THE FRAMING OF AFRICA IN TURKISH NEWSPAPERS

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ABSTRACT

Media plays a crucial role in shaping audience perceptions and interpretations of events through framing, which emphasizes specific issues while downplaying or ignoring others. Previous research on Africa's media portrayal has consistently shown that non-African outlets often depict the continent in an unfairly negative light, reinforcing stereotypes and limiting a nuanced understanding of African realities. However, little research has explored how Turkish media frames Africa.

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative content analysis and framing analysis, to examine how Turkish newspapers represent Africa. It investigates the dominant frames used in African news coverage, the frequency and types of African stories reported, and the distinctions in framing between North and Sub-Saharan Africa. The sample comprises all issues of four Turkish newspapers—*Hürriyet*, *Sabah*, *Sözcü*, and *Akşam*—published between July 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021. By analyzing this comprehensive dataset of news articles, the study identifies patterns in Turkish media discourse on Africa and evaluates the implications of these representations.

Findings indicate that Turkish newspapers predominantly apply the responsibility frame, which appears in 44.3% of all Africa-related news. Political news is the most frequently reported category, emphasizing governance, diplomacy, and security-related issues. Furthermore, over 99% of African news coverage comprises event-based reporting rather than original investigative journalism, limiting deeper engagement with African affairs. The study also reveals significant differences between North and Sub-Saharan African coverage. North Africa receives more media attention, and regional reports frequently adopt the responsibility frame. In contrast, Sub-Saharan Africa is covered less extensively, with a higher prevalence of the human-interest frame, often focusing on social and humanitarian issues. These findings contribute to a broader understanding of how Turkish media constructs narratives about Africa and the potential implications for public perception and international relations.

Keywords: *Framing, Africa, Turkish Newspapers, Frames, Representation.*

TÜRK GAZETELERİNDE AFRİKA'NIN ÇERÇEVELENMESİ

ÖZET

Medya, belirli konuların bazı yönlerini vurgularken diğerlerini göz ardı ederek veya önemsizleştirerek çerçeveleme yoluyla izleyici yorumlarını ve algılarını etkiler. Afrika'nın medyadaki temsiline ilişkin önceki araştırmalar, Afrika dışındaki medya kuruluşlarının kıtayı çoğunlukla haksız bir şekilde olumsuz gösterdiğini ortaya koymuştur.

Bu çalışma, Türk gazetelerinin Afrika'yı nasıl temsil ettiğini incelemek amacıyla nicel ve nitel içerik analizi ile çerçeveleme analizini birleştiren karma yöntemli bir yaklaşım benimsemektedir. Araştırma, Afrika haberlerinde kullanılan baskın çerçeveleri, haberlerin sıklığını ve türlerini, ayrıca Kuzey Afrika ile Sahra Altı Afrika arasındaki çerçeveleme farklılıklarını araştırmaktadır. Örneklem, 1 Temmuz 2020 ile 30 Haziran 2021 tarihleri arasında yayımlanan dört Türk gazetesinin—*Hürriyet*, *Sabah*, *Sözcü* ve *Akşam*— tüm sayılarından oluşmaktadır. Bu kapsamlı haber makalesi veri seti aracılığıyla çalışma, Türk medyasındaki Afrika söylemine ilişkin örüntüleri belirlemekte ve bu temsilcilerin olası etkilerini değerlendirmektedir.

Bulgular, Türk gazetelerinin Afrika ile ilgili haberlerinde ağırlıklı olarak sorumluluk çerçevesini kullandığını ve bu çerçevenin Afrika ile ilgili haberlerin %44,3'ünü oluşturduğunu göstermektedir. Siyasi

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haberler en sık yayımlanan haber kategorisi olarak öne çıkarken, Türk gazetelerindeki Afrika haberlerinin %99'undan fazlasının gazetelerin kendi araştırmalarından ziyade olayları kapsadığı dikkat çekmektedir. Kuzey Afrika ve Sahra Altı Afrika'nın haber kapsamında da önemli farklılıklar bulunmaktadır. Kuzey Afrika, Sahra Altı Afrika'ya göre daha fazla medya ilgisi görürken, çerçeveleme biçimi de değişiklik göstermektedir: Kuzey Afrika haberlerinde sorumluluk çerçevesi daha yaygın kullanılırken, Sahra Altı Afrika ile ilgili haberlerde insan ilgisi çerçevesi daha sık tercih edilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çerçeveleme, Afrika, Türk Gazeteleri, Çerçeve, Temsil.

INTRODUCTION

Since the era of enslavement and colonialism, Africa has been subjected to negative portrayals, initially propagated by traders, missionaries, explorers, and adventurers who depicted the continent as "dark" and uncivilized, in need of enlightenment. Although colonialism has ended, these negative representations persist, now mainly spread through the media. Africa, with its 54 sovereign nations, is often stereotyped, especially in Western media, as a homogeneous entity rather than a continent rich in diverse cultures and nations (Biney, 1997). The enduring negative imagery of Africa has thus shifted from the narratives of traders, missionaries, and adventurers to those now promoted by the media.

Africa is the world's second most populous continent, the second largest by land area, and arguably the most diverse. Despite its immense diversity, it continues to be subjected to stereotypical representations, particularly in Western media. The continent, with its 54 independent countries, is frequently portrayed as a single, monolithic entity, much like China, India, or Russia. This misconception ignores that Africa is a vast and varied continent, home to nations with rich cultural and linguistic diversity (Biney, 1997).

Turkiye's relationship with Africa dates back to the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century. However, modern Turkiye's engagement with the continent began in earnest in 1998 with its "opening up to Africa" initiative. This engagement was further reinforced in 2005 when Turkiye declared it "the Year of Africa" and adopted a more concrete policy to deepen ties with the continent. Today, Turkiye is Africa's fourth most represented country, following the United States, China, and France (Orakçi, 2022).

Several studies have examined how media from countries with significant representation on the continent, such as the United States, China, and France, frame Africa. However, Turkiye remains an exception. Despite Turkiye being a key player and maintaining bilateral cooperation with Africa, no studies have been conducted on the coverage and framing of the African continent in Turkish media, particularly in Turkish newspapers. This study aims to address this research gap by investigating how Africa is framed in Turkish newspapers, explicitly focusing on comparing the framing of North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Based on preliminary research, this study proposes the following hypothesis: "Conflict is the most commonly used frame by Turkish newspapers to portray Africa; additionally, Turkish newspapers frame the two regions of Africa (North and Sub-Saharan) similarly."

Framing refers to how news media select, emphasize, organize, and present information to an audience. During this process, journalists choose which elements of reality to highlight, such as focus, language, tone, placement of specific facts and evidence, values, and norms (Ford & King, 2015). Media frames organize and present messages from particular perspectives, shaping how audiences perceive and interpret the information (Gabore, 2020). The same event can be portrayed differently by selecting, emphasizing, excluding, or presenting information differently (Borah, 2011).

Framing also serves as a tool for media to provide specific cues, interpretations, and suggested decisions (Scheufele, 2006). By emphasizing certain aspects of an issue or excluding others, framing makes particular considerations more salient, favoring one perspective over another (Stauffacher et al., 2015).

This study explores how Turkish newspapers portray Africa in their news coverage, applying framing theory and utilizing both content and framing analysis methods. It addresses two main research questions:

1. How do Turkish newspapers frame Africa in their news coverage?

2. How does the coverage differ between North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa?

Additionally, the study examines four sub-questions:

- The presence of African news in Turkish newspapers
- The characteristics of African news in Turkish newspapers
- The most common types of African news in Turkish newspapers
- The quality of African news in Turkish newspapers

The study aims to understand how Turkish media represents different regions of Africa and whether certain areas receive more attention or distinct types of coverage compared to others.

Africa

Africa is a vast and diverse continent, rich in culture, history, and geography. It is the world's second-largest continent, covering 30.3 million square kilometers and home to 54 countries. The continent is often misunderstood, with some perceiving it as a single country or solely defined by deserts and wildlife. However, it features eight major physical regions, including savannas, rainforests, highlands, and coastal areas. Africa's population is equally diverse, speaking thousands of languages and divided into two broad racial groups: *Black populations*, making up over 70% of Sub-Saharan Africa, and *Caucasoid groups*, including Arabs in the north and European-descended populations in Southern Africa (Kaba, 2020; Palmer, 2022).

Today, Africa is home to over a billion people and is one of the most diverse continents in the world. It is rich in natural resources, including arable land, water, oil, natural gas, minerals, forests, and wildlife, holding a significant share of renewable and non-renewable global resources. African countries have diverse government systems, ranging from full presidential republics to semi-presidential and absolute monarchies.

Africa is divided into five geographical regions and has numerous regional cooperation organizations facilitating economic and political collaboration.

Table 1: Regions of Africa

Region	Countries
Eastern Africa	Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.
Western Africa	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.
Northern Africa	Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Sahrawi Republic and Tunisia.
Southern African	Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe
Central Africa	Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and São Tomé and Principe.

Source: African Union

Another way to categorize the African continent is by dividing it into North and Sub-Saharan Africa. These two regions are often distinguished due to differences in climate, culture, and historical influences. While different sources define the boundary between them based on varying criteria, this study considers North

Africa to include the five countries generally recognized as part of the Arab world, which have closer historical, cultural, and economic ties to the Middle East and the Mediterranean region: Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia. The remaining 49 countries are classified as Sub-Saharan Africa.

Although Africa is often associated with challenges such as coups, hunger, droughts, wars, and poverty, these issues are not universal across the continent. For instance, while coups occurred in Chad, Mali, Guinea, and Sudan in 2021, some African nations have never experienced one since gaining independence. Similarly, droughts may impact countries in the Sahel and Sahara, but others, such as São Tomé and Príncipe and Equatorial Guinea, rank among the world's wettest regions. Furthermore, while some African nations are classified as less developed, others, such as Seychelles and Mauritius, rank higher on the Human Development Index (HDI) than some European countries, underscoring Africa's diversity and progress.

Turkiye-Africa Relations

The relationship between Turkiye and the African continent dates back more than five centuries. Some scholars argue that relations between Turks and Africans predate the 15th century.[2] This study summarizes relations between Turkiye and Africans beginning in the 15th century, following the formation of the Ottoman Empire. The relationship is divided into three periods: the first during the Ottoman Empire, the second during the republic, and the third from the 1998 "Opening up to Africa" plan to the present (Gunn, 2020).

