşit Nefi) in their place, but repression fails. The superego, on the other hand, has internalized the father's punitive authority and the guilt stemming from the mother's loss. The witch is thus a projection of the punitive superego. Freud defines hypnosis as a transference process that reveals unconscious material (Bachner-Melman & Lichtenberg, 2001, p. 45). The hypnosis scenes in the film demonstrate this process, embody its dynamics, and reflect how unconscious content surfaces through transference. As Nefi's repressed memories surface in hypnotic trances, this process leads to an irreversible confrontation for the character and the audience.

From Lacan's perspective, Nefi's DID results from the subject's incomplete entry into the

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

Symbolic Order. The sense of unity established in the *mirror stage* is shattered by trauma, and when the *Father's Name* becomes dysfunctional, the subject is dispersed among fragmented identities (Lacan, 1966/2006). The figure of the witch symbolizes the void left by incomplete symbolic grounding. While Freud explains the return of repression, Lacan emphasizes the instability of signification. The witch emerges as a symptomatic formation at the point where prohibition, desire, and fear collide.

Jung's archetypes also illuminate the witch's ambivalent nature. The witch assumes both *the Shadow* and *the Terrible Mother*. In the film, the fact that the scene of bringing candy to the children is not directly shown but instead hinted at through evidence makes this figure an invisible yet potent force. In Jung's concept of *Persona* (2003), Nefi's socially acceptable self masks the repressed content, while the witch as an identity reveals the traumatic truth beneath. The figure of Binnaz Hanım, the jealous deceased wife, further reinforces this archetypal resonance. As a personal ghost and a collective symbol, she represents jealousy, revenge, and the all-consuming power of motherhood.

In addition to Nefi's trauma, the film also points to Fikriye's unconscious. Fikriye's nightmare scenes (whispers, shadows, and fragmented images echoing in dark corridors) represent not only the witch rumor turning into an obsession, but also the Freudian expression

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

of repressed desires within the logic of dreams. For instance, Nefi refuses to show photographs of his first wife (Binnaz). He even begins speaking in a different voice, as if another person were speaking through him during a quarrel before fainting. After seeing Binnaz's photograph in Nefi's hand by chance, Fikriye transforms her image into that of a witch and begins to live under its obsessive influence, as Mulvey (1975) notes in her psychoanalytic film analysis, dreams and fantasies constitute the realm where the spectator encounters the unconscious on screen. Fikriye's nightmares reveal that what is repressed affects not only Nefi but also Fikriye herself as a female subject.

The film dramatizes the return of the repressed on both individual and societal levels. The children's words, "Our witch mother brings candy", demonstrate the transformation of trauma into a mythical narrative. Moreover, Fikriye dares to go and dig the grave of Binnaz, but İrfan stops her due to the belief that harming a grave could bring a curse. Although the witch's physical presence is never revealed, it immerses the audience in the uncanny presence of absence. In addition, although the film does not explicitly present a maternal influence, the mother's inability to intervene against the father's violence and her subsequent suicide function as formative traumatic experiences. This contributes to shaping Nefi's later identification with a witch-like maternal figure in adulthood.

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

The return of repression in the film is not limited to Nefi's traumatic past. Fikriye's nightmares and obsessive relationship with the witch rumor reveal that patriarchal discourses also shape the female unconscious. This demonstrates that the witch is a symptom of repression and trauma at the individual level, while simultaneously revealing the figure's social functions. Therefore, while psychoanalysis effectively analyzes the witch's dimension, feminist film theory expands this explanation. Thus, the witch becomes intertwined with the discourses that discipline the female body in patriarchal society and reflects the female subject's struggle for subjectification.

Who Is the Witch? The Female Other in Erman Bostan's *The Witch*

Feminist film theory deepens the film's psychoanalytic analysis on two levels. The first concerns the shift in the gaze regime. In the opening sequence, a wise old woman accuses Binnaz of being a witch after a cat jumps over her dead body. The same woman adds that it is difficult to be an orphan and a woman in late Ottoman society, which is also true for Fikriye.

