



## The Relationship Between the Behavior Change Created in the Audience By Disaster Scenarios in Cinema Cities During the Covid-19 Period and the Pandemic

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### Abstract

After the Covid-19 all industries around the world have tried to adapt to pandemic conditions by renewing their production models. the cinema industry as well. Such films, produced before the pandemic, have come to the agenda again by reaching viewership rates that did not even exist in the years they were produced. This research, semi-structured interviews with experts in psychology and cinema were conducted and the data obtained through secondary source scanning were analyzed. The aim is to understand the differences between the mood changes created by urban perspectives in apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic films before and after the pandemic and to reveal concrete information about the relationship that is a factor in the pandemic process.

**Keywords:** Covid-19; Cinema; Apocalyptic; Post-apocalyptic; Behavior; Cinematherapy



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# The Relationship Between the Behavior Change Created in the Audience By Disaster Scenarios in Cinema Cities During the Covid-19 Period and the Pandemic

Murat Cem Acaralp

## Introduction

Cinema, which is a giant industry with its economic size, hundreds of thousands of employees all over the world, production, distribution, and screening branches, became one of the most damaged sectors from the 2019nCoV (Covid-19) that affected the world (Akser 2020).

Both production companies, cinema workers, distribution companies, and the audience have been affected by this crisis. It has directly or indirectly affected many industries due to the crisis of the cinema industry, its size, and its organic or inorganic relations (Fanea-Ivanovici 2024).

Considering the scope and breadth of the production process and the diversity of the elements involved, it would not be wrong to define the cinema industry as an industry. Unlike other industries, the cinema industry is evaluated within the cultural economy, which is a market consisting of production and distribution channels where cultural products are made and sold (Hedetoft, 2000).

Cinema has become one of the most important mass media since the 20th century, both artistically and commercially. According to Adorno, cinema is the fastest carrier of the mass industry (Adorno, 2007). Since its first screening in Paris in 1895, it has seen many crises and continued its development with limited opportunities despite all the negativities (Aytekin, 2020). For example, the first world war, the 1918 Spanish flu epidemic, the second world war, the emergence of television, the development and spread of video are events that deeply affected

cinema. Compared to all global crises, the Covid-19 virus outbreak has had a devastating effect on the industry with the effect of developing technology.

It was worth \$41.7 billion at the global box office in 2018. Including box office and home entertainment revenues, the global film industry was worth \$136 billion in 2018 (Stringfixer, 2019). In the first quarter of 2020, the loss at the box office reached around 88% when only the world's top 10 film industries are considered (Türten, 2021).

### What is Apocalyptic and Post-Apocalyptic?

The word apocalyptic is of French origin and has passed into our language directly from the word “apocalyptique”. According to TDK, it is defined as "incomprehensible, obscure, dark" in words and writing. It is a word used for motion pictures. Its equivalent in novels and stories is a dystopia. Its expression as a sentence is defined as "the disaster that will bring the end of humanity, the apocalypse". Post-apocalyptic, on the other hand, is used to describe after disaster.











Any movie set in a dark future can be included in the dystopia genre. Dystopian films are divided into many sub-genres such as cultural, apocalyptic, post-apocalyptic, pseudo-utopian, and cyberpunk. In apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic films, if before or after extraordinary situations such as nuclear or environmental disasters and epidemics are not told, they are generally considered sub-genres of dystopia.

### Top 10 Epidemic (Apocalyptic) Movies

If we take as an example; *Contagion*, it is shown as the most realistic epidemic film produced in 2011 (Türkoğlu, 2020). It is a well-crafted sci-fi movie reminiscent of the Sars-CoV-2-induced Covid-19 outbreak. It manages to directly convey what happened during the pandemic in documentary quality. How an epidemic can start, the factors that affect the spread of the

epidemic, scientists deal with the epidemic in a realistic way. In the Covid-19 pandemic, in which the world is actively involved, the movie reveals the motivation to evoke a sense of hope and unity in the audience by matching the situation and to be able to control anxieties and fears by getting away from the feelings of loneliness with the thought of being together.

In fact, when we look at the Top 10 productions in general, the script, visual narration, and acting, despite all the destruction, loss, and chaos that such a disaster will cause, present the message that unity, hope, and effort are the keys to getting rid of disasters, and feelings of anxiety and fear give people up to give up.