1. **Ottoman Empire (1510s-1918)**: Relations began when the Ottoman Empire expanded into North Africa, conquering regions like Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and parts of Sudan, Somalia, and Ethiopia. Sub-Saharan Africa had minimal contact, but the Ottomans maintained ties with African kingdoms such as Kanem Bornu and the Sultanate of Zanzibar (Firat, 2016; Gunn, 2020).

2. **Republic Period (1923-1997):** Following the fall of the Ottoman Empire, Turkiye focused on its internal issues, leading to limited interaction with Africa. However, Turkiye supported African decolonization and gradually established diplomatic missions, starting with North Africa and extending to Sub-Saharan countries like Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya (Özkan & Akgûn, 2010).

3. **1998-Present**: The "Africa Action Plan" initiated in 1998 marked a shift toward stronger diplomatic, political, and economic engagement with Africa. This period saw Turkiye's increased diplomatic presence, including observer status at the African Union (AU) in 2005 and designation as an AU strategic partner in 2008. The Turkiye-Africa Cooperation Summit, held every four years, strengthens bilateral ties. Turkiye's economic relations have flourished, with trade reaching $25.3 billion by 2020. The focus is on mutually beneficial cooperation, particularly in education, cultural exchanges, and humanitarian aid (Gunn, 2020).

Turkiye's relationship with Africa has significantly expanded, evidenced by increased diplomatic missions, business ventures, educational exchanges, and humanitarian support. This partnership focuses on win-win cooperation, mutual respect, and shared development.

Turkish Newspapers

According to Öner, 2011, Özgen, 2012, and Alrmizan, 2019, the history of newspapers in Turkish territory began in 1795 with the French-language *Bulletin des Nouvelles* in Istanbul. The first Ottoman newspaper focused on Ottoman affairs was the *Spectateur de l'Orient* (1825). However, *Takvim-i Vekayi* (1831) is considered the first official Ottoman newspaper in Turkish, followed by the first private newspaper, *Ceride-i Havadis* (1840).

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[2]Turkiye-Africa relations have an ancient history for Turks and Africa. It started during the period of Turkish tribes and Anatolian beyliks (*Anadolu beylikleri)* that broke away from Central Asia and migrated to the West, Europe, and Africa (Firat, 2016, p. 60).

The press evolved through several key periods:

1. Ottoman Era: Various newspapers emerged covering religious, artistic, and political content.
2. Early Republic Period (1920s): The press faced strict government control through the law known as Takrir-i Sükûn Kanunu (1925), leading to newspaper closures and journalist imprisonments. The 1928 alphabet reform, changing from Arabic to Latin script, temporarily decreased readership and circulation.
3. Post-WWII Era: The press expanded with new publications like Hürriyet and Milliyet. Technological advances enabled more significant circulation numbers, with Hürriyet reaching one million copies in the 1960s.
4. Military Intervention Period: The press was restricted during multiple military coups (1960, 1971, 1980, and 1997), which affected media outlets and journalists.
5. Modern Era: The 1990s-2000s saw the emergence of media conglomerates and online newspapers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Framing

This study is guided by framing theory, a widely used framework for understanding the effects of media that extends beyond the field of communication science. According to Ndinojuo, Ihejirika, and Okon (2018, p. 10), the origins of framing theory can be traced back to cognitive psychology through Bartlett (1932) and anthropology through Gregory Bateson (1955; 1972). The theory was later adapted in other fields, such as sociology, by Goffman (1974), who argued that interpretive designs are central to cultural belief systems. Goffman referred to these interpretive designs as *"frames,"* which we use daily to make sense of the world. The application of framing theory in communication science was first popularized by Tuchman's 1978 publication, *Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality* (Ndinojuo et al., 2018).

In communication, framing refers to how news media select, emphasize, organize, and present information to an audience. Journalists highlight specific elements of reality, such as focus, language, tone, placement of facts and evidence, values, and norms, to shape how audiences perceive an issue or event (Ford & King, 2015). Media framing organizes information into "packages" containing storylines that interpret and contextualize issues or events (Scheufele, 1999). According to Entman (1993, p. 52), framing involves "selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described."

Framing is a process that involves patterns of selection, emphasis, and exclusion (Gitlin, 1980, p. 17). It enables the depiction of the same event differently by selecting, emphasizing, interpreting, excluding, organizing, and presenting information in varying manners. The media employs framing by offering specific clues, interpretations, and evaluations, suggesting decisions, emphasizing certain aspects or parts of an issue to make them more salient, and excluding or muting other elements of reality, favoring one perspective over another (Gabore, 2020, p. 305).

Based on these definitions, framing can be understood as a communication theory that explains how the media packages and presents information to the public. It involves emphasizing specific events and contextualizing them to encourage or discourage particular interpretations. Consequently, the media wields selective influence over how people perceive issues or events.

In contrast, McCombs, Shaw, and Weaver (1997, as cited in Türkili, 2022, p. 26) argued that framing should be regarded as second-level agenda-setting, suggesting it is an extension of agenda-setting theory. However, Price, Tewksbury, and Powers (1997) contend that framing does not center on which topics or issues are selected but rather on the specific ways in which those issues are presented.

Furthermore, Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007) distinguish framing from agenda setting by asserting that "how an issue is characterized in news reports can influence how the audience understands it." This distinction highlights that while both agenda-setting and framing influence public opinion, they do so in different ways. Agenda setting prioritizes news topics like issues, groups, or individuals while framing shapes public opinion and perceptions of those topics.

Framing has two broad foundations: sociological and psychological. Sociological framing research examines the words, images, phrases, and presentation styles used to construct news stories and the processes that shape their construction (Gitlin, 1980). In contrast, framing with psychological foundations explores the cognitive processes involved in how audiences form frames and interpret messages (Gabore, 2020).

News Frames

Several scholars have defined "frames" in various ways. Fairhurst and Sarr (1996) described frames as how media and media gatekeepers organize and present events and issues and how audiences interpret the information provided. According to Entman (1993, p. 55), a frame is a "power imprint" that reflects the identity of actors or interests competing to dominate a text. The way media frame news can influence audience perception, propagate societal stereotypes, and shape empathy or aversion toward specific groups or ideologies (Ndinojuo et al., 2018). Similarly, Gitlin (1980, p. 7) defined frames as "persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation" media use to organize discourse through selection, emphasis, and exclusion.

Gamson and Modigliani (1987, p. 143) described a frame as a central organizing idea or storyline that provides meaning to unfolding events. Frames encapsulate the essence of an issue and highlight what is at stake in a debate. They further noted that the emergence of media frames is influenced by factors such as journalistic norms and practices and the influence of interest groups.

While other researchers, such as Edelman (1993), added other factors, such as ideology and prejudice to media frames, Scheufele (1999) recognized that media frames are shaped by external factors and identified five main factors that influence media frames:

(a) *Social norms and values* reflect widely accepted societal beliefs. (b) *Organizational pressures and constraints*, given that media outlets operate as profit-driven entities. (c) *Interest group pressures* reflect the inclinations of sponsors or stakeholders. (d) *Journalistic routines*, which prioritize the timely reporting of events. (e) *Journalists' ideological or political orientation* shapes framing issues within media narratives (Lin, 2016).

News frames can be categorized into *issue-specific frames* and *generic frames*. These can be analyzed through the presence or absence of specific keywords, stereotypes, images, information sources, and thematically supportive sentences (Entman, 1993, p. 52).

Vreese (2005, pp. 54–55) proposed four indicators for identifying and applying news frames:

1. **Distinguishable conceptual and linguistic characteristics** that define the frame.
2. **A common occurrence in journalistic practice**, ensuring its relevance.
3. **Reliability** in distinguishing the frame from others.
4. **Representational validity** means others should recognize the frame, not merely an academic construct.

Additionally, Tankard (2001, as cited in Ndinojuo et al., p. 13) outlined various framing devices that the media used to characterize and evaluate frames. These devices include headlines, subheads, photos, logos,

photo captions, leads, source selection, quote selection, pull quotes, statistics, charts, and concluding statements. This study adopts these framing devices and indicators to identify and analyze the words, sentences, and images used to represent Africa in Turkish newspapers.
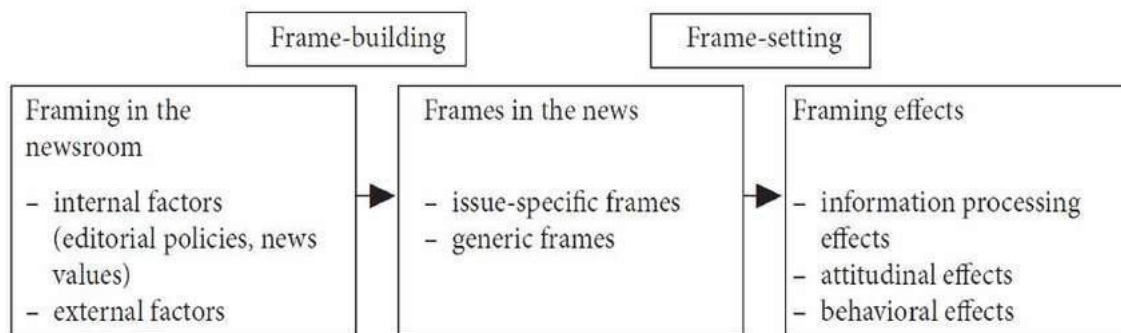
Framing Process

The framing process is continuous, with the outcomes of each phase serving as inputs for subsequent phases. Vreese (2005, pp. 51–52) identified three key stages of framing: *frame building, frame setting, and societal-level framing consequences*.

Frame building refers to the factors that shape the structural qualities of news frames. These factors can be internal, such as the ideology of journalists and media outlets, or external, such as political pressures. Lecheler and Vreese (2019) define frame building as the process through which the media select and prioritize competing frameworks originating from elite or strategic communicators. The frames produced through this process are included in news texts and represent the output of frame building (Türkili, 2022, p. 34).

Frame setting is a dynamic process that examines the interaction between media frames and audience responses. This stage explores the relationship between frames in communication (how the media present information) and frames in thought (how audiences interpret and process that information) (Vreese, 2005, pp. 52–53).

The final stage, *societal-level framing consequences*, encompasses the broader effects of framing on individuals and society. At the individual level, framing provides a cognitive structure that influences personal attitudes and decision-making. Exposure to specific frames can alter how individuals perceive and respond to issues. On a societal level, framing shapes collective processes, such as political socialization, decision-making, and collective action. By doing so, frames contribute to shaping public opinion and guiding societal behavior (Vreese, 2005, pp. 52–53).