Fikriye was raised by her uncle and his wife (Emine) as an orphan. Although we do not know the age of Fikriye, the patriarchal dominance of the society is revealed by the words of Emine as "a woman of your age must be a man's property, otherwise her chastity will be questioned". She forces Fikriye to marry Nefi despite the rumors that newlywed wives are

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

killed by the first wife, who is believed to become a witch after her death.

Fikriye, initially the passive bearer of this patriarchal discourse, gradually transforms into an active subject who takes control of the domestic events unfolding around her. We can see this as she interrogates the servant, Gülendam, about the sweets brought to the children. Even though the servant refuses to speak, a demonstration of patriarchal silence, this marks the first step for Fikriye to break that silence on the *forbidden topic*. As in Smelik's (1998) trilogy of body-gaze and agency, Fikriye becomes a subject by intervening in a field of knowledge monopolized by men. In contrast to the gender technologies that De Lauretis (1987) describes as confining women to a passive position, Fikriye asserts her agency.

The second level is the transformation of the witch figure's feminine otherness. In Creed's concept of the *monstrous-feminine* (1993), femininity is a bearer of fear and desire. The witch thus embodies the feminine otherness that the patriarchal order both represses and circulates as a figure of fear in its fantasies. From a Lacanian perspective, the monstrous feminine is also linked to the eruption of the *Real*. As an unnameable and unrepresentable excess that disrupts the boundaries of the *Symbolic Order*, the *witch* generates both unease and fascination in the viewer. This bearer of fear is associated with socio-moral discipline in both the film and the novel. In the film, İrfan, the house steward, implies to Fikriye that Binnaz was dominant,

vigorous, and jealous, and that her death was met with joy because it had disturbed her husband. The labeling of strong women, those capable of opposing men, as witches overlaps with the concept of the *monstrous-feminine*. Patriarchal order transforms independent and uninhibited women into figures of fear. In this respect, the witch is not only a sign of an individual psychoanalytic rift but also of the social order's discipline of the female body. However, at the film's end, Binnaz is portrayed not as a witch but as a victim of the patriarchal order. Thus, Binnaz can be read as an honest and unyielding woman branded as a witch who returns at night after her death, driven by a desire for revenge.

Guilt is also an important element within the film's narrative. For instance, before her unfortunate death, we see Binnaz and Nefi quarreling in a boat, after which she fell into the sea. Moreover, Nefi refuses to save her. This repressed guilt returns to Nefi's mind in the form of a witch. Thus, the witch figure is read not as a supernatural entity but as a manifestation of repressed trauma.

The director decided to revisit the same kind of confrontation between Nefi and Fikriye, in which the couple had another quarrel on a boat. In the scene, Fikriye is also represented as self-confident, a woman who refuses to submit to her husband's authority. These are the turning points in Fikriye's subjectification that occur during the boat scene and the scene in which she

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

attempts to dig Binnaz's grave.

Her words to İrfan, the house steward, during her unsuccessful attempt to dig Binnaz's grave are also a breaking point in her rejection of patriarchal oppression: “I have never had a father to protect me, nor a husband to protect me; I have been given nothing but fear. (…) I will not allow this”. This statement indicates Fikriye's emergence from Mulvey's (1975) *male gaze* regime and her becoming a subject. Her assertion of her own will, in response to İrfan the house steward's implication, “Leave Nefi”, by saying, “If I go, I will betray my love”, further solidifies this transformation. As Federici (2009) emphasizes, the witch figure historically symbolizes the suppression of women's autonomy. However, in the film, Fikriye symbolizes the subject of resisting this suppression. Fikriye’s progression from silenced orphan to active subject exemplifies Smelik’s (1998) trilogy of body, gaze, and agency, as she reclaims the narrative and the visual field.

Fikriye tries to establish solidarity with the mute maid Salime, who is also an orphan. To gain her trust, she even confesses that she writes poems and sends them to newspapers under a male name. This embodies the female subject's counter-narrative in Smelik's (1998) terms. It can also be linked to bell hooks' concept of *oppositional gaze* (1992): Fikriye and Salime construct their gaze and right to speak from a vantage point excluded by the patriarchal gaze.