	Movie	Year	Director	Type	
	1 Contagion	2011	Steven Soderberg	Apokaliptik	
	I Am Legend	2007	Francis Lawrence	Apocalyptic / Post-Apocalyptic	2
	3 28 Days	2002	Danny Boyle	Apocalyptic / Post-Apocalyptic	
	Resident Evil	2002	Paul W. S. Anderson	Post-Apocalyptic	4
	5 Children of Men	2006	Alfonso Cuarón	Apocalyptic	
	12 Monkeys	1995	Terry Gilliam	Apocalyptic	6
	7 World War Z	2013	Marc Foster	Apocalyptic	
	Outbreak	1995	Wolfgang Petersen	Apocalyptic	8
	9 Cargo	2017	Ben Howling - Yolanda Ramke	Apocalyptic	
	Carriers	2009	Àlex - David Pastor	Apocalyptic	10

*Figure 1: The best 10 epidemic films, which were highly appreciated with their cinematographic structure, script, and acting before the pandemic, and reached high ratings again with the Pandemic (Türkoğlu, 2020).*

## Best Post-Apocalyptic Films

According to the research conducted by (Korkmaz, 2022) by selecting the Netflix platform, which has 222 million subscribers around the world, as a sample according to February 2022 data, the interest in post-apocalyptic films has increased steadily in 2020 and 2021, respectively, starting from 2019, the beginning of the pandemic process was observed to follow the course. Between 2019 and 2021, a total of 51 post-apocalyptic films were screened on the platform, and one or more of them were included in the weekly "best 10" list in the process. According to Korkmaz, while subscribing to Netflix, there is an obligation to like at least 3 contents, and then an algorithm of Netflix is activated and content that he thinks he will like is presented to the audience. As the usage continues, the viewing habits of the audience are processed and optimized according to the content watched by an artificial intelligence working in the background, and audience satisfaction is kept at the highest level with a very low margin of error. The data provided by Netflix's artificial intelligence algorithm gives important information about the emotional state of people with different demographic structures of the period. Because the audience gives important information by choosing to watch movies that are suitable for their emotional state. When the psychological motives of the audience preferring the apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic genres, especially during the disaster period, are investigated; It is assumed that he turns to post-apocalyptic narratives to be ready for a disaster situation, experiencing catharsis with the thought that it will be the worst at that moment, eliminating the longing for returning to nature or learning the road map in a similar situation (Korkmaz, 2022, s. 68).


	Movie	Year	Director	Type	
	1 Mad Max	1979	George Miller	Post-apocalyptic	
	Planet of the Apes	1968	Franklin J. Schaffner	Post-apocalyptic	2
	3 Escape From New York	1981	John Carpenter	Post-apocalyptic	
	Stalker	1979	Andrej Tarkovsky	Post-apocalyptic	4
	5 The Road	2009	John Hillcoat	Post-apocalyptic	
	Wall-E	2008	Andrew Stanton	Post-apocalyptic	6
	7 The Book of Eli	2010	Albert Hughes, Allen Hughes	Post-apocalyptic	
	Turbo Kid	2015	François Simard, Anouk Whissell, Yoann-Karl Whissell	Post-apocalyptic	8
	9 Doomsday	2008	Neil Marshall	Post-apocalyptic	
	Le temps du loup	2003	Michael Haneke	Post-apocalyptic	10
	11 On The Beach	1959	Stanley Kramer	Post-apocalyptic	
	A Boy and His Dog	1975	L. Q. Jones	Post-apocalyptic	12
	13 Zardoz	1974	John Boorman	Post-apocalyptic	
	The Omega Man	1971	Boris Sagal	Post-apocalyptic	14

Figure 2: The best 14 post-apocalyptic films, which were highly appreciated with their cinematographic structure, script and acting before the pandemic, and reached high ratings again with the pandemic (Cakıcı, 2021).



## CINEMATHERAPY

Before defining and exemplifying the concept, it is necessary to give a piece of brief information about the starting point. Goethe's book "The Sorrows of Young Werther", published in 1774, will be the first example of the literature that people form attitudes by being influenced by what they read and see. In this book, which includes imaginary letters he wrote to a young, sensitive, and passionate friend, the story of Wilhelm, who could not overcome the pain and insolvency brought by his love for an engaged girl and chose suicide as a solution, was loved by Goethe's impressive narration and translated into many languages. It has been seen that young men try to make their style of dressing resemble Wilhelm's depicted in the book. Not limited to this, the news of people who chose this path by adopting the idea of suicide, which is the main narrative of this imitation in the book, began to spread. When the rumors that the book caused suicide began to increase, the end of the book was edited in subsequent editions to reduce the effect, but because of this rumor, the book was banned in many countries because of no results. Since this date, research and statistical studies on the media and its influence have increased, and similar events have been named the "Werther effect" (Gençöz F. , 2008, p. 2).