Figure 1*: An integrated process model of framing (Vreese, 2005, p. 52).

The framing process, as illustrated in Figure 1, begins with a frame building, where external factors, such as elites, political, economic, and cultural actors or organizations, and internal factors, such as editorial policies and news values, together with media outlets and journalists, shape the creation of media frames. This is followed by framing, a stage where individual frames are developed, influencing public perceptions and attitudes based on media frames. In summary, this process highlights how various actors create frames and the impact of news frame exposure on audiences' attitudes, decisions, and emotions. Consequently, frames play a crucial role in shaping how elites construct reality, guiding journalists in information selection, and influencing audience cognition and attitudes, as they are inherently part of culture and socially shared (Vreese, 2005; Matthes, 2012).

Previous Studies

There is a notable gap in research on how Africa is framed in Turkish media, as no comprehensive studies have been conducted. This study marks the first investigation into the portrayal of Africa in Turkish media, contrasting with extensive research into the framing of Africa in Western and Chinese media.

Studies on Western media's depiction of Africa consistently highlight negative portrayals, with few presenting a positive image of the continent. For instance, Biney (1997) argues that misinformation about Africa is a persistent issue, dating back to colonial times when Africa was depicted as a "dark continent" needing civilization. Over time, Western media representations shifted from "emergent Africa" in the post-independence era to "dependent Africa" in the 1970s and eventually to a "crisis-ridden and pitiable continent" in the 1980s and 1990s. Contradictory narratives have also been identified, such as the use of euphemisms like "black-on-black violence" for South African conflicts. At the same time, similar phrases were absent in discussions of white-dominated conflicts, such as those in Northern Ireland.

Michira (2002) identified seven common Western media portrayals of Africa: (i). Africa is a homogeneous entity, treating the continent as a single country. (ii). The "Dark Continent" highlights backward traditions and practices like female genital mutilation. (iii). Africa as a "Wild/Jungle," portraying it as a giant zoo. (iv). Persistent images of famine and starvation are often described in broad, absolute terms. (v). A continent plagued by violence, conflict, and civil war. (vi). Political instability and recurring coups. (vii). A continent infested with diseases like HIV, Ebola, and malaria.

These depictions, shaped during the colonial era, continue to influence Western perceptions and are reinforced by media coverage. Western media often provides minimal historical and analytical context for African conflicts, instead attributing them to tribalism and irrationality. This approach often reflects imperialist and racist biases (Michira, 2002).

In contrast, Chinese media adopts a journalistic approach called "constructive journalism." This focuses on balanced reporting that highlights solutions alongside challenges. Studies, such as Gabore (2020), have shown that Chinese media tends to portray Africa more positively. Gabore (2020) highlighted that during the COVID-19 pandemic, Chinese media coverage of Africa was overwhelmingly positive (75.5%), while Western media reports were predominantly neutral (41.2%) or negative (34.3%). Similar trends were observed in Abate's (2020) analysis of Chinese media's coverage of Ethiopia, where 47% of reports were positive, 36% neutral, and only 17% negative.

This comparative insight underscores the need to explore how Turkish media, with its unique historical and diplomatic ties to Africa, frames the continent in its narratives.

METHODOLOGY

A research methodology collects, analyzes, and presents data within a specific sampling frame. It encompasses data collection methods, analytical tools, and the overall research approach, shaping the selection of specific methods (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015, p. 26).

There are two main research approaches: *quantitative* and *qualitative*. The *quantitative approach* focuses on numerical data, such as frequencies, percentages, and proportions, providing measurable insights. In contrast, the *qualitative approach* explores non-numerical data to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences (Lin, 2016). This study applied qualitative and quantitative methods to examine the presence of African news in Turkish newspapers and analyze how they frame Africa in their coverage.

Methods

Content Analysis

Content analysis is a research method used to study and summarize messages in various forms of mass media, such as films, books, magazines, songs, and advertisements. It has been defined in various ways.

Berelson (1952) described content analysis as a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of communication content (p. 263). Kerlinger (1986) defined it as a systematic, objective, and quantitative method for studying and analyzing communication to measure variables. Krippendorff (1980) characterized content analysis as a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data within its context. Similarly, Weber (1985) defined it as a methodology that employs procedures to derive valid inferences from text. These inferences may relate to the message's sender, the message itself, or the target audience (Prasad, 2008).

The method gained prominence during World War II when Harold Lasswell's project, funded by the U.S. government, evaluated enemy propaganda. This initiative laid the groundwork for content analysis as a scientific method. It led to advancements documented in works like *The Language of Politics* (1940s) and Berelson's book *Content Analysis in Communication Research* (1952), popularizing it in the social sciences and media research fields.

Content analysis became prominent in Turkiye in the 1960s, with early studies by Nermin Abadan (1961) and Şerif Mardin (1969). Abadan compared the newspapers *Cumhuriyet* and *Ulus*, while Mardin analyzed changes in *Ülkü* journal's content by counting word frequencies. By the 1980s, content analysis had become widely used in Turkish communication research and remains a key methodology today (Atabek, 2007, p. 3).

This study employed qualitative and quantitative content analysis to examine news coverage of Africa in Turkish newspapers.[3]The qualitative analysis focused on the use of the term "Africa" and the accuracy and depth of information, while the quantitative analysis involved processing data in SPSS, conducting frequency analyses, and creating cross-tabulations.

The study analyzed three key areas:

1. **News Presence and Prioritization** – It assessed how frequently Africa-related news appeared on front pages, included images, or had large headlines.[4]

2. **Characteristics of Coverage** – It examined the context of reporting (event-driven vs. investigative), sources used (primary vs. secondary), diversity of country coverage, and the overall tone (positive, negative, or neutral).

3. **News Topics** – African news was categorized into eight main themes: economic, political, health and education, environmental, poverty and hunger, war and terrorism, Turkiye-Africa relations, and humanitarian issues. News that did not fit these categories was classified under "Other Topics," each category was analyzed for frequency and distribution in Turkish newspapers.

Framing Analysis

According to Vreese (2005), framing analysis is a key area of communication research that examines how the media presents specific topics by emphasizing certain aspects over others and identifying the factors influencing these choices. There are two main approaches to identifying frames in media: the *inductive approach*, where frames emerge from the data without predefined categories, and the *deductive approach*, which applies predefined frames to analyze media content (p. 53).

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[3] In quantitative content analysis, a concept is selected for examination, and analysis involves measuring and counting its existence. In contrast, qualitative content analysis aims to go beyond the existence of concepts by exploring the relationships between the defined concepts (Neuendorf, 2017).

[4] Fedyk (2018) and Serdali et al. (2016) mentioned headlines, front-page news, and images as a method of prioritizing news and a functional mechanism for influencing readers.

This study adopted the deductive approach, investigating five generic news frames identified by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) in their report, *Framing European Politics: A Content Analysis of Press and Television News* (p. 95). These frames are:

1. **Conflict:** Portrays news regarding individual, group, or nation disagreements.
2. **Attribution of Responsibility:** Assigns blame or responsibility for an issue to individuals, organizations, or governments.
3. **Human Interest:** Introduces personal or emotional elements, often featuring individual stories or human-centered narratives.
4. **Morality:** Frames issues through religious or ethical perspectives.
5. **Economic Consequences:** Highlights events' financial and economic impact on individuals, groups, or nations.

An additional category, **Other**, was used for news that did not fit into these frames. These generic frames served as coding tools to analyze how Turkish newspapers framed Africa in their reporting.

Sampling

This study employed purposive sampling to select a representative subset of Turkish newspapers. All issues of *Hürriyet*, *Sabah*, *Sözcü*, and *Akşam* published between July 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021, were analyzed. These newspapers were selected based on their high circulation, diverse ownership structures, and ideological differences, enabling a comprehensive examination of how Africa is framed in Turkish media.

FINDINGS

This study examined the presence and visibility of African news in Turkish newspaper publications. A total of 1,460 publications were analyzed, of which 473 included at least one mention of Africa or an African country. Among these, Akşam had the highest number of newspapers with African-related articles (147), followed by Hürriyet (124), Sabah (119), and Sözcü (83). In total, 595 news items mentioning Africa were identified and analyzed across these newspapers. The results are discussed below.

News Coverage of Africa

The study identified 595 news articles about African countries, leaders, and citizens. Akşam published the most Africa-related news (208, 35%), followed by Sabah (143, 24%), Hürriyet (141, 23.7%), and Sözcü (103, 17.3%).

Front-page coverage was minimal, with only 7.6% of African news appearing on front pages. Akşam had the most front-page stories (24), while Hürriyet and Sabah had nine each, and Sözcü had only three.

Visual representation was prominent, as 97.3% of African news featured photographs depicting events, leaders, or conflict aftermaths. Additionally, 44.4% of African news had large, attention-grabbing headlines, while 55.6% used minor headings.

Characteristics of the News and Articles Mentioning Africa

- *Context of Reporting*

The study examined what drives Turkish newspapers to cover Africa and whether they conduct investigative journalism or report on events. It found that only two investigative reports from Sabah focused on Africans living in Turkiye, making up just 0.3% of Africa-related news. The remaining 99.7% of coverage was event-driven, covering elections, attacks, and statements by leaders.

- *Sources of News*

Turkish newspapers relied on both primary and secondary sources. *Akşam* and *Sabah* used more primary sources, while *Hürriyet* and *Sözcü* relied more on secondary sources. 53.6% of African news used primary sources, mainly leaders and official documents from organizations like the UN and AU. Another 39.5% came from secondary sources, such as other media and news agencies, while 6.9% had no cited sources.

- ***Breadth of News Coverage***

The study found that African countries were not equally represented. Libya accounted for 42.7% of Africa-related news, followed by Egypt (21.3%), meaning these two countries comprised 64% of coverage. Nigeria and Somalia followed, each with only 4%, while many countries, including Angola, Malawi, and Congo, were barely mentioned.

A significant reporting gap existed between North and Sub-Saharan Africa. North Africa (5 countries) accounted for 67.4% of coverage, while Sub-Saharan Africa (49 countries) received only 31.1%. When looking at news focused on a single country, North Africa's share rose to 68.4%, highlighting an imbalance in Turkish media coverage of Africa.

- ***News Tone***

The study examined the tone used in Turkish newspapers when reporting on Africa. It found that the most common tone was neutral, followed by positive and negative tones. A neutral tone appeared in 81.8% of African news, a positive tone in 11.9%, and a negative tone in 6.2%.