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

Kristeva's (1982) concept of *abjection* also resonates with this transformation. The mansion's dark corridors, closed doors, and the well function as threshold spaces where disgust and attraction converge. The return of the repressed signals a fracturing of the boundaries of the patriarchal order, in both psychoanalytic and feminist terms. The visual representation of the witch figure is also significant for feminist theory. In the film, the image of the black-veiled, menacing witch visualizes how patriarchal society codes the female body through fear and violence through Binnaz. However, in later scenes, it becomes clear that Binnaz is, in fact, a victim. Nefi refuses to help her when she falls into the water and drowns during a boat trip. Branded as a *monster* for her harsh and disciplined demeanor by İrfan, the house steward, Binnaz is driven to her death by male violence. As the head servant of the household, İrfan (despite being a woman herself and knowing the witch's identity) keeps this secret out of loyalty to her master, whom she has cared for since childhood, thus silently consenting to the labeling of a dead woman as a witch. By contrast, in the novel, İrfan, the house steward, collaborates with Binnaz, the creator of the witch rumor, and with her neighbor. Here, the jealous wife, Binnaz, plans to prevent her husband from remarrying after his death: Her neighbor will frighten a potential wife by disguising herself as a *witch* and drowning her if necessary. These seemingly supernatural events are staged with information acquired from the spiritualist-magnetic milieu they belong to. Therefore, the witch figure functions not only as the revelation of individual

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

psychoanalytic fissures but also as a mechanism through which the social order maintains control over women's bodies. It is embodied as the uncanny return of the *Real*, which the *Symbolic* attempts to suppress. However, the film's ending differs significantly from the book's. As revealed towards the film's conclusion, Haydar's desire to bury his son Nefi in the well he had dug in the garden resulted in İrfan, the house steward, poisoning Haydar to protect Nefi. This situation can also be linked to the protective function of the mother archetype for İrfan the house steward. Thus, the female witch figure is positioned by another female as the product of the patriarchal order's demonization mechanism of women, as analyzed by Federici (2009).

The film's finale implies that this patriarchal discourse persists. The comments made by two male patients in the mental hospital where Nefi stays, “If you cannot control your wife, you will end up here”, about Nefi, demonstrate that, despite the empowerment of the female subject, masculinity is still defined by control over women. Consistent with Sharon Russell's (1984) observation that the witch in cinema is often a figure serving male control, the film reflects this discourse; however, by simultaneously centering Fikriye’s subjectification, the film creates a rupture in this paradigm.

From a feminist theoretical perspective, the film subverts the novel's patriarchal framework. In Gürpınar's work, Fikriye is a passive figure who learns events secondhand and

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

remains in the shadow of the *men's table*. The film, however, transforms Fikriye into an active subject. She cares for Binnaz's children, brings in the medium, opens the closed doors (both in the mansion and in Nefi's mind), and takes her place among the men at the center of the séance. The words of the medium Mesmer to Nefi, "You have a brave wife", confirm Fikriye's subjectification within the narrative. Furthermore, the fact that, unlike the novel, female servants are made to wait outside the door alongside men in the hypnosis scenes is noteworthy, demonstrating that women also reproduce the surveillance mechanisms of the patriarchal order. This shift signals a rupture in Mulvey's (1975) regime of gaze. It confirms Smelik's (1998) observation that the female subject assumes an oracular status through her power to see and demonstrate patriarchy.

The Witch both rationalizes the supernatural by internalizing it as the pathology of the male subject on an individual level and stages Fikriye's transformation into an active subject by transcending the patriarchal gaze. Written when the patriarchal order was deeply entrenched in Ottoman society, Gürpınar's novel satirizes superstitions and supernatural beliefs. However, although it concludes on a rational note, it ultimately legitimizes the woman's place within the patriarchal order. What is striking here is that the novel's author is male. Similarly, the director and screenwriter of the adaptation, Erman Bostan, is also male. Bostan, however, diverges by empowering Fikriye while exposing male weakness through the witch figure. Retaining the

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

novel's historical setting and characters, his free adaptation leans toward a feminist rewriting. That a male director reworks the male gaze in favor of the female subject renders the film especially significant. It also highlights the paradoxical yet productive space in which male authorship can contribute to feminist reinterpretations of patriarchal narratives, situating *The Witch* as a rare intervention in the horror genre of Turkish cinema.

