

“Backdrop of *Kurban Bayrami* (2008)”
Horror Cinema in the Republic of Turkey
By Can Evrenol

Looking back at my recently completed short film *Kurban Bayrami* (2008), I see a strong stand. Amid all the political chaos in Turkey, shooting an earnest short horror film has been an interesting experience for me. As in my previous two short films, I based my project very much on improvisation both on set and during post-production. I tried to let the content take a path of its own. Eventually, in a country where there's very little worth mentioning about its horror cinema, I believe the film stands unique and brave despite its flaws. (As much as I hate the way it sounds when a filmmaker or an artist calls its own work brave, I believe it is the appropriate thing to say here in terms of this essay's context)

This essay aims to investigate the defective and virtually nonexistent cinema of horror fiction in Turkey, eventually entering into direct dialogue with the short horror film *Kurban Bayrami*. Due to its niche content, the sources for this essay have been extremely limited. I feel obliged to thank Giovanni Scognamillo, Metin Demirhan and the Onar Films from the bottom of my heart for shedding light onto the Turkish Fantastic Cinema of the 70's; and to Serdar Kokceoglu for his inexhaustible efforts to encourage horror fiction in Turkey.

A Brief Introduction to Turkish Cinema

“Turkish cinema was a vast unknown and lost territory, only accessible to some specialised scholars or film historians. Then starting from the 80's and thanks, mainly, to the works of director Yilmaz Guney it gained world wide recognition and started participating in international film festivals collecting awards and recognitions. Actually the Turkish cinema has gained a place in its own right among Europe's national cinemas expanding its boundaries and getting attention through the works and achievements of a brand new generation of talented cinematographers. Still there are a lot of things to be discovered in its 85 years old history.”

As cinema came to Turkey as early as 1890's, during the last years of Ottoman Empire, it shared the similar fate as other nations' cinemas around the world where “film theatres rarely ever screened any locally produced films and the majority of the programs consisted of films of the stronger western film industries, especially those of the USA, France, Italy and Germany. This would rapidly change after World War II. A total of 49 films produced in 1952 meant that within a year, more films had been produced than the Turkish industry could produce during all the previous years. During the 60s, Turkey became the fifth biggest film producer world wide and annual film production reached the 300 film benchmark just at the beginning of the 70s. Compared with the histories of other national cinemas, the achievements of the Turkish film industry after 1950 are still remarkable.”

Turkish cinema has grown into serious critical acclaim and international attention due to several auteur films in the last decade. Various awards and nominations (as well as several best film awards) in Cannes, Berlin and European Film Awards in the last 10 years elevated Turkish Cinema to a new level. This year in London, Fatih Akin's *Edge of Heaven* (2007) was the main

feature at Curzon Theatres, with its posters on all main tube stations; Nuri Bilge Ceylan's *Uzak* (2002) is on the top row under East European classics section in HMV; and yet every year there's a Turkish film in the official selection of Cannes Film Festival.

However, none of these internationally acclaimed films in the last 10 years share any fantastic components, let alone horror. Well, before going into the reasons of that, one has to remember the 70's Turkish Fantastic Cinema which was far from international acclaim and full of masked heroes, medieval adventures, action, gore, sadism and eroticism, delivering one of the craziest chapters in world weird cinema until its suicide and the inevitable demise with the rise of video and private TV channels.

Turkish Fantastic Cinema of the 70's

“Turkish Popular Cinema was created in a kind of gold rush in the mid 1960's. A motley crew of businessmen, crooks and crazy visionaries suddenly discovered a huge rural audience, hungry for the vivid dreams that only cinema could provide. The country's film output leapt almost overnight from a handful of dry melodramas to as many as 300 films in a year. Action, sex, violence, fantasy... these were the ingredients of Turkish Pop Cinema. Turkish Pop Cinema of the 1960's and 1970's was like a boy zone adventure serial come to life but aimed at adults”