Studies have shown that the clearer and more detailed the narrative of the negative event that occurred between the 3rd and 15th days following the publication of the effect of real events in the media, the more severe the effect. In fact, it has been determined that the effect increases if the person associated with the negative situation is a famous person and close to the reader/viewer profile (Pirkis & Blood, 2001).

It seems inevitable that such negative images and results will affect the audience and lead them to negative situations in the cinema, where the aim in question is to completely influence the audience. On the other hand, it can be assumed that negative images will not affect the audience negatively, since it is known that the existence of editing and effect-enhancing effects

are used in the cinema, and the cinema is thought to be a product of imagination (Gençöz F. , 2008, p. 3). It is also remarkable and important that no research has been done on popular movies.

With the project carried out by the American Psychiatric Association (APA), the 1974 film "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" caused negative thoughts and attitudes in the treatments and clinic staff in psychiatry clinics. The documentary was shot and shown after the film was released. Afterward, the control group formed was divided into 4 groups by the researcher and the results were evaluated (Domino, 1983). The first group watched only the main film, the second group watched the documentary together with the main film, the third group watched only the documentary, and the fourth group did not watch both films. As a result of the observations, the subjects who watched the main movie and developed a negative attitude did not change their attitudes even if they watched the documentary. The main inference that can be made from this example is that even if it is known that movies are fictional, it is possible that even documentaries reflecting the truth can create negative effects.

After this important experimental research, it was seen that cinema films could be used as educational and therapeutic tools in a versatile way, and studies were started in this direction. Films containing negative examples, for example, a film focused on suicide cases, may produce useful and effective results in the training of specialists with the title of psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, and field nurse. In any case, its use for educational purposes will provide a significant benefit (Gençöz F. , 2006).

Cinematherapy, by definition, is the process of using movies as metaphors, where metaphors that are used creatively and repeated in movies play a role in changing behaviors, increasing insight, and developing understanding, gaining insight, and ensuring optimal healing



of the patient (Sharp, Smith, & Cole, 2002). The use of cinema films as a psychotherapy technique in the psychotherapy process is called cinematherapy (Gençöz & Türküler Aka, 2007).

The effect of cinema therapy takes place in 3 stages (Sharp, Smith, & Cole, 2002) (Gençöz F. , 2007) identification catharsis and insight. At the identification stage, the audience begins to see similarities between the character in the movie and themselves. They think that they identify within the framework of the character's personality and the problems that the character experiences, and with the similarity they realize, they begin to compare and question the behavior and thoughts of the character with their own behavior and thoughts. This questioning can cause the audience to realize their strengths and weaknesses.

In the second catharsis (Evacuation) stage, as soon as the audience thinks that the emotions of the character are identical to their behavior and mentality, the emotions that are consciously or unconsciously suppressed, and that went unnoticed, emerge, and become conscious. It is shaped by the fictional emotional intensity of the film and provides relief for the audience. Finally in the insight stage the spectator gains insight into producing solutions and making emotional decisions by comparing the behavior patterns and solution methods of the character with which they identify with the situation they are in.

Within the framework of this definition, the general purpose of cinema therapy means to determine a movie related to the patient's life, to identify with the character, and to develop an insight to solve their problems and to create steps to encourage them to make the right decisions and reach the solution of the problems.

According to Kerem Kaban, the content of a movie is one of the main factors of cinema therapy. That is to help people relax. With the feeling of control created by the movie, we can see a decrease in our anxiety and fears. For this reason, movies with apocalyptic scenarios about

people's fears provide a feeling of relief, not uneasiness, contrary to popular belief (Kaban, 2022).

### Why Do We Watch and Like Apocalyptic / Post-Apocalyptic Movies?

Although it is not a very correct attitude to try to compare Cinema, which is called the seventh art, and Psychology, which is a social science and also categorized as natural science, it can be said that they show similar characteristics in terms of human behavior and feed off each other. While trying to explain the behavior and habits of the individual to the cinema audience through subjective methods, psychology tries to reveal results through scientific methods and data. The viewing habits of the audience before and after the pandemic have been evaluated in many academic articles by both cinema and psychology, based on concrete data.

Human behaviors, their nature, and their attitudes, as well as interpersonal relations with the scientific methods of psychology, and in cinema, the screenwriter, director, and actor examine cinematographic principles and subjective methods. Since the observed and studied element is basically the same, it would be normal for there to be parallelism between the academic publications published by the science of psychology and the visual narrative of the work produced by the filmmakers. It cannot be expected to obtain different results by examining the same situation, the same condition, and the same case. The product that will emerge can only be defined as a style difference.