Conclusion

This study examines the film *The Witch* (2024), a free adaptation of Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar's novel of the same name, through the lenses of trauma, repression, archetypal figures, the gaze, agency, and the female subject, analyzing its narrative and characters to reveal how the witch figure has been repositioned in Turkish cinema.

In the film, the witch figure is not merely an element of supernatural horror but a representation that intersects with individual psychology and gender relations, operating through boundary violation. Freud's theories of repression and trauma, Lacan's account of subject formation and symbolic order, and Jung's archetypal approach provide the psychoanalytic foundation of this analysis. Kristeva's conceptualization of the abject and Creed's theorization of the monstrous-feminine highlight the witch's nature as charged with fear and desire. In parallel, Mulvey and Smelik's discussions of gaze and agency, together with

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

Federici's feminist perspective on discipline and the control of women's labor, further illuminate the witch's relationship with gender, power, and historical memory.

Bostan, the film's director and screenwriter, offers a feminist interpretation in his reworking of Gürpınar's novel, and the differences between the two texts further reinforce the strength of this feminist reading. Gürpınar's novel dismantles superstition by asserting the superiority of reason and satirizing the mechanisms of social control in early-1900s Ottoman society in Istanbul. The film, however, reshapes this narrative, redefining the witch as an expression of male repressed trauma and a catalyst for the female subject's acquisition of agency. Without altering the novel's historical setting, the director approaches the characters from a twenty-first-century perspective. Whereas women in the novel remain overshadowed mainly by male authority, Fikriye assumes visual and bodily agency in the film, subverting the male gaze. In this way, the female subject becomes both seer and signifier, while the witch emerges not only as a symptom of male psychic division but also as a force field through which female agency is redefined. However, this empowerment is not uniformly extended to other characters. Female servants such as Gülendam or Salime remain trapped within patriarchal silence, and İrfan, the house steward, ultimately protects Nefi rather than the other household women. By leaving these dynamics unaltered, the film preserves elements of the novel's patriarchal order even as it foregrounds Fikriye's agency. This duality demonstrates how

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

psychoanalytic readings of trauma and repression can be productively expanded through feminist frameworks, revealing not only the fractures of male subjectivity but also the possibilities of female self-assertion.

Significantly, Bostan (as a male screenwriter and director) reworks a novel set during the decline of the Ottoman Empire, preserving its historical setting while reshaping the male and female characters through a contemporary feminist perspective. Despite its formal shortcomings, such as weak CGI and the rationalization of tension, the film invites a multilayered rethinking of the witch narrative by centering the female subject within the triangle of space, gaze, and desire. In this respect, *The Witch* provides a compelling counterexample to Russell's observation of the dominance of androcentric frameworks in serious witch films: while the film makes male traumas visible, it locates the possibility of resolution in the courage, resilience, and agency of the female subject. By linking locally specific Ottoman perceptions of the witch to a contemporary gender perspective, the film offers a distinctive and valuable case at the intersection of psychoanalytic and feminist theory, updating representations of female otherness, repression, and historical memory. In doing so, it highlights the transformative potential of the witch figure within national cinematic memory and opens new pathways for feminist debate.

Volume 14.1 (2026) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2026.864 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

This paper's contribution lies in repositioning the witch figure in Turkish cinema not merely as a folkloric or supernatural motif, but as a psychoanalytic and feminist construct of repression, trauma, and female agency. In doing so, it sheds light on the rare appearance of the witch in Turkish horror and the gendered dimensions of adaptation. As a case study, *The Witch* maps a shift in Turkish horror from external demonology to internal psychopolitical architecture. Methodologically, the study also demonstrates how combining narrative–character analysis with spatial thresholds can extend feminist-psychoanalytic readings in a locally grounded way.

