The Water Myth in Cinema: From the Fountain of Youth to the Flood – the Hero's Journey in Films

Murat Şahin

Ondokuz Mayıs University. Samsun, Turkey. Email: murat.sahin2[at]omu.edu.tr

Abstract

This study aims to explore the portrayal of the Fountain of Youth and the myth of the Flood in movies. Firstly, the meaning of the water myth is explained. Then, the focus shifts to how the myth of the Fountain of Youth and the Flood are depicted in different mythologies. The study utilizes qualitative method and thematic content analysis, selecting six films through purposive sampling. The analysis incorporates Joseph Campbell's Monomyth theory and Klaus Koch's work on the eight features of the apocalypse. The study reveals how these myths are reproduced through sub-themes identified within the main themes of the Fountain of Youth and the Flood. The results indicate that films present the myth of the Fountain of Youth in various forms. Heroes have different motivations for seeking the Fountain of Youth and encounter various obstacles. Characters who reach the Fountain of Youth undergo significant positive transformations. In flood narratives depicted in movies, the cause of the flood and the awareness of it differ from film to film. Furthermore, other movie findings illustrate who boarded the ship or vehicle to escape the flood and who faced punishment.

Keywords

Mythology; Water Myth; Fountain of Youth; Flood; Monomyth; Apocalypse; Cinema

Миф о воде в кино: от фонтана молодости до потопа — Путешествие героя в фильмах

Шахин Мурат

Университет Ондокуз Майис. Самсун, Турция. Email: murat.sahin2[at]omu.edu.tr

Аннотация

Цель данного исследования – изучить образы фонтана молодости и мифа о потопе в кино. Сначала объясняется значение мифа о воде. Затем внимание переключается на то, как миф о фонтане молодости и потопе изображается в различных мифологиях. В исследовании используются качественные методы и тематический контент-анализ, шесть фильмов отобраны путем целенаправленной выборки. В анализе использована теория мономифов Джозефа Кэмпбелла и работа Клауса Коха о восьми признаках апокалипсиса. Исследование показывает, как эти мифы воспроизводятся через подтемы, определенные в рамках основных тем фонтана молодости и потопа. Результаты показывают, что в фильмах миф о фонтане молодости представлен в различных формах. Герои имеют различные мотивы для поиска фонтана молодости и встречают на своем пути различные препятствия. Персонажи, достигшие фонтана молодости, претерпевают значительные позитивные трансформации. В повествованиях о наводнениях, показанных в фильмах, причина наводнения и осознание ее в разных фильмах различные. Кроме того, другие факты из фильмов показывают, кому удалось сесть на корабль или транспортное средство, чтобы спастись от наводнения, а кого постигло наказание.

Ключевые слова

мифология; миф о воде; фонтан молодости; потоп; мономиф; апокалипсис; кино

Introduction

Water plays a crucial role in the life of humanity. When we examine myths, epics and legends, we often find water as the source of life and a symbol of continuity. It has been associated with myths surrounding the creation, continuity and end of the universe. Water represents the initial essence of creation, the fountain of immortality and the flood that brings about the end of life. Referred to as "the fountain of youth" or "the fountain of immortality" water embodies the concept of eternal life (Eliade, 2005). The water myth is sometimes represented as the "flood" that marks the end of life. While water myths may differ across cultures, they share fundamental similarities, emphasizing the universal importance of water. Despite cultural variations, the essence of these stories highlights a common belief in the extraordinary and transcendent (Campbell, 2017, p. 13). The reason for the similarity in myths lies in their archetypal nature, rooted in primitive patterns of human behavior (Jung, 2006, p. 50).

Films, as a contemporary medium of storytelling, often incorporate these myths through intertextual references. Cinema reshapes and perpetuates these myths by integrating them into its narratives (Aktulum, 2018, p. 72). In world cinema, films produced in different countries directly reproduce the myth of water and other water-related narratives, drawing inspiration from mythologies. While there have been various studies on films that depict the flood legend, no existing research has explored the portrayal of immortality water or the fountain of youth in movies.

Apocalyptic films (apocalyptic), which deal with the end of the world (eschatology) in cinema, are expressed as a sub-genre of science fiction cinema (Baudou, 2005) and are frequently used in films due to their rich visual content (Copier, 2017). Studies on flood films that are under the idea of the apocalypse (apocalyptic) have generally been made on three films, *The Day After Tomorrow* (Emmerich, 2004), *2012* (Emmerich, 2009) and *Noah* (Aronofsky, 2014). The studies on *The Day After Tomorrow* analyze how the thesis that global warming causes climate disaster was created in the film (Leiserowitz, 2004; Von Burg, 2012). Studies on *2012*, an apocalyptic movie, are again concentrated on global warming, climate threat (Methmann & Rothe, 2012), class discrimination and white human supremacy (Joo, 2020). *The Noah* movie is one of these movies on which much work has been done. These studies are generally about the transfer of Noah's flood, which is told in the Bible, to the cinema (Collins, 2017; Copier, 2017; Kozlovic, 2016; Reinhartz, 2018). In addition, Ruah-Midbar Shapiro and Moore (2019) conducted a comprehensive study of the flood in movies.