When breaking it down by region, North African news had a predominantly neutral tone (84%), with 12.5% positive and 3.5% negative tone. In contrast, Sub-Saharan African news also leaned neutral (79.5%), but it had a higher proportion of negative tone (12.4%) compared to positive tone (8.1%).

An important observation is the differing use of tones in the coverage of North and Sub-Saharan Africa. North African news had a significantly higher percentage of neutral tone (69.6%) than Sub-Saharan Africa (30.4%). Additionally, North Africa received more positive tone coverage (76.9%) than Sub-Saharan Africa (23.1%). In contrast, Sub-Saharan Africa had more of the news reported with a negative tone (62.2%) than North Africa (37.2%).

Types of News

Numerous social, political, and economic activities occur daily on the African continent; this study investigated which events are reported in Turkish newspapers. The study established eight news categories: economic, political, war and terrorism, health and education, environmental, poverty and hunger, Turkiye-Africa relations, and humanitarian news. News that did not fit into these categories was labeled "other." The study found that 545 (91.6%) of the news about Africa in Turkish newspapers fell into these categories, while the remaining 50 cases (8.4%) were considered invalid. The term "all African news" refers to the valid cases.
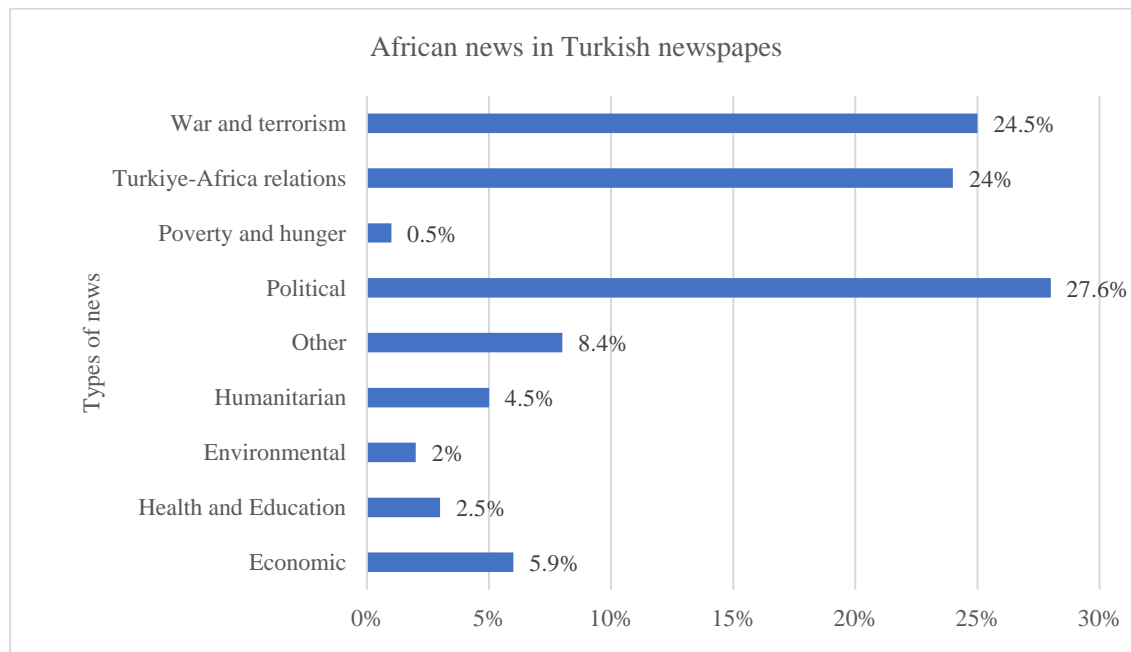
Table 2: Types of news in Turkish newspapers

Type of News	Newspaper									
	Akşam		Hürriyet		Sabah		Sözcü		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Environmental	6	3.4%	1	0.7%	2	1.5%	3	3,1%	12	2.2%
Economic	13	7.3%	11	8.1%	5	3.7%	6	6,3%	35	6.4%
Humanitarian	12	6.7%	4	2.9%	11	8.1%	0	0%	27	5%
Health and Education	10	5.6%	3	2.2%	1	0.7%	1	1%	15	2.8%
War and terrorism	56	31.5%	27	19.9%	36	26.7%	27	28,1%	146	26.8%
Political	52	29.2%	49	36%	32	23.7%	31	32,3%	164	30.1%

Turkiye-Africa relations	27	15.2%	41	30.1%	47	34.8%	28	29,2%	143	26.2%
Poverty and hunger	2	1.1%	0	0%	1	0.7%	0	0%	3	0.6%
Total	178	100%	136	100%	135	100%	96	100%	545	100%

The study found that different Turkish newspapers emphasized various news categories about Africa. Akşam focused more on war and terrorism news, followed by political news and news about Turkiye-Africa relations. Sabah prioritized Turkiye-Africa relations, followed by news of war and terrorism, and political news. Hürriyet and Sözcü gave the most attention to political news, followed by Turkiye-Africa relations, war and terrorism, and other topics.

Political news was the most covered, accounting for 27.6% of African news, followed by war and terrorism news (24.5%) and Turkiye-Africa relations news (24%). Other categories included economic (5.9%), humanitarian (4.5%), health and education (2.5%), environmental (2%), and poverty and hunger (0.5%). The remaining 8.4% fell into unspecified categories.

Figure 2: News about Africa in Turkish newspapers

Analysis of Types of News

The analysis of news types in Turkish newspapers reveals that political news is the most dominant theme in African coverage, comprising 27.6% of all African-related news. Most of this news is neutral (94.5%) and covers elections, government affairs, and international relations. Examples include the Libyan election, political tensions between Algeria and France, and government appointments in Somalia.

War and terrorism news follows closely, making up 24.5% of African news. It includes conflicts, terrorism, and criminal acts, with coverage primarily neutral (86.3%) but also negative (13.7%). Examples include the church shooting in South Africa, terrorism incidents in Somalia, Nigeria, and Mozambique, and Chad's leader dying in battle.

Turkiye-Africa relations news ranks third at 24%, focusing on economic, social, and political engagements. It is primarily neutral (68.5%) but carries a significant positive tone (31.5%). Examples include visits by Turkish leaders to African countries, Turkiye's new phase of relations with Egypt, and meetings between Turkiye's President and African leaders.

Economic news represents 5.9% of African-related stories, covering trade, investments, and industries. It is mainly neutral (62.9%) but has notable positive (31.4%) and minor negative (5.7%) tones. Examples include the discovery and sale of Tanzania's most prominent tanzanite minerals, the economic effects of the Suez Canal blockade, and economic agreements between Egypt and Qatar.

Humanitarian news, at 4.5%, highlights aid and assistance, with predominantly neutral (85.2%) and some positive (14.8%) coverage. Examples include digging wells in Uganda, TIKA's food and hygiene assistance to Mozambique, and Turkiye's support for Tigrayans in need.

Health and education news accounts for 2.5%, addressing disease outbreaks and educational developments. It is equally neutral (40%) and positive (40%), with some negative (20%) representation. Examples include COVID-19-related deaths in South Africa, Ugandans defying COVID-19 rules in Istanbul, and education initiatives in Somalia.

Environmental news, comprising 2%, covers climate issues and natural disasters. It is primarily neutral (83.4%), followed by positive (8.3%) and negative (8.3%) tones. Examples include floods in Morocco and Sudan, an oil spill in Mauritius, and the Great Green Wall tree-planting project from Senegal to Djibouti.

Poverty and hunger news was the least covered genre at 0.5%. It was exclusively in a neutral tone, focusing on food scarcity and migration due to economic hardships. Examples include hunger caused by volcanic eruptions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, efforts to combat drought in Madagascar, and people fleeing hunger and migrating to Europe via Libya.

Types of News in North Africa vs Sub-Saharan Africa

The analysis compared the coverage of news genres in Turkish newspapers between North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa, revealing notable differences in focus.

Political news was the most covered in North Africa, accounting for 36%, followed closely by Turkiye-Africa relations at 34%. War and terrorism news made up 19.5%, while other genres had smaller shares: economic news (7.8%), humanitarian news (1.9%), environmental news (0.5%), and poverty and hunger news (0.3%).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, war and terrorism dominated coverage at 44.2%, followed by political news at 17.8% and humanitarian news at 12.3%. Other genres had minor representations, with health and education news at 8.6% (absent in North Africa), Turkiye-Africa relations news at 6.7%, environmental news at 5.5%, economic news at 3.7%, and poverty and hunger news at 1.2%.

The regional distribution of news genres also showed disparities. North Africa accounted for 92% of Turkiye-Africa relations news, 82.9% of economic news, 82.3% of political news, and 50.3% of war and terrorism news. In contrast, Sub-Saharan Africa dominated health and education news (100%), environmental news (81.8%), humanitarian news (74.1%), and poverty and hunger news (66.7%).

Table 3: News Genres in North Africa vs Sub-Saharan Africa

	Region					
	North Africa		Sub-Saharan Africa		Total	
Types of news	N	%	N	%	N	%
Environmental	2	0.5%	9	5.5%	11	2%
Economic	29	7.8%	6	3.7%	35	6.5%
Humanitarian	7	1.9%	20	12.3%	27	5%
Health and Education	0	0%	14	8.6%	14	2.6%
War and terrorism	73	19.5%	72	44.2%	145	27%

Political	135	36.1%	29	17.8%	164	30.5%
Turkiye-Africa relations	127	34%	11	6.7%	138	25.7%
Poverty and hunger	1	0.3%	2	1.2%	3	0.6%
Total	374	100%	163	100%	537	100%

Framing Analysis

This is the second section of the study's analysis, in which a deductive framing analysis technique was used to examine how Turkish newspapers frame news about Africa. The study focused on five generic news frames: conflict, human interest, attribution of responsibility, morality, and economic consequences, which were initially identified and applied by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000).

The study analyzed 566 news items, representing 95.1% of the news about Africa in Turkish newspapers, which were framed within these five generic frames. In contrast, only 29 news items (4.9%) were framed using other approaches not covered in this study. The responsibility frame is the most frequently used in all Turkish newspapers analyzed in this study. It appeared in more than half of the cases in Sözcü (56.9%) and Hürriyet (51.5%), 38% of news items in Akşam, and 37.1% in *Sabah*.