In this case, it becomes necessary to ask the following questions first.

Apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic productions have risen to be among the most watched films as of the last quarter of 2019, although they were produced and released before the pandemic, especially when the internet data is examined based on platforms. What can be said about the

cinema-psychology relationship, why do people tend to watch such films more during the Covid-19 epidemic, and what the underlying psychological reason is?

According to Psychologist Çiğdem Dürüst<sup>1</sup>; It is seen that there are some changes in the needs and attitudes of individuals. It is known that the social influence on the psychology of individuals affects emotions and thoughts as well as behaviors. For this reason, as the pandemic process affects the preferences of individuals in terms of cinema, movies can also affect individuals and societies; It would not be wrong to say that they can do this individually as well as collectively causing an impact on society. It is known that the first reaction of individuals who must face undesirable and unexpected events is "shock". The state of shock may be accompanied by some emotions such as anger, surprise, guilt, helplessness, extreme sadness, embarrassment, boredom, depression, and conflicting emotions. The fact that the number of people experiencing similar events is comforting can be matched with the idea that they are not alone. It can be thought that this idea is confirmed through the media and that it contributes to emotional discharge through movies (Dürüst, 2022).

The pandemic process, which has the potential to affect the environment, the groups involved, the society, even the country and the world in general, may have caused the individual to be away from the constructive effects of social support for a while. In this process, the individual's thinking about and applying for solutions or accessing cognitive and emotional processes that can make more reasonable evaluations will help the acceptance process to begin (Akkök, 2020, p. 17) (Bıyıklı, 1989, p. 5)

Cinema producer and writer Canol Balkaya<sup>2</sup> said, "Every religion writes its own apocalypse within itself, and people always wonder how this existing world will have an end, its death, and how it will come. These genres have always been in demand in cinema since we are always ready, sociologically, and psychologically, for the apocalypse that may be experienced

due to a meteorite, perhaps an epidemic disease, or a virus created by humanity. Due to the pandemic, we are currently experiencing, the border between instant fiction and reality has been removed, and the apocalypse scenarios have been perceived with a possibility of reality, and their interest and relationship have increased” (Balkaya, 2022).

According to the director Derviş Zaim<sup>3</sup>, “Through the films that tell the stories of people who struggle to survive and try to re-establish their future, they can get into the process of getting to know themselves, asking questions about themselves and seeking answers to their questions. At the final stage of this search for a solution, he can relax with the feeling that he can be an ointment to his troubles” (Zaim, 2022).

Kerem Kaban<sup>4</sup>; The individual may want to escape from reality right now and may also seek a different type of entertainment that is not at all pathological or dysfunctional but may be healthy. But because it is so distressing, it can create a permanent avoidance of dark fiction and an unhealthy form of avoidance that has negative consequences when crises arise. If a large segment of society is focused on escaping the reality of the real situation and maintaining a sense of denial, rejection of a fictional depiction is a symptom of potentially dangerous social denial. During the epidemic, many people were forced into passivity. As restricted subjects, the most devastating thing they could do, especially in the early part of the pandemic, was to do nothing physically. Instead, many people sat at home to experience the end of the world on screen. This obligatory passivity began to appear as an ultimate part of what all social relationships experience through images and appearances (Kaban, 2022).

According to Balkaya, this genre has created a very large audience for itself in the current reality. In fact, although this need was created by a certain amount of audience, it was the industry that kept this need alive. In the age we call digital, it is in question that the audience is

followed and seriously guided by artificial intelligence and algorithms created. These are choices made by the audience, in a sense, out of consciousness. The genres produced in the halls that were open before the pandemic would be box office focused and diversity would continue. Even if the halls are closed and then opened, the tendency of the audience to digital channels has increased due to the uneasiness of collective gathering and similar factors, and the lack of interest compared to the past. It should be considered that the increasing demand for this genre and the fact that it is watched more often is not only the audience preference but also the sector and algorithms (Balkaya, 2022).

Why is there a need to watch such films, which describe the city and people in destruction, ruin, and chaos, when they are already living in an anxious period?