This study aims to explore how the myth of water takes place in cinema. The research questions determined for this purpose are as follows: in what ways is the myth of water reproduced in the cinema; how does the myth of the flood take place in the cinema and how does the myth of the fountain of youth take place in the cinema? The results obtained in the study include revealing how the myth of

water takes place in the cinema. In this context, this study, in which the situation determination pattern is used, is aimed to reveal thematically how the myths of the fountain of youth and flood take place in the movies. The main characters were analyzed to determine which themes took place in the films included in the sample that dealt with the myth of the fountain of youth. The classification in Joseph Campbell's *Hero's Journey* (2017) study was used for this. *Eight features of the apocalyptic ideology* expressed by Klaus Koch (1972) were used for the thematic analysis of the films that dealt with the flood myth and were included in the sample. Thus, this present study aims to address how the water myth takes place in cinema by revealing these gaps in the existing literature.

The Myth of The Youth Fountain

Water is the symbol of the universe and the basis of all life. "It cures diseases, rejuvenates old creatures and provides eternal life. The belief that water, which is based on a mythological basis, provides immortality, has caused it to be called as "water of life, the fountain of youth" (Eliade, 2005, p. 331). The water of immortality, believed to give immortality to those who drink it, has found its place in different mythologies, beliefs and cultures.

In the Epic of Gilgamesh, considered the oldest literary work in history, the hero's quest for immortality is depicted. Gilgamesh, the ruler of Babylon, strives to attain eternal life. To discover the source of immortality, Gilgamesh initially seeks the guidance of someone who can assist him. Utanapishtim, the sole survivor of the Flood, imparts the secrets to reach the fountain of immortality to Gilgamesh. Gilgamesh learns from Utanapishtim what the source of immortality is and reaches it. However, a snake eats and sheds its skin before taking a plant in the water, which is the source of immortality. Gilgamesh realizes he is mortal like all mortals (Bratton, 1995, p. 39-42; Eliade, 2005, p. 342-343).

There are narratives about the water of immortality in the Ancient Greeks, who have a rich mythology. According to Greek mythology, "As soon as *Achilles* was born, he was immersed in *Styx* water by his mother and made immortal. According to the Romans, *Jupiter* turned his beloved nymph *Juventa* into a fountain that rejuvenates those who bathe in its water" (Hançerlioğlu, 2000, p. 8).

The theme of the water of immortality has been inspired by epics, beliefs and mythologies. It has been used in various branches of art. The German Renaissance painter Lucas Cranach also depicted a pool in his painting "The Fountain of Youth," where the swimmer experiences rejuvenation. In the table (Image 1), it is shown that older men and women appear younger after swimming in the pool.

Image 1. Fountain of Youth – Lucas Cranach

In these narratives, the individual embarking on a quest for the water of immortality progresses through stages, similar to the Hero's Journey (Campbell, 2017). Firstly, the narrative presents a motivating factor that drives the protagonist to seek the water of immortality. Subsequently, the hero encounters and confronts various obstacles in their pursuit of this extraordinary water. Eliade (2005, p. 343) asserts that obtaining the water of immortality, believed to grant eternal life, is no simple task. The hero must overcome numerous hurdles, as the water is said to be located "at the end of the earth, at the bottom of a sea, in the land of darkness, on a very high hill, or in a hard-to-reach place like a center" and is safeguarded by various forces (2005, p. 343). Additionally, a supporting character accompanies the hero on this arduous journey. Throughout the narrative, the hero experiences the cycle of separation, initiation, and return. Finally, at the conclusion of the story, the hero attains the water of immortality, successfully achieving their original goal.

The Flood Myths

Another use of water in mythologies appears in the form of flood narratives. The flood is expressed as "the great rain believed to have been sent by God to destroy people who have strayed from evil" (Hançerlioğlu, 2000, p. 522). In the flood legends, it is told that the waters covered the whole world, that the cause of the flood was the fault of people, and that very few people and animals were saved from the flood. Life after the flood became possible. Water destroys

the existing order, which represents a sinful society, with the disaster it brings, and makes establishing a new world possible (Harman, 1989, p. 319).

Eliade (2005, p. 233) expresses the property of water that destroys the old and establishes a new order: "Water has the power to purify, recreate and regenerate by distorting the entire form, completely removing it from the previous state. As the object immersed in it dies, it is resurrected from the water, like a child without sin or a past, and attains a new and genuine life through a new evolution." Immersion in water also signifies cleansing and purification. Therefore, immersion represents life after death on the human plane and the flood that periodically destroys the world in the primordial ocean on the cosmic plane (Eliade, 2003, p. 202; 2005, p. 233).