The ranking of the second-most to least-used frames varied between newspapers. In *Akşam*, the second-most used frame was the human-interest frame (26%), followed by the conflict frame (25%), the economic consequences frame (9.5%), and, in last place, the morality frame, which accounted for only 1.5% of the cases. In *Hürriyet*, the conflict frame ranked second (25.8%), followed by the economic consequences frame (12.1%), and the human-interest frame (10.6%) in last place. No cases in *Hürriyet* were framed using the morality frame. In *Sabah*, the conflict frame was the second-most used (26.5%), followed by the human-interest frame (19.7%), the economic consequences frame (14.4%), and, in last place, the morality frame, representing 2.3% of cases. In *Sözcü*, the conflict frame was the second-most used (18.6%), followed by the human-interest frame (17.6%) and the economic consequences frame (6.9%). As in *Hürriyet*, no cases in *Sözcü* were framed using the morality frame. Table 4 below presents the distribution of valid frame cases across various Turkish newspapers.

Table 4: Frames in Turkish newspapers

Frame	Newspaper								Total	
	Akşam		Hürriyet		Sabah		Sözcü			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Morality	3	1,5%	0	0%	3	2.3%	0	0%	6	1.1%
Conflict	50	25%	34	25.8%	35	26.5%	19	18.6%	138	24.4%
Economic consequences	19	9.5%	16	12.1%	19	14.4%	7	6.9%	61	10.8%
Human-interest	52	26%	14	10.6%	26	19.7%	18	17.6%	110	19.4%
Responsibility	76	38%	68	51.5%	49	37.1%	58	56.9%	251	44.3%
Total	200	100%	132	100%	132	100%	102	100%	566	100%

According to the study's overall analysis of valid frames, the responsibility frame was the most commonly used by Turkish newspapers in their coverage of Africa. The analysis revealed that 251 news items, or 44.3% of all African news with valid frames, were presented through the lens of attributing responsibility. Turkish newspapers used this frame to assign blame for issues such as wars and political instability to

African governments, leaders, and individuals. Additionally, news in this frame highlighted the roles of Turkish and African leaders in strengthening bilateral ties and assigned responsibility for addressing problems like hunger and climate change to individuals, groups, and organizations.

The conflict frame was the second most commonly used, appearing in 138 news items, or 24.4% of all African news with valid frames. Turkish newspapers presented these stories through the lens of quarrels, physical confrontations, or disputes among individuals, groups, organizations, or nations. News framed this way includes coverage of tensions between Ethiopia and Egypt over the Nile dam, the war between separatists and Libya's recognized government, unrest in Somalia, and the power struggle between Mali's military and government.

The human-interest frame was the third most frequently used, appearing in 110 news items, or 19.4% of all African news with valid frames. This frame emphasized personal narratives and emotional angles, focusing on human suffering, deaths, and individual stories. Examples of African news framed in this way by Turkish newspapers include reports on civilians killed by terrorists, migrants suffering and dying in the Mediterranean Sea, and the deaths of African leaders, celebrities, and other citizens.

The economic consequences frame was the fourth most commonly used in Turkish newspaper representations of Africa. It appeared in 61 news items, accounting for 10.8% of the valid African news frames. In this frame, Turkish newspapers reported African news focusing on the economic impact of an issue, event, or action on individuals, groups, organizations, or countries. Stories in this category highlighted the continent's economic progress, investment, industry, and development challenges. Examples include reports on housing development in Libya, the Suez Canal blockade, and agreements between Turkiye and African countries.

The morality frame was the least used, appearing in only six news items and accounting for 1.1% of the valid African news frames in Turkish newspapers. In this frame, African events and issues were presented in the context of morals, social responsibility, and religious values, emphasizing themes such as caring for others and helping the less fortunate. Examples include stories about assisting underprivileged children in Nigeria, Turkish citizens building wells in Uganda, and constructing mosques in Chad and Tanzania.

The bar chart below (Figure 3) illustrates the percentage distribution of each frame Turkish newspapers use in their coverage of Africa.
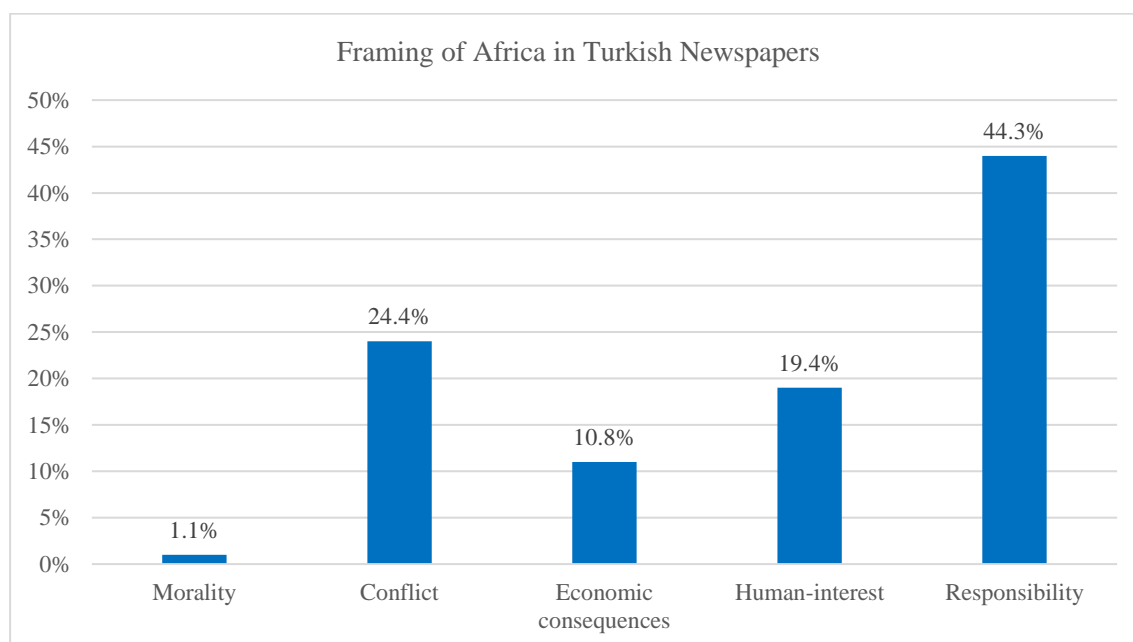
Figure 3: Frames in the news about Africa in Turkish newspapers

Framing in Various News Types

Building on its analysis of how Turkish newspapers generally frame African news, this study examined the distinct framing patterns used for different categories of African news.

The study found that Turkish newspapers predominantly use the responsibility frame when reporting on Africa. This frame was the most frequently applied across various news categories, including Turkiye-Africa relations (78.5%), environmental news (63.6%), health and education news (53.3%), humanitarian news (52%), and political news (50.9%).

The second most prevalent frame was the economic consequences frame, which was used in 90.6% of all economic news. Other notable framing patterns included the human-interest frame, which was dominant in poverty and hunger news (66.7%), and the conflict frame, which accounted for 47.9% of war and terrorism coverage.

Framing patterns varied across different news genres. In environmental news, 63.6% of stories were framed using the responsibility frame, while the remaining 34.4% were framed under the human-interest frame. Economic news was overwhelmingly framed through the economic consequences frame (90.6%), followed by the human-interest frame (6.3%) and the conflict frame (3.1%).

In humanitarian news, 52% of stories were framed using the responsibility frame, 24% using the human-interest frame, 16% using the morality frame, and 8% using the conflict frame. Similarly, health and education news were framed primarily through the responsibility frame (53.3%), followed by the human-interest frame (40%) and the economic consequences frame (6.7%).

Coverage of war and terrorism was framed mostly through the conflict frame (47.9%), with additional use of the human-interest frame (28.8%), the responsibility frame (19.9%), and the economic consequences frame (3.4%). In political news, 51% of stories were framed using the responsibility frame, followed by the conflict frame (37.1%), the human-interest frame (7.5%), and the economic consequences frame (4.4%).

The remaining two genres were framed as follows:

- In Turkiye-Africa relations coverage, 78.5% of stories were framed using the responsibility frame, followed by the economic consequences frame (13.1%), the conflict frame (4.6%), the human-interest frame (3.1%), and the morality frame (0.8%).
- In poverty and hunger coverage, the human-interest frame was the most dominant (66.7%), while the responsibility frame accounted for the remaining 33.3%.

Framing between North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa

One of the goals of this study was to determine whether Turkish newspapers frame North African countries differently from Sub-Saharan African countries. Analysis has found that Turkish newspapers frame North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa differently.

Table 5: Framing in North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa

| Frame | Region | | | | | |
| | North Africa | | Sub-Saharan Africa | | Total | |
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Morality	0	0%	5	2.8%	5	0.9%
Conflict	101	26.4%	37	20.8%	138	24.6%

|						
Economic consequences	48	12.6%	11	6.2%	59	10.5%
Human-interest	42	11%	68	38.2%	110	19.6%
Responsibility	191	50%	57	32%	248	44.3%
Total	382	100%	178	100%	560	100%

As shown in Table 5, Turkish newspapers predominantly used the responsibility frame when reporting on North Africa, accounting for 50% of all regional news. The conflict frame was the second most common (26.4%), followed by the economic consequences frame (12.6%). The human-interest frame was the least used, appearing in only 11% of news about North African countries.

Interestingly, while the human-interest frame was the least used for North Africa, it was the most frequently applied to Sub-Saharan Africa. Turkish newspapers used this frame in 38.2% of all news covering Sub-Saharan Africa, often portraying people in the region as victims of terrorism and political instability. The responsibility frame was the second most common for Sub-Saharan Africa (32%), followed by the conflict frame (20.8%) and the economic consequences frame (6.2%). The morality frame was the least used; it did not appear in any North African news but accounted for 2.8% of news about Sub-Saharan Africa.

When comparing the representation of North and Sub-Saharan Africa within each frame, North African countries were more prominently featured in the economic consequences, responsibility, and conflict frames. At the same time, Sub-Saharan Africa was more dominant in the morality and human-interest frames. Specifically:

- North African news accounted for 81.4% of coverage in the economic consequences frame, while Sub-Saharan Africa comprised 18.6%.
- North Africa represented 77% of the news in the responsibility frame, while Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 23%.
- In the conflict frame, 73.2% of the news was about North Africa, while 26.8% focused on Sub-Saharan Africa.
- The morality frame was used exclusively for Sub-Saharan Africa (100%).
- In the human-interest frame, 61.8% of the news focused on Sub-Saharan Africa, while 38.2% covered North Africa.