Çiğdem Dürüst; Individuals who encounter unexpected, sudden, uncontrollable, and undesirable events may develop negative emotions. The individual who experiences all these negative emotions, which are known to be very intense in uncertainty and insecurity, may experience some emotional states up to post-traumatic stress disorder, accompanied by the effect of the event and the feeling of being blocked by factors such as the severity, length, and breadth of the process. Desires, expectations, and desires that emerged at various stages of this process were prevented or delayed. Being prevented and/or delayed may reveal feelings of anger and aggression, stress, and anxiety in the individual. The way of expressing these feelings can be affected by the personality structure of the individual, the way of life, the style of meeting the developing conditions, and many other individual or psychosocial factors. Considering that the media, especially movies and TV series, is an activity that meets the social needs of the individual, it seems possible to think that it can make evaluations to meet this need (Dürüst, 2022).

According to Canol Balkaya, these are choices made by the audience unconsciously. Because this process, which we call "digitalization", is directed seriously by the artificial intelligence created and the algorithms they use. Especially with the movie theaters that were closed during the pandemic, digital platforms that caught a blank space and started to rise, following all the developments in the world closely and processing the data they obtain through artificial intelligence, and the algorithms they use in the background consider many factors and base the basic choices of the audience using the platform. it presents options. He explains that although the options presented create the impression that they are presented according to the audience, they are options imposed on the audience by the platform, considering purely commercial elements (Balkaya, 2022).

Derviş Zaim also states that the audience can be nourished by such films in terms of finding a cure, creating empathy, and eliminating the feeling that they are not alone (Zaim, 2022).

Çiğdem Dürüst; All kinds of questioning, thinking, experiencing new behaviors, and trying to understand and understand their emotions within the scope of the search for meaning can also help the individual to accept the undesirable process. What to do, the method and skill of discovering solutions are important in terms of increasing resilience and balancing life-sustaining behaviors. The questions that he cannot find answers to in this process can help him focus his behaviors on the pursuit of survival so that his search for meaning in life can be reinforced or contribute to his adaptation to the new situation. All kinds of stimuli from the environment, of which the media has an important place, help them to form ideas, develop meanings and shape their attitudes, to act in the context of individuals or groups. The aim here is to bring life under control again (Küçükcan & Köse, 2000, p. 65) (Dürüst, 2022).



According to Kerem Kaban, although the apocalypse may seem like an unrepresentable event at first glance, it has been one of the leading narratives, especially in cinema and literature. The thought of the end of the world forces us to dream. It confronts the limit of knowledge that seems impossible. The moment human psychology starts to feel like losing control, the mind acts and starts to produce doomsday scenarios. It doesn't matter to the mind how likely the worst-case scenario is to happen, what matters is having the strength to believe it, even if it's a one-in-a-million chance. When looking at such films, the negative images and feelings left by people are not generally mentioned, the main idea is the strong hope that everything will return to normal at the end of this process. This hope is the most important layer that the mind needs for the doomsday scenario (Kaban, 2022).

In this case, can the anxiety of the pandemic situation in real life be reduced by watching movies about the pandemic?

According to Derviş Zaim, the audience, who watches movies that center on fear and anxiety, can develop a strategy to play with fear, overcome fear and live with it, through these movies. An alarming situation that won't go away easily can be handled more easily with such a viewing experience. By watching works that center on fear, the audience can divide fear into more understandable, divisible, digestible, and swallowable parts and encounter it in less frightening conditions and rhythms and try to digest it. Horror movies can help the audience that is living in an anxious atmosphere in the process of coping with their fear (Zaim, 2022).

Çiğdem Dürüst; individuals who had to experience various troubles in many areas of their lives due to the Pandemic; Instead of focusing on the effects of this process, individuals can sometimes focus more on what they can learn from the event. Thanks to the factors that will strengthen the sense of hope, they can increase the joy of life. They may hold on to religious

beliefs, dreams, and fantasies that can support self-confidence. They can socialize in this direction, she says (Dürüst, 2022).

Canol Balkaya; the subject of all social interactions has determined the conditions of this pandemic, which has been experienced for a while. How many vaccinations have you had? Which country or brand of vaccine was it? Nano outgrowth? Are they produced using traditional methods? Have you ever been Covid-19? How many times have you caught the virus? Were you intubated? etc. Now, the relationship we have established with all our verbal and written social environment, as well as the reality that we live in the media, digital platforms, social media, or entertainment sector, and the fact that we live with the lower or upper memory will provide some relief until the process of returning to normalization. He says that such films have a great impact in this sense (Balkaya, 2022).

Kerem Kaban; In fact, our pleasure in such stories is indicative of what we are most worried about. We see the disintegration of a society, what life would be like, and what the consequences might be. As consumers of popular culture, we like to see scenarios where society is threatened and possibly collapsed. These are the expressions of our fears that we have constructed in our minds. We would also like to see how human society manages it. This means that the fears produced by our minds are embodied in a solution (Kaban, 2022).