REFERENCES

Akay, E. (Director). (2006). *Hacivat Karagöz neden öldürüldü?* [Killing in the Shadows] [Film]. İstisnai Filmler Reklamlar.

Altunay, E. (2020). *Kadim cadılık öğretisi Wicca* (7th ed.). Destek.

American Psychiatric Association. (2022). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed., text rev.; DSM-5-TR). American Psychiatric. https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425787

Arakon, A. (Director). (1949). *Çığlık* [Scream] [Film]. Atlas Film.

Aslan, M. (Director). (1970). *Tarkan: Gümüş eyer* [Tarkan: Silver saddle] [Film]. Acar Film.

Aslan, M. (Director). (1972). *Tarkan: Altın madalyon* [Tarkan: Gold medallion] [Film]. Acar Film.

Aycibin, Z. (2008). Osmanlı Devleti'nde cadılar üzerine bir değerlendirme. *OTAM Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi, 24*(24), 55–70. https://doi.org/10.1501/OTAM_0000000545

Bachner-Melman, R., & Lichtenberg, P. (2001). Freud's relevance to hypnosis: A reevaluation. *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis, 44*(1), 37–50. https://doi.org/10.1080/00029157.2001.10403454

Barry, P. (1995). *Beginning theory: An introduction to literary and cultural theory*. Manchester University Press.

Başaran, T. (Director). (1971). *Ayşecik ve sihirli cüceler rüyalar ülkesinde* [The Turkish wizard of Oz] [Film]. Hisar Film, Ören Film, Ses Film.

Berber, N., & Gülen, H. (2018). Tuhaf olana ve bilinmeyene korku: Avrupa'dan Osmanlı'ya cadılar. *Atlas Tarih*, 69–75.

Betz, H. D. (Ed.). (1986). *The Greek magical papyri in translation, including the demotic spells* (2nd ed.). University of Chicago Press.

Bever, E. (2008). *The realities of witchcraft and popular magic in early modern Europe: Culture, cognition, and everyday life*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Boag, S. (2006). Freudian repression, the common view, and pathological science. *Review of General Psychology, 10*(1), 74–86. https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.10.1.74

Bordwell, D. (1985). *Narration in the fiction film*. University of Wisconsin Press.

Bostan, E. (Director). (2024). *Cadı* [The Witch] [Film]. Wow Studios.

Bostan, E. (n.d.). *The witch | Feature film*. Retrieved July 14, 2025, from https://www.ermanbostan.com/witch

Burns, W. E. (2003). *Witch hunts in Europe and America: An encyclopedia*. Greenwood.

Chatman, S. (1978). *Story and discourse: Narrative structure in fiction and film*. Cornell University Press.

Christensen, B. (Director). (1922). *Häxan* [Film]. Aljosha Production Company, SF-Produktion.

Clair, R. (Director). (1942). *I married a witch* [Film]. Paramount Pictures, United Artists.

Creed, B. (1993). *The monstrous-feminine: Film, feminism, psychoanalysis*. Routledge.

Davy, B. J. (2006). *Introduction to pagan studies*. AltaMira.

De Palma, B. (Director). (1976). *Carrie* [Film]. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Redbank Films.

De Lauretis, T. (1987). *Technologies of gender: Essays on theory, film, and fiction*. Indiana University Press.

Doğan, C. (2013). Osmanlı Devleti'nde cadı avı var mıydı? (Karşılaştırmalı bir inceleme). *Journal of History Culture and Art Research, 2*(1), 218–240. https://doi.org/10.7596/taksad.v2i1.169

Eggers, R. (Director). (2015). *The witch* [Film]. RT Features, Rooks Nest Entertainment, Parts & Labor.

Engelbrecht, J. (2021). Magical mothers: The representation of witches and motherhood in contemporary fantasy cinema. *Communicatio*, *47*(1), 20–41. https://doi.org/10.1080/02500167.2021.1876122

Erksan, M. (Director). (1974). *Şeytan* [The Turkish exorcist] [Film]. Saner Film.