Figure 4 (below) visually represents the differences in framing between North and Sub-Saharan Africa.
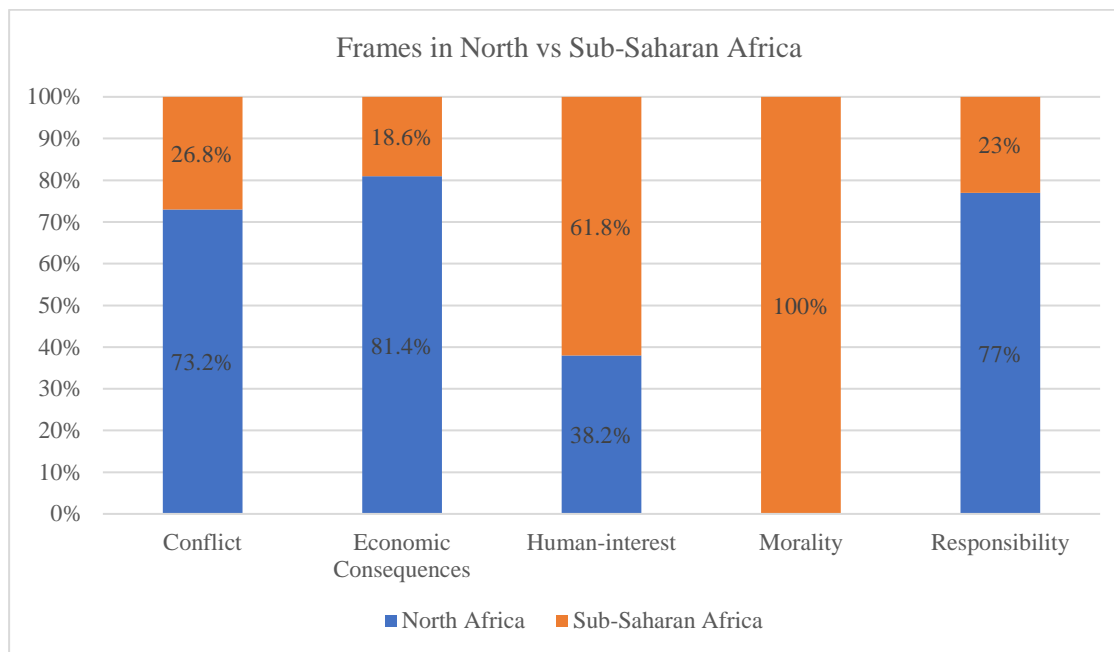
Figure 4: The difference in framing between North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa

Qualitative Analysis

This study used qualitative content analysis to develop more detailed information about Turkish newspapers' frames, scope, and quality of Africa-related news. The topics discovered through qualitative analysis of African news in Turkish newspapers are:

The term Africa

This study analyzed the usage and context of the term *Africa* in Turkish newspapers. Two key findings emerged: first, Turkish newspapers predominantly use the term to refer to people and countries in Sub-Saharan Africa; second, they often generalize events and issues from Sub-Saharan Africa as if they were representative of the entire continent.

The study reveals that Turkish newspapers frequently use *Africa* as a synonym for Sub-Saharan Africa, referring to its people as *Africans* and its nations as *African countries.* In contrast, North African countries and peoples are identified by their specific names. For instance, in *Sabah* and *Hürriyet* newspapers of January 31, 2021 the leaders of Senegal and Guinea-Bissau visiting Ankara were mentioned as *African leaders*. In contrast, the leaders of Libya and Egypt are mentioned with their names, titles, and national affiliations. By consistently equating Africa with Sub-Saharan Africa, where the majority of the population is Black, Turkish newspapers reinforce the perception of Africa as a homogenous entity composed solely of Black people. This framing overlooks the continent's diversity and misleads readers about its accurate demographics.

The second issue is Turkish newspapers' tendency to generalize events, problems, and activities occurring in individual African countries, presenting them as if they apply to the entire continent. Notably, this generalization applies only to Sub-Saharan Africa, whereas news related to North African countries is attributed to specific nations. Some headlines make broad generalizations while specifying a country within the article, while others omit the country's name altogether, further reinforcing the notion that the issue affects the entire continent. For example, conflicts in Libya and Somalia are reported differently. While the Libya conflict is headlined as *Conflict in Libya*, the Somalia conflict is described as *Al-Qaeda terror in Africa.* First example is *Hürriyet* newspaper of January 3, 2021 which used the headline *Al-Qaeda terror*

escalating in Africa to report on terrorism in Somalia. This pattern extends beyond conflict reporting to areas such as health, education, and humanitarian aid. For instance, the COVID-19 variant discovered in South Africa was labeled as an African *variant* in different Turkish newspapers including Akşam newspaper of April 2, 2021. In humanitarian aid reporting, assistance to a specific location is often framed as aid to the entire continent. For example, Akşam newspaper of May 1, 2021 headlined a news story about a Turkish organization providing an iftar dinner in a Malian village as *Iftar given in Africa.*

This generalization fosters distorted perceptions of Africa in several ways. First, presenting Africa as a singular entity reinforces the misconception that the continent is a single, homogeneous country. Additionally, framing problems in one or a few African nations as continental issues misrepresents Africa as a whole. For instance, referring to terror in Somalia as *terror in Africa* creates an image of the entire continent as a place of war and terrorism, even though most of its 54 countries have never experienced such conflicts. Similarly, the broad labeling of disease-related news strengthens the stereotype of Africa as a continent of illness. At the same time, the framing of humanitarian aid efforts perpetuates the perception that Africa is universally impoverished and dependent on external assistance. These portrayals are misleading, as they ignore the vast socio-economic diversity across the continent.

Quality of News

This study examined the quality of African news coverage in Turkish newspapers, evaluating accuracy, prioritization, positioning, and depth of information. The findings indicate that African news is not a priority in Turkish newspapers, as the quantitative analysis shows that only 7% of African-related news appears on front pages. Moreover, when such news is published, it is often placed in small headlines and squeezed between other articles with more significant, more prominent headlines, making it easily overlooked.

Overall, the quality of African news in Turkish newspapers is generally satisfactory. However, in some cases, particularly those covering Sub-Saharan Africa, news articles contain inaccuracies and lack essential background information. A clear example is the reporting on the death of Tanzania's leader. *Sabah* newspaper published this news on March 19, 2021, under COVID-19 updates, without mentioning the leader's name, position, or cause of death. The lack of context and placement under COVID-19 updates created the misleading impression that the leader had died from COVID-19, resulting in a misrepresentation of the event.

Another issue is the presence of factual errors in published news. A notable example is a report in *Akşam* newspaper on January 7, 2021, about a mass killing of citizens in Mali. The article incorrectly described Mali as a country in South Africa, which is an apparent geographical inaccuracy. Such errors suggest either a lack of proper fact-checking and editorial oversight or a limited understanding of African geography among some journalists and editors in Turkish newspapers.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study investigated how Turkish newspapers frame and represent Africa, offering both quantitative and qualitative insights into the tone, structure, and themes of coverage. Drawing on the five generic frames proposed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), the research reveals that responsibility, conflict, and human-interest frames dominate Turkish media portrayals of Africa, collectively accounting for 88.1% of the framed news items. These findings mirror broader trends in international media, where Africa is frequently covered through narratives of crisis, governance, or humanitarian concern.

Coverage was found to be largely event-driven, focusing on high-profile developments such as elections, conflicts, official visits, and natural disasters. The news tone was predominantly neutral, and coverage relied heavily on primary sources. North African countries such as Libya and Egypt received the most attention, with Sub-Saharan Africa receiving less visibility. News from North Africa was primarily framed

through the lens of responsibility and political stability, while Sub-Saharan African news was framed more often using human-interest angles related to conflict and humanitarian issues.

These disparities are likely influenced by Turkiye's geopolitical interests and historical ties, particularly in the Mediterranean and North Africa. The prominence of themes such as the Turkiye–Libya Maritime Border Agreement illustrates how strategic priorities shape editorial decisions.

The study's findings carry broader implications. Media framing not only influences public perceptions but also plays a role in shaping foreign policy discourse. The underrepresentation and fragmented portrayal of Sub-Saharan Africa, in particular, risks reinforcing narrow stereotypes and obscuring the continent's diversity and complexity. Moreover, the reliance on event-based journalism limits the potential for deeper engagement with African societies, voices, and developments.

Future research should expand beyond print media to explore how Africa is framed across digital platforms, television, and social media, where visual framing and interactivity may produce different narratives. Audience reception studies could also provide valuable insights into how Turkish readers interpret and internalize these representations. Additionally, comparative studies between Turkish and African media could help identify discursive asymmetries and inform efforts to build more balanced transnational narratives.

In conclusion, this study provides a foundational understanding of Africa's portrayal in Turkish print media and highlights the need for more inclusive, diverse, and contextually rich journalism that moves beyond episodic reporting and stereotypical framing.

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Colonization, Contagion, and Infection in Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*

Layla GLEISA[5]

Abstract

Throughout the history of the British Empire, the relationship between colonialism, disease and medicine played a crucial role in shaping the conceptualization of the colonized world. This was especially evident in the tropical regions, such as the Caribbean, where the West Indian was the central to British colonial interest. Therefore, the emergence of tropical medicine, coupled with the discipline of epidemiology, reinforced the depiction of these regions as dangerous and prone to disease. Epidemiology was used as colonial tool and served to distinguish between the West and the oriental tropical regions. In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Jean Rhys contrasts the Caribbean and English landscapes through the differing perspectives of her female protagonist and male character, each grappling with the complexities of these geographies. The portrayal of the tropical landscape as hostile and untamed echoes the racial and colonial anxieties toward the colonized land. This hostility reinforces the colonial notion that both the land and its people are inherently diseased, thereby justifying the colonizer's perceived need for medical intervention and control. This article will examine how colonialism practiced the medicalization of the colonized landscape and body as it represented a racialized conception of disease in its rhetoric and literature.