Then, in this process, do such films cause a decrease in the feeling of fear because they increase the feeling of security? Is the feeling of security the main factor in reducing this feeling?

Çiğdem Dürüst; It increases the sense of security in the axis of emotion and thought-based perspectives and related behavior and impulsive interactions, which may contribute to the temporary alienation from emotions such as fear, anxiety, worry, and horror (Dürüst, 2022).

For Canol Balkaya, I believe that cinema always refers to the future, not the past. For example, the production of Star Trek is a production that has existed almost since 1996. In this production, he offered predictions such as video conversations, traveling in space, and huge flash memories. Perhaps the only thing in this production that is not included in our lives yet is teleport. It creates a sense of fear and then connects the viewer with a sense of security. This gives the viewer the feeling that a safe way of salvation is possible no matter what the situation is (Balkaya, 2022).

According to Kerem Kaban, in a way, people are subconsciously responding to their groves by consuming similar stories that unfold in reality. Confrontation becomes its own form of escape. There is also the case that seeing frightening conditions on the screen can provide relief from being alone and help reduce our fear in uncertain times. There may even be a feeling of catharsis from watching these movies. In a safe environment where it is acceptable to experience fear, it may create a need to confront fear and confirm that one is safe (Kaban, 2022). Do such processes turn into a situation where both the producers of this industry and the consumers (audience) can benefit from each other?

According to Derviş Zaim, the issue of whether this kind of work can be transformed into a positive way of coping in terms of the mental health of the producers is an ambiguous subject on my own behalf, but the following can be argued. A creative team that has decided to produce a work that addresses this type of issue is likely to ponder over the feeling of fear. Such an attempt at mental and emotional reasoning can contribute to a better understanding of the dimensions of fear. Apart from that, producing works about fear and anxiety can benefit the revival of an industry that is in a stagnant state. Similarly, it is possible to talk about the fact that the works about fear can bring a positive economic input, as they will affect the functioning of industrial conditions in macro terms (Zaim, 2022).

As for Balkaya, since there is a period in which the digitalization process penetrates the entire industry, the big actors of the cinema industry can produce content according to their interests and tastes by closely following the audience, especially with artificial intelligence algorithms, the audience is also faced with the content in line with their wishes, and mutual benefit is provided due to the supply-demand balance. is possible. This is also the main issue and direction of the scenarios of their new productions, he says (Balkaya, 2022).

According to Kaban, When, in restraint, the reality is perceived as a social relationship between people mediated by images, then the critique of imagining the apocalypse outlined earlier loses ground. During the apocalyptic spectacle of the pandemic, for many people, the image itself becomes the gateway to reality. However, while the image world leads to the subject's complete alienation based on the end of his real-life experiences, it has been tried to be grasped as a field. This field of vision has turned into a form of politicizing the world of imagination by blurring the lines between image and reality, reshaping sensation, and experience, instead of pulling us into a field of fantasies. Such films also show a person what kinds of social conflicts can arise in the midst of chaos, what institutions can truly be trusted, and how the world can be viewed if people act selfishly or cooperatively. This provides a mutual benefit (Kaban, 2022).

According to Dürüst, the benefit framework of the cinema and film industry is to meet the need, to produce films on subjects with high visibility, or to create an economic and sociological relationship by reminding the old ones due to the situation associated with the extraordinariness of the period. It is ironic at this point that science is a risk in itself, but it is also remarkable. Everything remarkable brings to mind the formation of commodities on the producer-consumer axis and the exchange with economic value (Timur, 2017) (Dürüst, 2022).

In the fight against such crises, can the film industry help people manage their anxieties and fears?

Zaim; The digestible fear or anxiety that one puts in the position of being ruled may be less of a risk to the individual himself. For this reason, it is possible to say that films containing horror and dystopian elements in this tone can help the audience in their search for unity and balance. He says that films can constitute a mirror and conduce to the discussion of different views and dimensions (Zaim, 2022).

According to Balkaya, in the end, a hero will always appear and save all of humanity. The relationship that the audience establishes with the genre they watch has always been built on hope. The film, which progresses with destruction, death, and loss until the end, definitely pleases the audience with that hope. This is a formula, and it has always worked (Balkaya, 2022).