Totally ripping off the stories from the major Hollywood productions, Turkish Fantastic Cinema began with fairy tales like Snow White and the Seven Dwarves, Cinderella, Aladdin, Pink Panther and most successfully The Wizard of Oz. Actually calling them rip-offs is not accurate. They were mere adaptations with some Turkish motives thrown in. The later films however, Westerns, James Bond films, Exorcist, E.T., Dracula, Spiderman, Supermen, Invisible Man, Rambo, Flash Gordon, Mexican wrestler El Santo, Italian villain Killing and many others were unprecedented examples of copyright violation. It will be pointless to go into detail with all these films since nearly all of them fall under “trash” category, not even “B” movies. But nevertheless they do deserve respect for what they are; unique gems of world weird cinema mirroring crude fantasies of a generation of Turks. The quantity of these films is surprising for even the gurus of cult cinema. Unimaginable plots featuring Captain America and El Santo teaming up to battle an evil Spiderman is unlikely to be found elsewhere but here in the Turkish Fantastic Cinema. Even historic films and westerns are considered part of Turkish Fantastic Cinema. The fact that it was a western or it was about a Turkish folk hero from 1500's didn't make any difference. They were all about the same fighting choreography, same actors, same action and same madness. Looking for a sense in the plot would often be a waste of time.

These films deserve serious attention as social cases, rather than artworks. Bizarre works, oddities, social freak shows... Especially *Turkish Star Trek* (1973) and *Turkish Star Wars* (1982), shamelessly stealing footage from the original films, hold an unparalleled cult status among the international audiences.

Early Turkish Horror Attempts

But among all this madness, even at this time of atrocious filmmaking, why didn't Turkey produce its own horror genre? Such a profitable genre in many parts of the world, horror, sadly failed to establish a genre of its own in Turkish Cinema. Even Turkish Fantastic Cinema experts Giovanni Scognomillo and Metin Demirhan find it difficult to address the reasons behind this issue. Sure there were elements of horror and gore in many of these fantastic films –

especially in the form of torturing scarcely dressed women as an influence of the Italian underground cinema – but throughout this period only 4 films qualify as horror cinema. And it wouldn't be inaccurate to say that none of these films were successful neither in the eyes of the critics nor in the box office. These films are *Ciglik* (1947), *Dracula Istanbul'da* (1953), *Dead Don't Talk (Oluler Konusamaz Ki)* (1970) and *Seytan* (1974)

Ciglik, which translates as 'scream', is a first film by Aydin Arakon. Arakon deserves credit for tackling a genre which has never before experimented in his country. Relying on atmosphere rather than plot, *Ciglik* is the story of girl who has been trapped by his uncle in a house for legacy matters. A doctor tries to save the girl, the doctor tries to kill him but instead, the girl gets killed at the end. A grim ending... fair enough. But the 1947 film fails to scare or excite with its single interior setting.

A few years later Turgut Demirdag, a Turkish filmmaker who studied in the US and worked four years in Paramount sets to shoot *Dracula Istanbul'da (Dracula in Istanbul)*. Being a relatively high-budget production, *Dracula Istanbul'da's* crew claim they have never seen Bela Lugosi's *Dracula* (1931) prior to shooting the film. Demirdag rather bases his film on Stocker's novel. In the original novel, Dracula fights against the Turks (The Ottomans). Vlad infamously impales the Turks vertically on spikes. Since 'Vlad the Impaler' is a very well known, notorious figure in the Turkish history, Demirdag's film fits very well in Turkish Cinema and it is widely regarded as the first Turkish horror film. The art direction stands out as its most respectable feature. The atmosphere, at times, reaches to the level of Hollywood's *Dracula*. The film also features scenes of eroticism with the lead actress Annie Ball which is a precious touch. However, once again the film fails to scare the audiences, despite its gracious acting and art direction. Being a famous film critic of its day, Sezai Solelli, finds the film "mediocre at best and complains about the plot holes and the film's inability to scare"

Dracula Istanbul'da was not exported but it did gain major international recognition in later years as the first sound film to depict Dracula with fangs!

It took nearly two decades for Turkish cinema to come up with another gothic horror film in 1970; *Dead Don't Talk (Oluler Konusamaz ki)*. By that time in the world cinema, the fundamentals of horror genre was set. "Hammer studios in England, AIP in America, and Mario Bava and his colleagues in Italy had been cranking out a steady stream of gothic horrors for years. The distinguishing characteristic of *Dead Don't Talk* lies more in tone. While Italian filmmakers took familiar genres and ramped up the violence and sleaze at the expense of characterization and plot structure, Turkish filmmakers took that model to the next level, stripping out even the bare minimum of character and turning the plot entirely into a vehicle to get from scene to scene. Moreover, while Italian films were often visually stunning and innovative, the Turks, without a highly professional core of technicians and designers to draw on, relied almost entirely on sheer energy and bravado.