KEYWORDS: epidemiology, medical topography, disease, landscape, colonialism, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Jean Rhys

Jean Rhys'in *Wide Sargasso Sea* Eserinde Sömürgecilik, Bulaşma ve Enfeksiyon

ÖZ

Britanya imparatorluğu tarihi boyunca sömürgecilik, hastalık ve tıp arasındaki ilişki, sömürgeleştirilmiş dünyanın kavramsallaştırılmasının şekillenmesinde çok önemli bir rol oynamıştır. Bu, özellikle Batı Hint'in İngiliz sömürge çıkarlarının merkezi olduğu Karayipler gibi tropikal bölgelerde belirgindi. Bu nedenle tropikal tıbbın ortaya çıkışı, epidemiyoloji disiplini ile birleştiğinde, bu bölgelerin tehlikeli ve hastalığa yatkın olarak tasvirini pekiştirdi. Epidemiyoloji sömürge aracı olarak kullanıldı ve Batı ile doğu tropikal bölgelerini ayırt etmeye hizmet etti. Geniş Sargasso Denizi'nde Jean Rhys, Karayipler ve ingiliz manzaralarını, her biri bu coğrafyaların karmaşıklıklarıyla boğuşan kadın kahramanı ve erkek karakterinin farklı bakış açılarıyla karşılaştırıyor. Tropikal manzaranın düşmanca ve evcilleştirilmemiş olarak tasvir edilmesi, sömürgeleştirilmiş topraklara yönelik ırksal ve sömürgeci kaygıları yansıtıyor. Bu düşmanlık, hem toprağın hem de halkının doğası gereği hastalıklı olduğu sömürge fikrini pekiştirir, böylece sömürgecinin tıbbi müdahale ve kontrole olan algılanan ihtiyacını haklı çıkarır. Bu makale, sömürgeciliğin, söyleminde ve literatüründe ırksallaştırılmış bir hastalık anlayışını temsil ettiği için sömürgeleştirilmiş manzaranın ve bedenin tıbbileştirilmesini nasıl uyguladığını inceleyecektir.

Anahtar kelimeler: epidemiyoloji, tıbbi topografya, hastalık, manzara, sömürgecilik

Introduction

Wide Sargasso Sea (1966/1997), Jean Rhys' last novel is a highly acclaimed work of fiction that garnered significant attention from critics. Perceived as a cruelly significant prequel to Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*, the novel reimagines the life of Bertha Mason, known in Rhys' story as Antoinette Mason, a West Indian woman who marries her unnamed husband, implicitly Rochester, in Jamaica. Set in the aftermath of the Emancipation Act, the novel unfolds across three distinct settings: Coulibri Estate in Jamaica, the wider Jamaica island and England. Each setting is rendered with detailed, descriptive landscapes that serve as backdrops and integral elements with historical and cultural significance. This article focuses on the first

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two settings in the Caribbean, where the landscapes challenge and reveal colonial racialized narratives by presenting the tropical environment as beautiful and threatening, reflecting the racial and colonial anxieties of the era. *Wide Sargasso Sea* delves into the formation of a Creole woman of mixed heritage who falls victim to her husband's perception of her as exotic and possessing monstrous qualities. His view of Antoinette mirrors his perception of the island's wilderness, which he perceives as a threat to his well-being and sense of control.

Theory

Throughout the long history of British colonial settlement in the West Indies, disease played a pivotal role in shaping the medical rhetorical strategies of the colonizers. These methods are profoundly embedded in the colonial archives, which include records, historical documents and literature. The historical and literary work on cholera, its first epidemic outbreak in 1817, greatly impacted British colonial views of the West Indies and its inhabitants. This epidemic shaped colonial rhetoric, which was used to justify intervention under the guise of civilizing and medicalizing the colonized bodies and their exotic land. As a result, British attitudes toward these regions and their people have changed significantly.

As a result of colonizing new places, the British were subjected to new disease against which they were not immune. Therefore, epidemiological anxieties started to preoccupy the consciousness of Britain. Alan Bewell (1999) points out the global consequence of colonial disease spreading in the narrative of the British Empire and national identity. As he put it, the literature of the 19th century, especially Percy Shelly's, expresses "anxiety about the direction British society was heading and fear that its imperial contact with other nations was becoming as great a plague to them as the East had originally seemed to be for England" (p. 211). Likewise, as Arya Aryan (2024) explicates, Anjuli Fatima Raza Kolb (2021) "traces historical links between Islam, contagion and rebellion since colonial times, asserting that the contemporary notion of Islam as a racial category is rooted in nineteenth-century Orientalism," specifically with the Indian Mutiny, and adds that Rudyard "Kipling's depiction of the Mutiny, through the characters' encounters with an old man who served as a native officer during the Rebellion of 1857, associates the event with a plague and madness" (2024). Raza Kolb (2021) comments on the significant impact of cholera epidemics through the British Empire on the colonial medical writing and imperial discourse on science. She also examines how epidemics were often discussed using literary techniques taken from Orientalism and at the same time, influenced literature with its association with the empire anxiety, the fear of contagion and the other (p. 85). Raza Kolb (2021) explores the origins of epidemiology within the context of colonialism, explaining that the discipline was fundamentally shaped by colonial anxieties. She notes that epidemiology was "[e]stablished in 1850 during the second major outbreak of Asiatic cholera in England… [and] the Epidemiological Society of London was born of colonial contact" (p. 11). This underscores how epidemiology emerged as a colonial science, developing in response to diseases like Asiatic cholera, which were perceived as originating in Indian colonies and posing a direct threat to Britain.

To contemplate how tropical diseases were perceived during the colonial era, it is critical to realize that these contagions which were new to the colonizer were often associated with and extended to tropical regions and their inhabitants. Nevertheless, these illnesses were only acknowledged as a significant medical problem once they began to affect the colonizer's body. This reflects a bias in medical documentation, where diseases were primarily noted and addressed when embodied by the colonizer, rather than when hey afflicted the native populations who were initially plagued. In colonized tropical regions, disease played a crucial role in reinforcing a hierarchy between the bodies of colonizers and natives. This dynamic established a binary opposition in which the colonizer's body was perceived as healthy, while the colonized body was constructed as either a source or vector of contagion. As a result, the colonizer racially stigmatized not only the colonized people but also the diseases they were associated with and the environments they inhabited. As Arya Aryan (2024) argues, this pattern reflects a broader framework in Western thought which "has been founded and functioned upon binary oppositions implying a hierarchy; that is, in each binary opposition one takes the centre and is superior or privileged" (p. 13). This hierarchy is underpinned by the belief that civilization flourishes where disease is absent or controlled, positioning the colonizer as civilized and healthy, while casting the colonized as diseased and uncivilized.

Consequently, tropical regions were tarnished as inherently infectious, symbolizing alienation and backwardness. Cindy Patton (2002) describes epidemiology as the "tropical thinking's urban cousin" (p. 39), similarly concerned with marking distinctions. Yet, while tropical medicine focused on pathologizing specific regions and bodies within colonized areas, epidemiology – before being shaped by colonial tropical thought – aimed to identify who was being pathologized, regardless of location or heredity. In this context, places and bodies were not seen as inherently different; rather, anyone could be subject to medical scrutiny and classification. However, colonial medics appropriated epidemiology to serve imperial narratives, transforming it into a tool for mapping colonized regions in terms of health and disease. Thus, epidemiology extends beyond scientific practices, intersecting with literary narratives born of colonial encounters. These narratives frequently appear in symbolic representation of diseased bodies and landscapes. The framing of the tropical environment to reinforce colonial dominance highlights the study of colonial diseases, particularly through Orientalist depictions of landscape and how they are perceived and constructed. In *Miraculous Plagues* (2011), Cristobal Silva examines the narrative behind such epidemiological methods. As he implies puts it:

> [E]pidemiological approach reveals how those nodes are connected narratively … they behave epidemiologically insofar as they imagine specific relationships between sick and healthy populations and form coherent narratives describing those relationships. And even if modern audiences do not immediately recognize texts associated with these events as "medical" or "epidemiological," they imagine spaces according to detailed behavioral models. (p. 11)

The link between infection and contagion in narrative and epidemiological practices is not immediately identified. However, the ways in which such spaces are imagined and constructed reveal the influence of underlying epidemiological practice. Likewise, Priscilla Wald (2008) highlights the intersections between diseases and narrative form. She introduces the concept of "outbreak narrative," which is shaped by colonial and cultural anxieties surrounding diseases, which reinforces fears of the Other. As she puts it:

> [E]pidemiologists rely on and reproduce assumptions about what constitutes a group or population, the definition of pathology and well-being, and the connections between disease and the lifestyle and behaviors of different groups. These classifications inform the epidemiological narratives, and they can thereby import cultural assumptions that are substantiated by the authority of medical science and the urgency of a public health threat. (p. 19)

Similar to Wald, Silva (2011) emphasizes the relationship between literature and medicine in disease narratives, a connection she refers to as "epidemiological narrative." Her approach is not grounded in scientific analysis but rather in literary criticism, focusing on how narrative genres shape our understanding of disease. Constructing a coherent disease narrative involves encoding bodies, behaviors and geographical spaces, and thereby effectively redefining them.

The epidemiological narrative was crucial in constructing medical topographies that targeted tropical landscapes during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As described by Silva, epidemiology resonates strongly with the colonial medical topographies that emerged in the Caribbean, which was framed as both a exotic and inherently disease-ridden region. As Ludwig Finke, whose work is considered the first major text in medical topography, writes: "I have looked at the whole world from medical point of view" (citied in Emily Senior, 2018, p. 61). Western colonialists were highly invested in mapping diseases onto geography, drawing implicit links between particular illnesses and non-European lands. This practice reinforced colonial narratives that portrayed non-European regions as inherent diseased and dangerous. As a case in point, in "Cholera Cured Before Hand" (1831), written in the aftermath of the second cholera pandemic, Samuel Taylor Coleridge presents an epidemiologist speaker "as a sanitary reformer" who associates the disease with gypsies, of Indian origin, who have diabolic, evil presence:

And nose to tail with this Gypsy
Comes, black as a Porpus,

The Diabolus ipse
Call'd Cholery Morpus:
Who with horns, hoofs, and tail, croaks for carrion to feed him,
Tho' being a Devil, no one never has seed him! (Coleridge, lines 145–150)

Therefore, the epidemiological and medicalization practices applied to the colonized body and landscape functioned as tools of separation between colonizer and colonized. By attributing illness to the colonized land and its people, these practices served as mechanisms of differentiation that legitimized colonial domination under the pretense of healing, sanitation and civilizing intervention.