Çiğdem Dürüst says; in the face of an undesirable or unexpected event, it questions patience, courage, consciousness, tactics, and ability to survive with the right methods. It makes one question the value or worthlessness of spirituality, which religions block questioning. While scientists emphasize the problems that can be experienced, they often leave the solutions ambiguous. The notion that some of these responses are found in movies has become evident to many people. In fact, can some search for results, which are left open to questioning in movies, affect the way of thinking about life while giving those who watch the movie that emerges in these searches the "reward" that the brain needs in the form of "winning" to those who are right in the common discussion platforms? It is possible for clients who are addicted to having a perception of "lack of reward" and processes that lead to the perception of "winning an award" regarding the issue of anxiety and fear management here (Dürüst, 2022).

Kaban; apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic films necessarily envision a point of no return in humanity's future. But this future is nothing but a reflective result of present causes. By

addressing a troubled future with the current effects of power relations, the directors actually highlight critical parts of the present. Therefore, imagining a future that has never happened outside the scenario is nothing more than going one step further in the critique of the existing systems that govern the world (Kaban, 2022).

In your opinion, what inferences do the audience derive from such films?

Çiğdem Dürüst; The measures taken against what happened in such films have been associated with the pandemic process by individuals. The situation was supported by the fact that similar situations were experienced in the movies with the pandemic process, newspaper news, and advertising slogans. The viewers who interpret the messages discuss within themselves or mutually accept them as they are, according to their cultural and social characteristics, education and worldview, and the way they make sense of life. It is also possible to make sense of this by evaluating popular culture products in terms of research and cultural theories (Hall, 1980). The interpretations, the reactions of individuals are directly proportional to the dominant ideology, and what is appropriate for them is related to the agenda and interests. This situation leads to similarities in the way of being influenced by the same kind of movies (Dürüst, 2022).

Zaim; The spectator experiences an encounter within the framework of his own individual capacity in direct proportion to the tensions he experiences and can sail to other parties according to his individual integrity according to the results of the encounter. It may be inconvenient to consider this process limited to individual films or a frozen time period. Because the process continues and goes on endlessly, with other films, real events, and individuals meeting in a chain manner thanks to action and reaction. The aim continues in the form of finding balance or finding its opposite and completing it with the other elements within itself. Obviously, a similar movement can continue on macro scales. In this sense, films contribute to the process of



recognizing the balance and opposite of the social subconscious and completing the opposite with its opposite. He states that there is an ongoing dynamic at the social level, just like in individuals (Zaim, 2022).

Balkaya; The main reason for the audience is to catch an empathy with the reality they live in. The world has entered a new age, the name of this age is Anthropocene. Since the existence of humanity until today, nature has always intervened in human beings. With the beginning of the Anthropocene era, we stepped into another era to experience the apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic beginnings. Because this age is an age in which humans intervene in the world for the first time and cause the most damage due to developing industry, technology, environmental pollution, crowded human population, and climate changes. This pandemic, which was experienced during this era, in a sense, underlined the need for the governments and the people to have a common memory, and I think that their consciousness has improved. It is time to use the world more carefully, he says (Balkaya, 2022).

Kaban; When associated with science fiction, critical dystopia often implies a critique that warns against contemporary socio-political trends, with the concern of evoking a reaction in the audience that will likely help change the present. Therefore, the dystopian future, in which apocalyptic films are examined, is nothing but a temporal critique of the present. Although usually set in the future, dystopian fiction intends to address contemporary issues of human anxiety, he says (Kaban, 2022).

What kind of positive or negative contributions has the cinema industry made to the pandemic process with apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic films?

According to Balkaya, noting that he is not sure about his contribution, perhaps the production is a plus, the industry that caught the audience increased its investments in this genre, and the audience began to consume its relationship with this genre with a different awareness of

realism. He says that he has endured in the sectoral sense with financial contributions; unfortunately, the educational side of cinema has not come into play yet. The message that should be received is that "If the world is not used sparingly, disasters and great losses are at our doorstep", it is actually the right time for this awareness to develop, but in my opinion, this genre still has not risen above the category of entertainment class films (Balkaya, 2022).

Also, for Zaim; he said above that it is important for the individual to come into contact with the dark area within himself in order to achieve balance and integrity. It may not be possible for this effort to bring the expected results under all circumstances. Success: It may vary depending on the individual, the capacity of the individual, how he or she is surrounded by obstacles and barriers, whether these obstacles are manageable, and whether there are mentors who help the individual. Other factors may also affect this process. It is possible to claim similar determinations at the social level and on macro scales (Zaim, 2022).

Cigdem Dürüst; The pandemic process has generally affected the individual socially, and psychologically. The problems experienced throughout the world during the pandemic process have affected the daily lives of individuals. The processes of education, shopping, transportation, restrictions imposed on these, even curfews from time to time, and the closure of worship centers were also the subjects covered in the films.