"Character development was unheard of, complicated plots were dropped. In *The Dead Don't Talk*, plot and characterization weren't just minimized; they were surgically removed as by a lobotomy. All the tropes of gothic horror are here – horse-drawn carriages, foggy nights, ominous mansions, full-figured ladies in flowing nightgowns, and superhuman creatures from beyond the grave. However, director Yalinkilic flat-out removes all of the 'getting to know the characters' scenes. Why does Melih carry a gun? Who knows. Yalinkilic fills out the empty space with some nice visuals and laughing, lots of laughing. According to actor Akkaya, this low-budget 'lost' film probably did not even make it into the large Istanbul market, but was shot

solely for regional distribution. Akkaya himself plays only a limited role, and took the part only because it was early in his career. Certainly the film was never intended for foreign distribution. Unfortunately, the gothic mode never caught on in Turkey, and *The Dead Don't Talk* disappeared until its recent rediscovery” by Onar Films.

The only other film from the era is *Seytan*, from 1974, which is a really funny story. The original film, *The Exorcist* (1973) reached Turkish cinemas in 1980! So as the *The Exorcist* was storming the western audiences in 1974, producer/director Hulki Saner comes up with the bright idea of shooting a Turkish adaptation of *The Exorcist*. “The idea was to capitalise on the worldwide success of the film before it reached the Turkish cinemas. Having Metin Erksan (director of *Susuz Yaz* - 1964 Golden Bear Best Film) as the director, the project was considered as a guaranteed winner in the box office... Erksan travels to London, watches *The Exorcist*, makes notes of it.”

The result was a travesty of the original film. *Seytan* was literally marketed as ‘the global-box-office-hit masterpiece’ and ‘the film that created a worldwide frenzy’. What did these words meant to the Turkish audiences is debatable (Obviously a fraction of the public somehow thought this was identical to the film that rocked the world – or even maybe this film was actually that film!)

The major conflict of the film, the clash between metaphysics and religion was failed to be adapted to *Seytan*. The two priests in *The Exorcist* were adapted as a psychologist and an ‘Islam expert’ which made it impossible for *Seytan* to have a similar conflict in its core. The film was a flop in the box office and soon forgotten... only to be resurfaced just a few years ago by late night TV shows where clips of it were screened as a joke to amuse and entertain new generation of Turkish teenagers.

“By the late 1970’s the boom was bust. TV has taken over. The money men moved on to pastures new. The films were forgotten, most were destroyed and the rest left to gather dust. They existed only as memories in the minds of people who had seen them as children.” Turkish cinema in the 80’s and early 90’s had come to a halt.

***Serpent’s Tale* (1993)**

Somewhere between the death of the Turkish Fantastic Cinema of the 70’s and the rise of the Turkish Cinema in the 2000’s, lies an isolated chapter about a single gem of a film; *Karanlik Sular* (*Serpent’s Tale*). It is interesting that this sort of cinema was being made in Turkey and virtually nobody knows about it. It is unlike any other film featured here in this essay.

“Amongst the people dwelling in this movie are a mother whose dead son shows himself to an American man (whose business in Turkey looks a bit shady), an eight-year-old girl who may be the incarnation of a 800-year-old Byzantine princess and/or a vampire, a French translator and the mysterious ‘they’. Sounds odd enough? Well, *Karanlik Sular* is odd enough to make you scratch your head several times. Like other movies in similar genres, *Karanlik Sular* tries its best to keep you as confused as possible. Is the son dead or not? Is the little girl a vampire or is it an act? Is the mother hallucinating or is she being plagued by the netherworld? Questions, questions, questions... and you may have to sit through the entire 82 minutes before some of your questions will be answered. That's right: some, not all. Mondo Macabro described the movie as "an Argento script directed by Alain Robbe-Grillet". Now it may just be a bit too

much praise for the movie. It is not really the sort of movie that can stomach any expectations, let alone high. It works best if you start the movie with an open mind and allow yourself to be taken by surprise. In fact, had it been made twenty years earlier, *Karanlık Sular* would've been a cult classic nowadays. Now it's just an underrated gothic horror movie born in Turkey in the wrong era.”

Serpent's Tale is the debut film of Kutlug Ataman, who was born in Istanbul, studied film in Paris and Los Angeles. Being one of the leading names in the Turkish gay liberation movement, Ataman is also highly acclaimed for his video-installations. His film *Serpent's Tale* falls under the fantastic category more than horror. However the opening credits deliver an attitude, taking aim at the audience in a direct manner, which is rarely matched by any other horror film. If it had been served the respect it deserved in the early years, it could have been a major influence on upcoming Turkish filmmakers and ultimately contribute to the initiation of the genre.