The flood myth is a widely accepted belief spanning ancient civilizations and monotheistic religions. The oldest recorded flood legend is the story told in the Epic of Gilgamesh. According to this myth, God would punish those who have sinned, saying, "Ask the sinner to account for their sins." In the Sumerian flood myth, the god Enlil and the goddess Ishtar argue that humanity should be wiped out from the face of the earth. However, the god Ea, who symbolizes wisdom (Hançerlioğlu, 2000, p. 522), is the only deity on the side of the people. A chapter in the Gilgamesh epic serves as inspiration for the Sumerian flood myth. When Gilgamesh finally reaches Utnapishtim, he asks how Utnapishtim achieved immortality. Utnapishtim explains that the gods granted him immortality after the Flood (Çığ, 2009, p. 52).

In mythology, the events and the living beings that cause floods vary across different cultures. For instance, in Australian mythology, a giant frog is responsible for causing flooding, while in Iranian mythology, the flood is attributed to the melting of heavy snow during winter. According to the writings of Harman (1989, p. 320), Ahura Mazda advises Yima, the first man and king, to seek refuge in a castle, bringing along the best individuals, plants, and animals. In Greek mythology, it is Zeus who orchestrates the flood, while Prometheus accompanies the people and constructs a ship to save them (Hançerlioğlu, 2000, p. 522). The flood myth in Greek mythology is also referred to as the Deucalion Flood. In this version of the myth, there is also a punisher (Zeus), a warner (Prometheus), and a person warned (Deucalion), who builds a ship to safeguard living beings (Erhat, 1993, p. 87).

In Indian mythology, Manu, the son of the sun god, finds a small fish named Matsya while washing his hands in a river. He removes it from the water and places it in an aquarium. However, Matsya grows rapidly each day and becomes too large for the aquarium. Matsya declares that she will punish wrongdoers and requests Manu to construct a ship. Manu constructs the ship, and when the flood begins, Matsya guides the ship to the mountain slope, rescuing the people on board (Kaya, 1997, pp. 154-155).

The Flood is also mentioned in the holy books of monotheistic religions. The Flood legend finds place in the Bible. The Biblical Flood narrative (Genesis, v. 6:11-9:19) shows Noah as the hero of the Flood story. God wants to destroy sin-

drenched humanity and asks Noah to build an ark. God destroys all humanity with the Flood. Consequently, according to this narrative, the surviving human race is descended from Noah's three sons and their wives.

The word 'Flood' appears in two instances in the Qur'an. The first occurrence relates to the water disaster that befell Pharaoh and the people of Egypt (Qur'an, v. 7:133), while the second pertains to Noah (Qur'an, v. 29:14). God informed Prophet Noah that the wickedness of his people would lead to their destruction, and he was instructed to construct an ark. A pair of every living creature, male and female, were taken onto the ship. Subsequently, the heavens and the earth's waters were unleashed, initiating the Flood. This continued for forty days and forty nights. The ship remained afloat for six months, and once the Flood subsided, it settled on Mount Cudi (Harman, 1989, p. 319).

The Fountain of Youth and the Flood Myth in Cinema

In the cinema, the myth of water is explored through various features. This myth is sometimes portrayed in films as narratives of the fountain of youth, while at other times it appears as flood narratives. When water is depicted as a fountain of youth, it is often portrayed as a womb that gives life to living things, a medium of transmission due to its transparent nature, and a source of immortality. In certain films and series such as *Cronos* (Del Toro, 1993), water serves as a life-giving womb (Eliade, 2003, p. 199). In other films like *Altered Carbon: Resleeved* (Nakajima and Okada, 2020) and *Ghost in the Shell* (Oshii, 1995), water functions as a means of the transfer due to its transparency. Additionally, there are series that explore the concept of water's immortality. In some of these series like *Forever* (Miller, 2014-2015), water is depicted as the life source of an immortal character. Others, such as *Gilgamesh* (Telecasting, 2003), present a modern adaptation of a legendary story. No recent studies on the myth of the fountain of youth have been found in the literature.

The flood myth is frequently used in films. Copier (2017) argues that this situation is due to some features of the flood myth. Copier states that the flood myth consists of rich visual themes, allowing filmmakers to develop recurring visual concepts and produce a cinematic show that evolves with the advancement of special effects technology.

On the other hand, the films about the Flood were classified by researchers. Kozlovic (2016) divides the movie about the Flood into two, historical and fictional. Films in the historical category reflect myth through their transfer in religions and legends. On the other hand, fictional films include recent films inspired by flood narratives. Kozlovic then puts the flood films into another genre division: science fiction, disaster, comedy and animation.

Another genre distinction in films about the Flood is as follows: They can be categorized into films that depict the events during the Flood and those that explore life after the Flood. In other words, they can be classified as both apocalyptic and

post-apocalyptic. This study specifically focuses on films that center around the moment of the flood event.

One of the studies examining flood narratives in cinema is the article by Ruah-Midbar Shapiro and Moore (2019). In their study focusing on the appearance of the flood narrative in cinema, the researchers analyze themes such as 'recurring visual themes and characters,' 'theology and ethics,' 'family and the other,' 'animals and ecology,' and finally, 'female characters.'