Ertan, Ö. (2023). *Hekate bize ne mesaj veriyor?* Destek.

Federici, S. (2009). *Caliban and the witch: Women, the body and primitive accumulation* (3rd ed.). Autonomedia.

Fleming, V. (Director). (1939). *The wizard of Oz* [Film]. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

Fletcher, J. (2013). *Freud and the scene of trauma*. Fordham University Press.

Freud, S. (1914). *Psychopathology of everyday life* (English ed.). The Macmillan Company.

Freud, S. (1933). *New introductory lectures on psycho-analysis* (Vol. XXII). Hogarth. Internet Archive edition.

Freud, S. (1939). *Moses and monotheism* (K. Jones, Trans.). Hogarth.

Friedkin, W. (Director). (1973). *The exorcist* [Film]. Warner Bros., Hoya Productions.

Germaine Buckley, C. (2019). Witches, "bitches" or feminist trailblazers? The witch in folk horror cinema. *Revenant: Creative and Critical Studies of the Supernatural*, (4), 22-42.

Greene, H. (2021). *Lights, camera, witchcraft: A critical history of witches in American film and television*. Llewellyn Worldwide.

Göreç, E. (Director). (1970). *Pamuk prenses ve 7 cüceler* [Snow White and the seven dwarfs] [Film]. Hisar Film.

Göreç, E. (Director). (1975). *Tatlı cadının maceraları* [Film]. Birlik Film.

Gürpınar, H. R. (2021). *Cadı*. TDK Yayınları. (Original work published 1912)

Harmes, M. K. (2013). The seventeenth century on film: Patriarchy, magistracy, and witchcraft in British horror films, 1968-1971. *Canadian Journal of Film Studies*, *22*(2), 64-80.

Harper, D. (2013). *Early Chinese medical literature: The Mawangdui medical manuscripts*. Routledge.

Heller-Nicholas, A. (2024). *The cinema coven: Witches, witchcraft and women's filmmaking*. McFarland.

hooks, b. (1992). The oppositional gaze. In *Black looks: Race and representation* (pp. 115–132). South End.

IMDb. (n.d.). *Tatli Cadi'nin Maceralari*. Retrieved August 23, 2025, from https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0392829/

Jensen, G. F. (2006). *The path of the devil*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Jung, C. G. (2003). *Four archetypes: Mother, rebirth, spirit, trickster* (R. F. C. Hull, Trans.). Routledge.

Karaküçük, S. A. (2010). "Korkunun kadınları": Cadılar ve cadıcılık. *Sosyoloji Araştırmaları Dergisi, 13*(2), 38–64.

Kayhan, V. (Director). (1975). *Tatlı cadı* [Film]. Birlik Yapım.

Kendall, L. (2009). *Shamans, nostalgias, and the IMF: South Korean popular religion in motion*. University of Hawaii Press.

Koçak, B. (2012). Doğu-Batı arasında Türk sineması: Korku filmleri üzerine bir değerlendirme. *İstanbul Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Dergisi, 26*, 93–104. https://doi.org/10.17064/iüifhd.26680

Koçer, Z. (2019). The monstrous-feminine and masculinity as abjection in Turkish horror cinema: An analysis of *Haunted* (*Musallat*, Alper Mestçi, 2007). In S. Holland, R. Shail, & S. Gerrard (Eds.), *Gender and contemporary horror in film*. Emerald. https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-78769-897-020191011

Korkmaz, M. (2012). *Zerdüşt dini İran mitolojisi*. Kum Saati.

Kristeva, J. (1982). *Powers of horror: An essay on abjection* (L. S. Roudiez, Trans.). Columbia University Press. (Original work published 1980)

Lacan, J. (2006). *Écrits* (B. Fink, Trans.). W. W. Norton & Company. (Original work published 1966)

Laplanche, J. (2005). *Essays on otherness*. Routledge. (Original work published 1999)

Laplanche, J., & Pontalis, J.-B. (1973). *The language of psychoanalysis*. The Hogarth & Institute of Psycho-Analysis.