The reason for the film being virtually unknown is a mystery paralleled only by its story. For a movie that isn't even 15 years old, it is a bit of a shame that the original negatives aren't available anymore. But then again it fits perfectly considering its opening credits.

Blows to the dead

“Since 1995 the situation in Turkish cinema has improved. After the year 2000, annual ticket sales reached the 20 millions and since 1995, the number of theatres continuously increased to an approximately 500 theatres country-wide. Now, Turkish films attract millions of spectators and top the blockbuster-lists, often surpassing foreign films in terms of ticket sales.”

In year 2004, after almost a quarter of a century, Turkish cinema produced two unfortunate so-called horror films; *Okul (School)* (2004) and *Buyu (Magic)* (2004). Taylan Brothers are generally credited as the initiators of a new wave of Turkish horror films during the second half of the decade with their horror/comedy flick *Okul*. Unfortunately *Okul* strikes as a project which was set to be a horror film, but could not, ultimately transforming itself into a comedy. The film became a joke amongst the teenagers all over the nation, reinforcing the fact that making a Turkish horror film is equal to being ridiculous. Considering the film was marketed as the first Turkish horror film, with two teenagers looking up the skirt of a female teacher with gorgeous legs as its poster-art, one can say the film stabbed the Turkish horror enthusiasts on the back.

However, Taylan Brothers were creators of a TV series titled *Sir Odasi* (1999) which is worthy of mentioning here. Although the project was just a rip-off of the original *X Files* (1993) and could only survive a few episodes, it did deliver minor creeps (at least to younger generations) and achieved a minor cult status. Moreover, Taylan Brothers deserve much credit for their later work, *Kucuk Kiyamet (The Little Apocalypse)* (2006) which is probably the finest piece of Turkish Fantastic cinema.

Orhan Oguz's *Buyu* is probably the weakest film of this so-called new wave, as one can guess looking at its dull title. The film creates a genuine Turkish village atmosphere, but uncommitted acting, terribly fake dialogs and its extremely slow paste make the film unwatchable, once again alienating the audiences from the concept of an actual Turkish horror film. The humiliating effect of *Okul* and *Buyu* remained vivid for the next two years. It was so humiliating how people were referring to the idea of making a Turkish horror film, personally, I refused to watch any other Turkish horror flicks until last year. At a period where realist Turkish cinema was excelling, these two films had landed a fatal blow to the already dead Turkish Fantastic Cinema.

Quoting from Freud, on his article 'The Uncanny' at The Imago, "The uncanny is undoubtedly related to what is frightening – to what arouses dread and horror; equally certainly, too, the word is not always used in a clearly definable sense, so that it tends to coincide with what excites fear in general. Yet we may expect that a special core of feeling is present which justifies the use of a special conceptual term. One is curious to know what this common core is which allows us to distinguish as uncanny certain things which lie within the field of what is frightening." That was exactly what *Okul* and *Buyu* films were lacking. They were not frightening. Moreover, they were not brave enough to deliver what arouses dread and horror! They were mere products to attract audiences by using the brand 'horror' (which has always been the enemy of universal horror literature).

Finally, birth of a genre?

Suddenly in the second half of the decade, arrived *Gen* (2006), *Gomeda* (2007) *Araf* (*Abortion*) (2006), *Dabbe* (2006), *Musallat* (*Haunted*) (2007) and *Semum* (2008). These films were somewhat different. Although they were all weak and generally failed to impress the critics and audiences alike, they did touch the hearts of a few. If it wasn't for the negative effect of *Okul* and *Buyu*, these films made may have been embraced by wider audiences in Turkey.

Gen was the first medium budget horror film for Turkish standards, since *Drakula Istanbul'da*. The budget provided a considerably strong atmosphere for the film. The 22 year old director Togan Gokbakar had actually achieved the look of a horror picture. However the dialogues and the acting were poor and the plot was ripped off from an H.P. Lovecraft story. Failing to be authentic, still, the film did manage to be considered scary by some. Unfortunately, Gokbakar turned out to be a good businessman rather than a filmmaker and went on to direct the highest grossing Turkish film of all times in 2008; an ultra-ridiculous, ultimately shallow, abject of a comedy. But considering his business skills and early passion, Gokbakar still stands as a promising nominee for horror in the near future.