In some of these films, although there are differences between them (*The Deluge*, 1911; *Noah's Ark*, 1928; *The Bible: In the Beginning*, 1966), the flood event is depicted following the descriptions found in holy books. In other films (*The Deluge*, 1933; *Deep Impact*, 1998; *Sky Captain*, 2004; *Evan Almighty*, 2007; *The Day After Tomorrow*, 2004; *2012*, 2009; *The Humanity Bureau*, 2014), the flood narrative of the modern world occurs within the universe and is portrayed in apocalyptic or post-apocalyptic movies.

In their study, Ruah-Midbar Shapiro and Moore (2019) first determined that the flood myth was associated with periodically changing meanings. In the middle of the 20th century, Flood movies were produced in connection with the Cold War. For example, while the 1951 version of the movie *The Day the Earth Stood Still* is associated with the Cold War, the 2008 version is associated with ecological events. Starting in the 1960s and increasingly so, films began to be linked to ecological issues. The study also states that destruction was directly attributed to God as a tool of punishment (*The Deluge*, 1911; *Noah's Ark*, 1928; *The Bible: In the Beginning*, 1966 and *Noah*, 2014). These films were included in the historical category by Kozlovic (2016). Some films propose that the deterioration of ecology, resulting from human industrial activities and disregard for natural resources, leads to the Flood (*The Deluge*, 1933; *Deep Impact*, 1998; *Sky Captain*, 2004 and 40 *Days and Nights*, 2012).

Methodology

In this study, the case study design was used as it was aimed to reveal thematically how the myths of the fountain of youth and flood took place in the movies. The case study is a qualitative research design in which the researcher investigates one or more specific situations using various data collection methods, such as observation, interviews and document reviews, in order to identify common themes. The case study collects data systematically and examines how the events unfold in their natural environment (Creswell, 2016; Yin, 2009).

The purposive sampling method was used as the sampling method in the study. Purposive sampling is "the selection of units suitable for the purpose determined beforehand" (Neuman, 2012, p. 322). In the study, films such as (Table 1) *The Fountain* (Aronofsky, 2007), *Cocoon* (Howard, 1985), *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides* (Marshall, 2011) and *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*

(Jackson, 2002) were chosen as sample films to analyze the myth of the fountain of youth.

The main characters were analyzed to determine which themes were involved in these films. The classification in Joseph Campbell's *Hero's Journey* (2017) study was used for this purpose. Additionally, *Deep Impact* (Leder, 1998), *2012* (Emmerich, 2009), *40 Days and Nights* (Geiger, 2012) and *Noah* (Aronofsky, 2014) were selected as sample films for the analysis of the flood myth, using the purposive sampling method. The thematic analysis of the films included in the sample was conducted based on eight features of Klaus Koch's *apocalyptic ideology* (1972).

The Fountain of Youth	*The Flood*
The Fountain	*Deep Impact*
Cocoon	*2012*
Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides	*40 Days and Nights*
The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	*Noah*

Table 1. Movies Including Sampling About the Fountain of Youth and the Flood Myth

In the study, document analysis was used as a data collection tool. To thematically analyze the reflection of the youth myth on the films through the main characters, the Monomyth theory, also known as Hero's Journey (Table 2), developed by Campbell (2017), was used. This theory has been formed because myths are based on a universal and archetypal structure. In the Fountain of Youth myths, the characters adventure to find this source to reach immortality. Therefore, this theory was used to reveal the transformation of the film's characters and analyze it thematically.

1. *Seperation*	2. *Initiation*	3. *Return*
Call to	Road of Trials	Refusal of the Return
Refusal of call	Meeting with the Goddess	Magic Flight
Supernaturel Aid/Mentor	Woman as Temptress	Rescue from Without
Crossing the Threshold	Apotheosis	Crossing the Return Threshold
Belly of The Whale	The Ultimate Boon	Master of two Worlds
		Freedom to Live

Table 2. Stages of Campbell's (2017) Hero's Journey

On the other hand, eight features of the apocalyptic ideology (Table 3), developed by Klaus Koch in 1972, were used to analyze the reflection of the flood myth on the films through the main characters. These features include an expectation that the world will end soon, a universal catastrophe occurring, and the establish-

ment of a new order. During this stage, struggles between good and evil take place, and salvation from disaster sparks the expectation of an ideal order. The decision for this disaster is made by God, with an intermediary between God and his servants. Upon watching the movies, it was observed that these features pertaining to the apocalypse were also applicable to the flood movies, which belong to the apocalyptic movie genre. Furthermore, these features are utilized here to analyze the transformation and adventures of the characters.

1	Immediate anticipation for the end of earthly conditions in the near future
2	The end as a cosmic catastrophe
3	Periodization of history and determinism
4	Activity of angels and demons
5	New salvation, heavenly in its specific form
6	Manifestation of the kingdom of god
7	A mediator with privileged functions
8	The "victory" of good

Table 3. Eight features of the idea of apocalypse according to Klaus Koch

The selected films were analyzed using the thematic analysis method, also known as "the exploration of themes that hold significant importance in the study of phenomena" (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). In this study, the movies were watched sequentially for coding purposes. During the process of determining the codes and categories, predefined stages were employed, incorporating the character journeys as presented by relevant theories. The main themes identified in this study were the concept of the fountain of youth and the occurrence of a flood.