Levine, H. B. (2014). Psychoanalysis and trauma. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry, 34*(3), 214–224. https://doi.org/10.1080/07351690.2014.889475

Mestçi, A. (Director). (2014–2025). *Siccin* [Sijjin] [Film series]. Muhteşem Film.

Muhtar, M. (Director). (1953). *Drakula İstanbul'da* [Dracula in Istanbul] [Film]. And Film.

Mulvey, L. (1975). Visual pleasure and narrative cinema. *Screen, 16*(3), 6–18. https://doi.org/10.1093/screen/16.3.6

Murray, M. (1995). *Law of the Father? Patriarchy in the transition from feudalism to capitalism*. Routledge.

Nahya, Z. N. (2011). İmgeler ve ötekileştirme: Cadılar, yerliler, Avrupalılar. *Atılım Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, 1*(1), 27–38.

Needham, R. (1978). *Primordial characters*. University Press of Virginia.

Oğuz, O. (Director). (2004). *Büyü* [Dark spells] [Film]. UFP.

Oxford University Press. (n.d.). *Witch, n.* In *OED Online*. Retrieved August 9, 2025, from https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/2272358375

Ögel, B. (1995). *Türk mitolojisi II*. Türk Tarih Kurumu.

Özdemir, B. G. (2019). Dabbe Zehr-i Cin filminin Türk halk bilimiyle bağlantılılığının Charles Sanders Peirce'ın göstergebilim kuramıyla incelenmesi. *Milli Folklor, 16*(124), 160–174.

Özçelik, C. Ö. (Director). (2019-2022). *Cadı üçlemesi serisi* [Witch Trilogy] [Film]. Filmada.

Özkaracalar, K. (2006). *Geceyarısı filmleri*. 1 Kitap.

Öztürk Bitik, B. (2011). Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi'nde cadı, obur, büyücü anlatıları ve kurgudaki işlevleri. *Millî Folklor, 23*(92), 64-71. Retrieved August 12, 2025, from https://repository.bilkent.edu.tr/server/api/core/bitstreams/8669a823-2cb8-4e03-a313-50e3de928799/content

Petrie, D. (Director). (1980). *Resurrection* [Film]. Universal Pictures.

Polanski, R. (Director). (1968). *Rosemary's baby* [Film]. Paramount Pictures, William Castle Enterprises.

Pufong, M. G. (2023, August 10). McCarthyism. *The First Amendment Encyclopedia*. Middle Tennessee State University. Retrieved August 10, 2025, from https://firstamendment.mtsu.edu/article/mccarthyism/

Quine, R. (Director). (1958). *Bell, book and candle* [Film]. Columbia Pictures, Phoenix Pictures.

Qur'an. (n.d.). Surah al-Baqara (2:102–103). Retrieved August 10, 2025, from https://quran.com/al-baqarah/102-103

Russell, S. (1984). The witch in film: Myth and reality. In B. K. Grant (Ed.), *Planks of reason: Essays on the horror film* (pp. 113–125). Scarecrow.

Sariyannis, M. (2013). Of Ottoman ghosts, vampires and sorcerers: An old discussion disinterred. *Archivum Ottomanicum, 30*, 195–220. Retrieved August 15, 2025, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329399924

Saydam, N. (Director). (1975). *Minik cadı* [Film]. Acar Film.

Smelik, A. (1998). *And the mirror cracked: Feminist cinema and film theory*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Smith, M. (2022). *Engaging characters: Fiction, emotion, and the cinema*. Oxford University Press. (Original work published 1995)

Türk Dil Kurumu. (n.d.). *Cadı*. In *Türk Dil Kurumu sözlükleri*. Retrieved September 20, 2025, from https://sozluk.gov.tr/

Ünal, Ü. (Director). (2010). *Ses* [The voice] [Film]. Bir Film.

Vidler, A. (1992). *The architectural uncanny: Essays in the modern unhomely*. MIT.

Yaltırık, M. B. (2013). Türk Kültüründe Hortlak-Cadı İnanışları. *Journal of History School (JOHS), 16*, 187–232. https://doi.org/10.14225/Joh346