Gomeda was an interesting film which was able to bring something new to the table with its art direction, accompanied by its ever boring dialogues. Tolga Tan Demirci, being highly influenced by Jodorowsky, delivers a series of interesting short films in *Gomeda* but fails to be unformulaic. The film, being very keen on staying away from cheap scares and delivering a surreal atmosphere, made it to the 25th Brussels International Fantastic Film Festival and not surprisingly failed like a rock at the Turkish box office.

Araf, with a plot involving a religious curse about late abortion, too, failed to find a receptive audience. The film was weak in many aspects but one dream sequence where the girl walks in a Turkish graveyard, dragging a foetus by its umbilical chord was definitely memorable.

Musallat managed to be the most financially successful Turkish horror film, thanks to its trailer reminding Cunningham's "Aphex Twin – Come to Daddy". Alper Mestci does a great job of creating a couple of impressive exorcism scenes, although it's nowhere near Cunningham. Very much like *Gen*, *Musallat*'s strongest element is its atmosphere – but this time with an authentic subject. However, *Musallat*, too, falls at the hands of its plot holes and fails to reach an international level in horror literature.

The best film of this wave is undoubtedly Taylan Brothers' most recent film, *Kucuk Kiyamet* (*The Little Apocalypse*). It delivers a story about death, using the 1999 Izmit Earthquake as its backdrop. The film is not a very assertive, which is good. And it certainly does qualify as horror. It is a quite solid, dark, low budget film with good acting (Basak Koklukaya, Ilker Aksum) and a

good twist. The character that is delivered by Ilker Aksum is the high point of the film. Further explanation of the character would be a spoiler but it is needed to be stated that Ilker Aksum's character makes the film a very good one. Also, the long-shot scene at the final of the film is glorious. Taylan brothers prove that they are very promising now indeed and certainly redeem themselves for the sins of their earlier work.

Delirious Cinema of Hasan Karacadag

Hasan Karacadag, on the other hand, may be the most esteemed entry in Turkish horror cinema with his two crazy films; *Dabbe* (2006) and *Semum* (2008). When one researches about Hasan Karacadag, the ultimate fact about him is that he has travelled to Japan to study film and shot and some short features there. It's almost as if Karacadag did not exist before travelling to Japan. Upon returning to Turkey, heavily influenced by J-horror, he writes and directs *Dabbe*, a supernatural story having its roots in Islam mythology, about a series of suicide cases related to a virus spreading through the internet which builds-up to an actual apocalypse with demons from hell in the finale! Beat that. His films are over-the-top in terms of content compared to anything Turkey has ever come close to producing in the name of horror. They are like CGI Lucio Fulci or Mario Bava films set in contemporary Turkey (minus the ultra gore). Passionate Karacadag doesn't seem to care much about the unconvincing CGI monsters, the amateur make-ups, half-wit plots and the poor dialogue. He is the only filmmaker you can encounter from Turkey who would not be ashamed of being a b-movie director in the name of amusing his audience.

Karacadag chooses a small town for its setting in *Dabbe*. It is not Istanbul or another major city in Turkey. This aspect wins the film a considerable credit. Personally I would not appreciate the absurdity of the film if it was set in New York or London, or even Istanbul. It feels authentic and interesting and real as in it would be impossible for Karacadag to reach that level of reality in another setting.

The cardinal turn-off of the film is the 388@0... The evil spreading through the internet appears as 388@0 on the monitors of the victims with digital fonts. Even a six year old can figure out that this reads 'DaBBE' -the title of the film- when it's spelled backwards with digital fonts. The film is trying to build up a tension on this, slowly revealing this truth over a period of nearly 45 minutes - which becomes frustrating and laughable. Nevertheless, with its plot owing much to the Japanese animation TV series *Serial Experiments: Lain* (1998), *Dabbe* stands out as the only Turkish film to create a couple of scary and disturbing scenes (mainly relying on the sound effects).

Being mauled to the ground by film critics with his first film, Karacadag loses nothing from his self-confidence with his next film *Semum*, again with an Islamic theme. *Semum* is like a typical *Exorcist* clone, only to go mad towards the end with a CGI creature from hell that can only be described as the 'Eddie' from Iron Maiden. (The lead actor of *Semum* was hugely disappointed after seeing the CGI effects and declared that the film turned out to be a cartoon.) Once again, *Semum* delivers the goods and the defects that *Dabbe* did. I don't know if I am the only one who is enjoying the presence of Karacadag's low-art cinema on a literary level but until a solid horror picture hits the Turkish cinema, I think I will stick with the brave and preposterous *Dabbe* and *Semum* as my favourite horror flicks from Turkey.