The results obtained in the study include a thematic presentation of the issue of how the water myth takes place in the cinema. Thus, it will contribute to the literature. In line with this purpose, the sub-questions in the study can be listed under the primary purpose as follows: In what ways is the water myth reproduced in the cinema? How does the flood myth take place in the cinema? How does the myth of immortality of water take place in the cinema? To find answers to these questions, firstly, how the water myth is handled in world cinema is given. Then, the processing of immortality water and flood narratives in mythologies is mentioned.

Film databases were used while detecting films containing immortality water narratives in the cinema. Movies found because of searches with words such as "fountain of youth" and "water of immortality" on the IMDB site were watched. The films that have been reached under the concept of the fountain of youth and analyzed under the determined themes are as follows; *The Fountain* (Aronofsky,

2007), *Cocoon* (Howard, 1985), *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides* (Marshall, 2011) and *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* (Jackson, 2002). (Table 1).

Films with flood narratives were also determined based on film databases and the studies of Ruah-Midbar Shapiro and Moore (2019), in which they examined flood narratives in cinema. As a result, "flood narrative" films are as follows; *The Deluge* (1911), *Noah's Ark* (1928), *Deluge* (1933), *The Bible: In the Beginning* (1966), *Deep Impact* (1998), *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004), *2012* (2009), *40 Days and Nights* (2012) and *Noah* (2014) (Table 1).

Among these films, *The Deluge* (1911), *Noah's Ark* (1928), *Deluge* (1933), and *Noah* (2014) narrate the flood event experienced by Noah and share similarities in terms of plot. Due to its recent production and extensive research, only the movie *Noah* was selected from this group. On the other hand, *The Bible: In the Beginning* covers a more extended period, starting from the creation of the universe and the first man, and includes the flood event. Therefore, this movie was not included in the selection of films. Additionally, snow and ice floods were excluded from the sample, as they occurred before the flood, as depicted in *The Day After Tomorrow*. Consequently, the movies *Deep Impact*, *2012*, *40 Days and Nights* and *Noah* were chosen as the sample films.

Reflections of the Fountain of Youth Myth in Cinema

The first research question is aimed to reveal how the myth of the fountain of youth occurs in the movies. *The Fountain, Cocoon, Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides*, and *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* movies, which were determined as samples, were analyzed with thematic content analysis. During the analysis, Campbell's (2017) stages in the hero's journey were considered as categories. The data were collected and evaluated under these categories. In the movies, firstly, the heroes are called to adventure within the framework of Campbell's (2017) monomyth theory. The goal of this adventure is to reach the fountain of youth.

In this part of the study, the main category was the myth of the Fountain of Youth. The "departure", "initiation" and "return" of the hero, which are the main components of Campbell's (2017) monomyth theory, were formed as subcategories. Under these three categories, coding was done with the following questions about the fountain of youth: What form is the water found in the fountain of youth? What is the fountain of youth called? Why does the hero want to reach the fountain of youth? Where is the fountain of youth? What are the obstacles in front of the hero? Who reaches the fountain of youth? What changes occur in the hero who reaches the fountain of youth?

The first research question aimed to reveal what form the water of immortality is presented in movies. According to the results obtained, the water of immortality was in the form of the source that gives life to the tree of life (*The Fountain*), water in a swimming pool (*Cocoon*), drinking water (*Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides* and *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*).

Further analysis revealed that the water of immortality in the movies had different names. It has been determined that the water of immortality is called the spring that gives life to the tree of life in *The Fountain*, the fountain of heaven in *Cocoon*, the fountain of youth in *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides* and the water that gives life to trees in *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*.

Another research question was "why does the hero want to reach the Fountain of Youth?" In the movies, the heroes had different purposes in wanting to reach the fountain of youth. These aims were to heal one's sick wife (*The Fountain*), to be healthy and stay young (*Cocoon*), to be immortal (*Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides*); and hobbits desire to grow taller (*The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*).

In movies, a "guide" with supernatural powers helps the hero in his journey. The main female character, Izzi, is the guide who helps the main male character Tom in his journey in *The Fountain*. In the movie *Cocoon*, the people who guide the elderly to reach the fountain of youth are aliens. In *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides* it is the map and mermaid that allow the main character Jack Sparrow and his companions to reach the fountain of youth. In *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* it is the Old Tree in Fangorn Forest.

Image 2. A scene like Lucas Cranach's Fountain of Youth (*Cocoon*)

The hero has obstacles and tests before reaching the fountain of youth. Heroes mature by removing these obstacles. First, the water of immortality is in hard-to-reach places. It was believed that the water of immortality which gave life to the tree of life in *The Fountain*, was hidden in a pyramid left by the Mayans in the jungles of Central America. In the movie *Cocoon*, the water in the pool is

the fountain of youth. In the movie, some aliens came to Earth on a mission from the planet Antares a hundred centuries ago and were reborn to save a group of Antarean stranded on Earth. The Antareans' friends were in giant snail shells at the bottom of the sea among the ruins of an ancient civilization. Antares pulled his friends from the bottom of the sea and placed them in a pool of giant snail shells. A group of older people had been swimming in the same pool for a long time because the house was empty. This elderly group continued to swim in the pool after the cocoons were placed. In *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides*, the fountain of youth was found deep in the jungle after crossing mysterious seas. In *Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*, the water of life was found in the perilous Fangorn Forest.