Before the pandemic, the "defiant individuals/humanity of the 20th century" turned into people who protect themselves and their environment, and even try to protect their closest ones, after the pandemic, while making them realize that this is the phenomenon they are used to seeing in movies. Sometimes such films were watched not as a social activity as before, but also as documentaries or things to learn. Cases to be learned from were searched. That had a positive effect. These films, which shaped the issue of salvation along with desperation, had a positive

effect while saying that it was possible to get rid of it. As her sense of helplessness turned into reality, it helped her to question that there might be remedies.

The support of political and military ideology was questioned. Political rulers were questioned. This has had both negative and positive effects. Because political forces and military forces were the forces that tried to produce solutions in such films. What happened during the pandemic process caused these movies to be considered realistic. When similar movies are researched, it is stated that movies are watched and individuals are affected more positively (Dürüst, 2022).

According to Kerem Kaban, the pandemic has created a lot of negative emotions in people since it started. There have been mental breakdowns, depression, and even suicides. What helped people overcome this mental crisis was finding a plot to identify with.

Thus, the most dystopian applications of today's world systems survive with a sense of nostalgia compared to the results of the apocalypse with their advanced technologies. In almost all fiction, a hazy and unresolved code began to form about the future of humanity. The worldview of the surviving masses was too blinded to look beyond survival. Capitalism will likely end in an apocalypse if the social rule has once turned into a monstrous self-destructive totalitarianism. The man-made epidemic was designed or created to accommodate a utopian future. He states that as we go from a utopian revelation to a dystopian disaster, we will have to look at all scenarios again (Kaban, 2022).

## Conclusion

The directly observable behaviors of the individual and the elements of thought, emotion, visualization, remembering, and taking action that affects them are the subject of psychology. In addition, the tendencies to imagine, remember, construct their social life, exist, and continue in their professional life have also changed. Psychology evaluates them as a whole and in the

context of social psychological theoretical approaches, the individual dimension is affected by the social structure and the social life is evaluated with the cooperation that contributes to the evaluation of the ways in which it is affected (Zimbardo & Gerrig, 2020).

Filmmakers can help people relax with the content of their films. With the feeling of control created by the movie, we can see a decrease in our anxieties and fears. For this reason, people who have fears watch horror movies about their fears, which helps them relax, contrary to what we think. Such films can instill feelings of control, hope, and courage in people, and can work quite well and effectively as a means of instilling emotions.

Another point is that when people start to get the feeling of losing control, their minds start to produce disaster scenarios, the worst of the situation. It doesn't matter to our minds how low the probability of the worst scenario will happen, the important thing is to be able to produce such a scenario and to have the power to believe it, even if it is a one-in-a-million chance. Watching movies containing such disaster scenarios can provide us with all the positive emotions and thoughts we need for our own disaster scenario, such as hope, courage, unity, saving lives, feeling useful, taking control, and resilience. This is why such disaster movies end with a victory for humanity. In this sense, it is very important for both the producers and the audience that the films prepared during such processes or the disaster films that have a one-in-a-million probability of happening even if they have not been experienced in the world yet are finished with an end that humanity has won.

There are three natural tendencies in the brain for people to fight the anxiety brought by the pandemic, says Kerem Kaban.

Escape: You either fight or flee. However, when it comes to an unseen enemy like a virus, escaping is a better option. The physical flight involved staying at home and avoiding contact

with many people. However, social distancing also triggers another type of crisis that affects mental health. People needed another place to escape, and that was in post-apocalyptic movies.

Emotional Resonance: That is, it is the thought process of feeling another person's emotions. These films can give you two kinds of resonance experiences. When you feel nervous watching a scene from that movie, you experience the same resonance. This means feeling the full feeling of the other. Emotional resonance is experiencing a physical union with the characters in the movie. Like crying or laughing.

Empathy: While watching the characters on the movie screen, you also experience their emotions. This is called empathy, and it has led to feeling compassion for people (Kaban, 2022).

Perhaps one of the more important points is that the effects of this epidemic process will continue at a serious rate after the epidemic rather than at the time of the epidemic. In many studies, it is seen that post-epidemic people deal with "post-traumatic stress disorder" and "depression" problems up to 30%. When we look at disaster-themed movies, these movies do not mention the negative images and feelings left by people after the disaster. Thus, people feed on the hope that everything will return to normal when this process is over. Such hope is the most important part the mind needs for a disaster scenario.

The science of psychiatry confirms the support of cinema in this regard and accepts the concept of cinema therapy (Sharp, Smith, & Cole, 2002).

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## INTERVIEWS

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