***Kurban Bayrami* (2008)**

Coming back to the 'brave', one can imagine the main problem with the inexistence of a serious Turkish horror film can be traced back to the freedom of speech, influence of Islam and Turkish society codes. "The attraction of horror can be understood in essentially three ways: (1) as the counter phobia or the satisfaction of overcoming objects of fear; (2) as 'the return of the repressed' or the compulsive projection of objects of sublimated desire; and (3) as part of a more complicated rite of passage from onanism to reproductive sexuality." *Kurban Bayrami* was the platform for me to create and play around these very objects, fears and satisfactions.

The whole idea began with a scene I had in mind for quite some time. I imagine a family of three; mother, father and the child are sitting at a dinner table. Everything is as casual as possible. Suddenly a man breaks into their house and attacks the family with no obvious explanation or reason. This was it; simple, fast, brutal and all the reason for it is not delivered. The fact that this kind of content in cinema is very rare, if not in-existent in Turkey, encouraged me all the more to make a short film about this. I always imagined the killer as two dimensional as possible. I didn't want him to show any signs of humanity, if you will, or any emotions to justify and explore his terrible action. It is an idea I had already explored in my previous short film, *Sandik - The Chest (2007)*; the idea of this reasonless, harsh and grim fate being delivered to a regular family (almost divinely).

What lies beneath this idea is probably my own biggest fear in life. We live day by day, trying to figure out how to survive and how to motivate ourselves in this world, without ever knowing the reason of our existence, with the burden of our awareness that any time, any kind of most terrible ill fate can come upon us.

On December 2007, I won the third place award in Plato Film School's short film festival with *Sandik - The Chest* and the school offered to financially help me with my next short film. Having three weeks to return to London for my education, I gave a thought about shooting a short film in this short time span. Soon the idea of titling my film after a religious festival, *Kurban Bayrami* came about (probably much owed to the faux trailer of Eli Roth, *Thanksgiving*). I pictured this scene where a severed sheep heads falls on to the dinner table of this family. Suddenly it was a green light in my head and I knew this project would find a satisfying path to itself.

The family is the smallest core of the social life. That's why an attack on family is like an attack to the heart of all society. As I finished the rough cut, I realised *Kurban Bayrami* was trying to show them sights which would most upset them. Following this essence, I designed the opening credits to give the audience a grim welcome to Turkey, which further reinforced a coherent subtext.

It is very significant that *Kurban Bayrami* was shot during YouTube was banned by Turkish government. YouTube is a symbol of the new social status in the world. YouTube was the main reason why Time magazine has chosen 'you' as the man of the year in 2006. The choice highlights the rise in the sharing of online content, the importance of the emerging online community and its democratizing effect on global media. Being a tough country, Turkey often falls short when it comes to freedom of speech. This latest temporary but recursive government bans on YouTube and Google Groups are sad examples of it.

Publish or Perish

A short film which was banned by TRT (the government channel which was scheduled to screen the film) was Serdar Kokceoglu's *Artik, Eksik* (2004). Based on a short comic strip by Kenan Yerar, the film is very raw and amateur but manages to capture the fantastic atmosphere

of *Yarar* and shocks with its surprising ending. Kokceoglu himself has long been a believer in the revival of the Turkish Fantastic Cinema through short films, amid the ill-organised short film festivals in the country. Kokceoglu, in his articles, has several times referred to a highly impressionistic, experimental and surreal short film by Ahmet Ulucay; *Exorcise* (2000) as the most authentic and artistic piece of horror cinema coming from Turkey. Serdar Kokceoglu must have a point, as there is a noticeable rise in the amount of interesting short films coming from Turkey, dealing with the fantastic and horror.

As Turkish cinema continues to produce good films, I believe, soon, a good Turkish horror film will strike. One can say the Republic of Turkey is on the crossroads in many aspects as a nation. With war just next door, being in the middle of east-west polarization and countless brutal internal and external problems, Turkey at times feels like a horror film. The government ban on the Internet is an actual, non-fiction piece of horror. One can not overcome its objects of fear and embrace the return of the repressed in an environment where his communication is crippled. It is a case of 'publish or perish'...

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