Further analysis revealed that there were obstacles that the heroes in the movies had to overcome in order to reach the water of immortality. In *The Fountain*, the protagonist struggles with the Mayans who were protecting it and the Spanish Church, which tried to prevent him from reaching the Tree of Life, to which the water gives life. In the movie *Cocoon*, the heroes first try to enter the new house to reach the fountain of youth. They then negotiate with the aliens. In Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides, Spanish and English sailors embark on a search for the Fountain of Youth, while a group of pirate sailors is also pursuing it. Those who undertake the journey to reach the Fountain of Youth must overcome various obstacles. The protagonists must navigate a pirate ship and defeat in the ship the giants in order to survive. Additionally, they encounter mermaids who alternately fascinate them with their beauty and instill fear. Additionally, they encounter mermaids who sometimes fascinate them with their beauty and other times instill fear. Eliade speaks of "nymphs" who live around the water of life and draw strength from it. The nymphs are "created from water and the power that emanates from it" (Eliade, 2003, p. 199-200, 2005, p. 246-247). In *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*, two hobbits enter the mysterious Fangorn Forest. Orcs have inflicted significant damage on the trees that feed on the water of life. The tree king, who initially mistakes the two hobbits for orcs, later fights alongside them against the orcs who have harmed them significantly.

The heroes in the movies were rewarded after overcoming obstacles to reach the fountain of youth. Then the hero entered the return phase. In *The Fountain*, the main character found the water of immortality in the Tree of Life. In the movie *Cocoon*, a group of elders acquired the fountain of paradise. The water of life was reached in *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides*. Two hobbits drunk the water of life in *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*.

Image 3. The life water gives life to the tree of life (*The Fountain*)

The final research question in this section is, "What changes occurred in the hero who reaches the fountain of youth?" In *The Fountain*, the character's body, which reaches the Tree of Life and drinks from its liquid, is integrated. Older people swimming in the pool, expressed as the fountain of heaven in the movie *Cocoon*, improved their eyesight, their hair grew, their sexual power increased, and they got younger daily. In *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides*, the main female character, and her father together with Jack Sparrow are the ones who reach the heavenly fountain in the land of darkness. In front of the spring, they repeated this ritual, which was necessary, while one glass contained the water of immortality and the other contained the mermaid's tears. Eventually, the father's life span was passed on to his daughter. In *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*, two hobbits flee from the orcs and take refuge in the talisman filled Fangorn Forest to drink the water of life. This forest was the Forest of Fangorn, in which the trees, fed by water, move, come to life, and speak. The two hobbits who took refuge here drank the water that flows there, despite the warning of the forest king, the Tree Shepherd, or Treebeard, otherwise. As soon as one of the hobbits drinks the water, the tree vibrates and grows tall.

Reflections of the Flood Myth in Cinema

The first research question is aimed to reveal how the flood myth occurs in the movies. *Deep Impact*, *2012*, *40 Days and Nights* and *Noah* movies determined as samples were analyzed with thematic content analysis. During the analysis,

the eight features of the apocalypse mentioned by Koch (1972) were considered as categories. The data were collected and evaluated under these categories.

In this part of the study, the main category was the flood myth. The eight features of the idea of apocalypse expressed by Koch are as follows; immediate anticipation for the end of earthly conditions soon, the end as a cosmic catastrophe, periodization of history and determinism, activity of angels and demons, new salvation, heavenly in its specific form, manifestation of the kingdom of god, a mediator with privileged functions and the "victory" of good. Based on Koch's study in which he expressed eight features of the apocalypse, the answers to four questions in movies were sought. The questions are: "What caused the Flood?", "By which vehicle are people saved from the flood?", "How do the heroes know about the Flood?", "Who is being punished?" and "Who is being saved?"

Image 4. The flood ends life and provides new beginnings (*Deep Impact*)

The first research question aimed to reveal "What caused the Flood?" in the movies. Koch refers to two characteristics of the apocalypse: understanding the "end of the world" and the "end as a cosmic catastrophe." These two features were the source of the study's question, "What caused the Flood?" The thing that caused the flood in the movies is God's will (*Noah*); people being sinful (40 *Days and Nights*); a giant asteroid hitting the earth (*Deep Impact*); and the alignment of some planets (2012) were shown.

Further analysis revealed how people were rescued from flooding in movies. In Flood movies, the ship symbolizes salvation from the flood. In the films examined in the study, it was determined that the salvation of humanity from the flood is usually through a ship. In the movie Noah, he made this ship the savior by the will of God. In the films of 2012 and 40 *Days and Night*, humanity, advancing in science and technology, determined that there would be a flood this time. Later, scientists build

flood-resistant ships. In *Deep Impact*, authorities built underground bunkers to help people escape floods.

Image 4. Ships as symbols of salvation from the Flood and a new life (2012)

Another research question was "How do the heroes in the movies know about the Flood?" A mediator plays an essential role in making humanity aware of the flood. The concept of the mediator is another feature of Koch's classification. The mediator is the person who informs the people that the flood will occur during the apocalypse and establishes the connection with God. In the films examined in the research, it was determined that people became aware of the Flood when God revealed it to Noah (*Noah*) or through science and technology (*Deep Impact*; *40 Days Nights*). In the movie *2012*, people learned from the Mayan calendar that the flood would happen.

The existence of angels and demons and the periodization of history are other themes Koch focuses on in his work. These themes were the source of the question of "who is punished" in the study. In the films examined, it was determined that the authorities could sometimes be the state and sometimes a savior and that people were looking for some conditions to get on the vehicles. In some movies (*Noah*), believing in Noah was a sufficient reason to get on the ark. In the movie *Deep Impact*, the number of people who would board the ship was determined by drawing lots. In the 2012 movie, the condition to get on the ship was to have a billion dollars. It was concluded that those who were punished by the flood in the movies were those who did not believe in Noah (*Noah*), whose name was not mentioned in the lottery, and who could not board the ship because they did not have money (*2012*; *40 Days and Nights*).

Finally, Koch refers to the "Heavenly new salvation," the "Kingdom of God," and the "Triumph of Goodness" as features of the apocalypse. These features formed the basis of the last subject discussed in the study. Thus, the final research question in this section was "Who is getting rid of the flood?" In the films examined

in the study, some creatures survived the flood. In the movie *Deep Impact*, 1 million human and animal species, plants, and seeds survived the flood and became the source of new life. In the movie *2012*, ships were built to save those who had money. Later, the ship's hatches were opened during the flood and everyone was taken inside. In *40 Days and Nights*, 300 people and insect species survived for the continuation of life. In the movie *Noah*, it was seen that people who believed in *Noah* survived the flood. Actually, the disaster that comes with the Flood is not an extinction but a new beginning. After the evil is destroyed by the flood, a new world is established.

Conclusion

This study aimed to reveal how the water myth is reproduced in the cinema with thematic content analysis. In line with this primary purpose, there are sub-objectives to reveal how the myth of the fountain of youth and flood is reproduced in cinema. In this section, the limitations of the study, interpretations of the main findings are presented, and recommendations for the literature are made. The main characters were examined to determine which themes occurred in the films about the fountain of youth myth. Therefore, this study's findings should be interpreted considering various limitations. Firstly, Campbell's *monomyth theory* was used while investigating how the legend of the fountain of youth was reproduced in the cinema, and answers were sought in the films for the questions developed in this direction. Secondly, eight features of Koch's apocalyptic approach were used while investigating how the flood myth was reproduced in the cinema. Answers were sought in the films for the questions developed in this direction. No study has yet been found in the literature that comprehensively addresses the water myth in cinema. There were only studies on flood. No research was found on how the cinema's fountain of youth was formed. Therefore, this study will contribute to the literature.

The first important finding obtained in the research is the reproduction of the fountain of youth myth in movies. In the movies, the water of immortality is called by different names. Heroes have different reasons for reaching the water of immortality. Some guides assist heroes on their journey to reach the water of immortality. In this journey, the heroes encounter different obstacles that they must overcome. After the heroes overcome these obstacles, they get various rewards and experience some positive changes. As a result, while the myth of the fountain of youth is reproduced in the movies, it has been determined that the heroes go through the stages of "departure," "initiation" and "return," as in Campbell's monomyth theory.

The second important finding in the study is the reproduction of the flood myth in movies. As Copier (2017) states, films about the flood myth in cinema history have always attracted attention due to the rich visual themes of the flood myth. In this study, it was seen that this feature of the flood myth continued. In the movies, it has been determined that flood is usually caused by people's sins

and human errors, such as the climate crisis. In some movies, God informs people that the flood will happen through the prophet. In some movies, scientists know the flood will happen thanks to science and technology. In religious-based narratives, humanity is more aware of the flood by the command and mediator of God. Scientists determine the flood events caused by the changes in modern times. In the movies, humanity escapes from the flood either by building ships as told by God or by producing modern vehicles thanks to science and technology in modern times. The flood survivors are the few people who believe in the prophet or those in the upper class with wealth and the elite. As a result, while the flood myth is reproduced in the movies, it has been determined that the events took place, as Koch stated in *the apocalypse theory*. Since the flood event in the movies brought the end of the world, it was seen that the events passed through similar stages as in Koch's theory.

References | Список литературы

Aktulum, K. (2018). *Sinema ve Metinlerarasılık: Filmlerarası Etkileşimler ve Aktarımlar [Cinema and Intertextuality: Interactions and Transfers between Films]*. Çizgi Kitabevi. (In Turkish).

Aronofsky, D. (Director). (2006). *The Fountain*. Warner Bros.

Aronofsky, D. (Director). (2014). *Noah*. Columbia Pictures.

Baudou, J. (2005). *Bilim-kurgu [Science fiction]* (İ. Bülbüloğlu, Trans.). Dost Kitabevi. (In Turkish).

Bratton, F. G. (1995). *Yakın Doğu Mitolojisi [Near Eastern Mythology]* (N. Muallimoğlu, Trans.). MÜ İlahiyat Fakültesi Yayınları. (In Turkish).

Campbell, J. (2017). *Kahramanın Sonsuz Yolculupu [The Hero with a Thousand Faces]* (S. Gürses, Trans.). İthaki Yayınları.

Çığ, M. İ. (2009). *Sümerlilerde Tufan Tufanda Türkler [Sumerian Flood Turks in the Flood]*. Kaynak. (In Turkish).

Collins, M. A. (2017). An Ongoing Tradition: Aronofsky's Noah as 21st-Century Rewritten Scripture. In *Noah as Antihero* (pp. 8–33). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315180892-2

Copier, L. (2017). Commercial Configurations of Scriptural Temporality: Noah as a Blockbuster. In *Noah as Antihero* (pp. 102–116). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315180892-7

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. SAGE Publications.

Eliade, M. (2003). *Dinler tarihine giriş [A History of Religious Ideas]* (L. Arslan, Trans.). Kabalcı Kitabevi. (In Turkish).

Eliade, M. (2005). *Dinler Tarihi: İnançlar ve İbadetlerin Morfolojisi [History of Religions: Morphology of Beliefs and Worship]* (M. Ünal, Trans.). Serhat Kitabevi. (In Turkish).

Emmerich, R. (Director). (2009). 2012. Columbia Pictures.

Erhat, A. (1993). *Mitoloji Sözlüğü [Dictionary of Mythology]*. Remzi Kitabevi. (In Turkish).

Fereday, J., & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006). Demonstrating Rigor Using Thematic Analysis: A Hybrid Approach of Inductive and Deductive Coding and Theme Development. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(1), 80–92. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690600500107

Geider, P. (Director). (2012). *40 Days and Nights*. 20th Century Fox.

Genesis. (n.d.). Bible Gateway. https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%209-18&version=NIV

Hançerlioğlu, O. (2000). *Dünya İnançları Sözlüğü [Dictionary of World Beliefs]*. Remzi Kitabevi. (In Turkish).

Harman, Ö. F. (1989). Tufan [Deluge]. In *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi [TDV Encyclopedia of Islam]* (pp. 319-322). (In Turkish).

Howard, R. (Director). (1985). *Cocoon*. 20th Century Fox.

Jackson, P. (Director). (2002). *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*. Warner Bros.

Joo, H.-J. S. (2020). We are the world (but only at the end of the world): Race, disaster, and the Anthropocene. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 38(1), 72–90. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263775818774046

Jung, C. G., & Gürol, E. (2006). *Analitik Psikoloji [Analytical Psychology]*. Payel Yayınları. (In Turkish).

Kaya, K. (1997). *Hint mitolojisi sözlüğü [Dictionary of Indian mythology]*. İmge Kitabevi. (In Turkish).

Koch, K. (1972). *The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic*. SCM Press.

Kozlovic, A. K. (2016). Noah and the Flood: A cinematic deluge. In R. Burnette-Bletsch (Ed.), *The Bible in Motion: A Handbook of the Bible and Its Reception in Film* (pp. 35–50). De-Gruyter. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781614513261-007

Leder, M. (Director). (1998). *Deep Impact*. Paramount Pictures.

Leiserowitz, A. A. (2004). Day After Tomorrow: Study of Climate Change Risk Perception. *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development*, 46(9), 22–39. https://doi.org/10.1080/00139150409603663

Marshall, R. (Director). (2011). *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides*. Walt Disney.

Methmann, C., & Rothe, D. (2012). Politics for the day after tomorrow: The logic of apocalypse in global climate politics. *Security Dialogue*, 43(4), 323–344. https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010612450746

Neuman, W. L. (2012). *Toplumsal Araştırma Yöntemleri Nitel ve Nicel Yaklaşımlar [Social Research Methods Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches]* (S. Özge, Trans.). Yayınodası Yayıncılık. (In Turkish).

Qur'an. (n.d.). https://kuran.diyanet.gov.tr/mushaf

Reinhartz, A. (2018). Reversing the hermeneutical flow: Noah's Flood in recent Hollywood films. In R. Walsh (Ed.), *T&T Clark Companion to the Bible and Film* (pp. 287–289). Bloomsbury Publishing. https://doi.org/10.5040/9780567666239.0031

Ruah-Midbar Shapiro, M., & Moore, L. (2019). "Not Your Grandmother's Bible"—A Comparative Study of the Biblical Deluge Myth in Film. *Religions*, 10(10), 542. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10100542

Von Burg, R. (2012). Decades Away or *The Day After Tomorrow*?: Rhetoric, Film, and the Global Warming Debate. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 29(1), 7–26. https://doi.org/10.1080/15295036.2011.637221

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. SAGE.