Medicalizing the Colonized: Disease, Environmental Toxicity and Colonial Fears in *Wide Sargasso Sea*

Jean Rhys was born in Dominica to a Creole mother and a Welsh father who was a physician. This family background may have exposed her to medical themes from an early age. Her acclaimed novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) was written in the wake of poststructuralist theories which challenged the constructed binary oppositions of Western thought. Moreover, as Aryan (2020) argues, this period was marked by "[a]n enduring preoccupation" among women writers "to disclose the patriarchal binary that attributes a concept of pure rationality to the male but promulgates definitions of women as being more driven by irrational emotional responses, and with tendencies towards madness" (p. 230). Set in the aftermath of the Emancipation Act during a time of unrest in the West Indies, *Wide Sargasso Sea* explores themes of disease, frenzy and insanity as they are projected onto the Caribbean landscape. The novel's first part is narrated by Antoinette, who expresses a hybrid identity and perspective. She opens with a sense of pessimism and foreboding, introducing motifs of disease and death through the account of Mr. Luttrell, a neighbor who commits suicide after killing his dog. Rhys writes, "[o]ne calm evening he shot his dog, swam out to sea and was gone for always" (1997, p. 5). This haunting image illustrates the devastating impact of the Caribbean environment on European settlers. The tropical climate , perceived by many as hostile and mentally destabilizing, was often linked to madness and suicide. As Alan Bewell (1999) observes:

> The literature on tropical invalids presents a much darker reflection on the epidemiological consequences of colonialism. In talking about these people, whose bodies registered in very personal terms the medical consequences of migration to tropical regions, European medicine addressed fundamental questions about the relation between biology and colonialism, seeing in these ruined bodies a dark allegory of imperial ambition and its limits. (p. 279)

Bewell examines the consequences of colonialism through the physical and psychological deterioration of European settlers and newcomers and portrays this decline as a powreful allegory for the broader failures of British's imperial ambitions. The weakness of the European body was often attributed to the harsh and unfamiliar tropical climate, which was seen as completely incompatible with English health and sanity. This highlightes a percieved incongruity between European bodies and the tropical Caribbean environment, a region often imagined as a site of danger to both body and mind. In the novel, the land itself is personified as an active character who threatens British well-being. It becomes an environmental force imbued with menace, shaped by and reflecting the rigid colonial ideologies projected onto it. The Caribbean landscape is not a passive setting but a charged, symbolic presence that resists domination. Mr. Luttrell's act of "swimming out to sea" after shooting his dog can be interpreted as an escape from this overwelming, oppressive atmosphere. It is an escape from place that erodes sanity and overwhelms the European psyche.

Moreover, the death of the poisoned horse highlights the toxicity of the Caribbean environment. As Antoinette recalls: "then one day, very early, I saw her horse lying down under, the frangipani tree. I went up to him but he was not sick, he was dead and his eyes were black with flies … later that day, Godfrey found him, he had been poisoned" (Rhys, 1997, p. 6). The horse's death linked to frangipani tree, a native Caribbean plant also known as plumeria, evokes both environmental and symbolic danger. In local folklore, the frangipani is often associated with graveyards, ghosts and death. As Thomas J. Zumbroich (2014) notes, [w]hile local interpretations vary, there is a surprisingly wide-spread association of plumerias with the spirit

world, the dead and cemeteries (p. 356). He adds that in graveyards, "plumeria trees were said to 'have always been there" (p. 357).

The horse's poisoning reinforces a sense of environmental hostility. The frangipani becomes a symbolic agent of colonial unease, bringing together themes of death, poison and the colonizer's fear of the land. Antoinette's response – "I ran away and did not speak of it for I thought if I told no one it might not be true" (Rhys, 1997, p. 6) – reflects an underlying dread, where silence becomes a form of denial against the land's malignant potential. The frangipani tree, though visually beautiful, is toxic; its sap can cause skin irritation, vomiting and diarrhoea. Zumbroich (2014) also notes its medicinal use: plumeria "featured in an ointment for 'scaly skin disease', one of the many skin conditions that were known to occur" (p. 348), underscoring the tree's dual capacity to heal and harm.

Rochester's encounter with the frangipani wreaths further amplifies this tension. As he observes, "[t]wo wreaths of frangipani lay on the bed. 'Am I expected to wear one of these? And when?' I crowned myself with one of the wreaths and made a face in the glass" (Rhys, 1997, p. 44). Almost immediately, he feels discomfort: "I stepped on it. The room was full of the scent of crushed flowers" (Rhys, 1997, p. 45). The overpowering fragrance of frangipani, while superficially pleasant, becomes suffocating, an embodiment of miasma and decay. Rochester's physical reaction suggests an acute awareness of the land's latent threat. In this context, the frangipani's scent, normally associated with beauty, becomes a sensory reminder of poison, colonial anxiety and the blurred line between allure and danger in the tropical landscape.

The novel's first environmental description focuses on the Coulibri garden: "Our garden was large and beautiful as that garden in the Bible—the tree of life grew there. But it had gone wild" (Rhys, 1997, p. 6). The depiction of the garden as overgrown and wild presents a dual image of beauty and chaos, mirroring colonial perceptions of the Caribbean as an exotic yet untamed and disorderly place. Rhys deepens this ambivalence by steering the description toward a darker, more ominous tone:

> The paths were overgrown and a smell of dead flowers mixed with the fresh living smell…Orchids flourished out of reach or for some reason not to be touched. One was snaky looking, another like an octopus with long thin brown tentacles bare of leaves hanging from a twisted roo…. I never went near it. All Coulibri Estate had gone wild like the garden, gone to bush. (Rhys, 1997, p. 6)

The symbolic and metaphorical imagery in the novel reinforces an epidemiological narrative that frames the Caribbean as a site of death and corruption, epitomized by the image of a deadly atmosphere filled with toxic, lethal flowers. Rhys juxtaposes nature's alluring beauty with its underlying menace, presenting a landscape that is both seductive and threatening. The description of the orchids, particularly the octopus orchid with its "snaky" and "tentacle" features, intensifies this portrayal of the garden as simultaneously exotic and dangerous. While Antoinette percieves the garden with a sense of ambivalence, recognizing its beauty and sinister undertones, she does not express any disgust.

After staying in Spanish Town, Antoinette returns to her old house in Coulibri and reflects on the changes that the estate has undergone, barely recognizing it: "Coulibri looked the same when I saw it again. Although it was clean and tidy, no grown between flagstone, no leak, but it did not look the same" (Rhys, 1997, p. 14). Despite its outward familiarity, the newly ordered and sanitized Coulibri feels alien to her – a transformation imposed by her English stepfather, Mr. Mason, who sought to "civilize" the estate according to European ideals. His reform mirrors colonial medical topographies that aimed to reshape colonial environments in the name of health, order and control. As physician Ronald Martin (1837) observes, the reordering of West Indian land "must prove one of the most direct and impressive modes of demonstrating to the natives, the superiority of European knowledge in general and that they must cultivate it actively if they would rise in the scale of nations" (p. 21).

Moreover, the veranda in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, as a European architectural feature, invites reflection on its role within colonial medical topography, specifically in relation to disease prevention and hygiene. As Alan Johnson (2011) notes, the veranda is "a space of European leisure in a hot climate; as a threshold where goods from the bazaar are brought to be sold to the English memsahib so she can be safe from marketplace pollution; and as a zone situated between English and Indian spheres of life" (p. 183).Therefore, the veranda functions as a symbolic boundary designed to protect Europeans from the perceived dangers of the tropical environment. It becomes a space where characters are exposed to environmental elements such as heat and humidity, which, according to the miasma theory, were believed to transmit disease through the air. Positioned at the intersection of the domestic and the external, the veranda represents the colonial effort to manage and contain the invironment while maintaining a distance from the colonized world. In the novel, the verandah also becomes a site of tension and escape. For Rochester, it represents a refuge from both the oppressive landscape and his wife, whom he increasingly associates with the threatening environment. Antoinette acknowledges his unease: "He hates me now; I hear him every night walking up and down the veranda. Up and down" (Rhys, 1997, p. 71). Rochester's own words underscores his desire for protection: "I must protect myself. I went softly along the dark veranda" (Rhys, 1997, p. 96).

The veranda also formed part of the colonial project to remake the tropics in the image of European architecture, which reflects its perception of the Orient spaces as degenerated and in need of reform. This parallels the orientalist vision of the East, which Edward Said (2003) describes as "an integral part of European material civilization and culture" (p. 2). He argues that Orientalism is "a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (p. 3). In this context, the veranda functions as more than a structural feature. It embodies a sanitized and regulated space within colonial homes, reflecting European ideals of order, hygiene and control.

Colonial medical topographies reinforced this notion by advocating for spaces that would preserve European health in unfamiliar, colonized climates. In *Medical Topographies* (1838), Ronald Martin underscores the importance of designing spaces that safeguard health, stating that "petty verandahs opening inwards…if placed on open ground and made more roomy, would not appear ill calculated for the climate" (p. 20). He emphasizes the significance of cultivating and constructing spaces that conserve health, especially in European colonial settings. As Swati Chattopadhyay (2005) notes, "Martin provided the structure of argument for his successors. He gave scientific credence to the idea of the native city as a pathological space, contrary to the European town" (p. 66). Therefore, physical space was significant in creating distance between the colonizer and the object of the gaze. Designed in the English style, these verandas were viewed as well-suited to tropical conditions, protecting from rain and harsh sunlight, maintaining distance from the surrounding environment. This symbolic division becomes evident upon Rochester's arrival on the island, where the veranda functions as a boundary between these two worlds:

> Standing on the veranda I breathed the sweetness of the air. Cloves I could smell and cinnamon, roses and orange blossom. And an intoxicating freshness as if all this had never been breathed before. When Antoinette said 'Come, I will show you the house' I went with her unwillingly for the rest of the place seemed neglected and deserted. (Rhys, 1997, p. 50)

This passage highlights Rochester's sensory experience on the veranda, where the rich and exotic atmosphere of Caribbean air momentarily captivates him. The fragrant blend of cloves, cinnamon, roses and orange blossoms evokes an intoxicating freshness, offering him a sense of contentment. Yet, this moment of sensory pleasure is sharply contrasted with his discomfort towards the interior of the house, which he associates with decay and neglect. Furnished with West Indian elements such as a worn sofa, a mahogany table and an old oak chest with brass feet shaped like lion's claws, the space appears to him as abandoned and uncared for. His discomfort parallels his perception of the broader environment, as reflected in his description of the estate: "the place looked deserted" (Rhys, 1997, p. 44). The term "deserted" is a metaphor for the neglected state of the house and the percieved wildnewss of the Caribbean landscape, which reveals not only his growing anxiety but also a colonial tendency to pathologize and distance the unfamiliar.

This colonial mentality is deeply rooted in miasma theory, which held that disease spread through noxious vapors emanating from marshy, humid landscapes. In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, sensory elements, particularly smell, evoke this theory and its racialized implications. Rich with tropical scents, the air is portrayed as impure and threatening. As David Arnold (1991) explains, the "emergent discipline of 'tropical medicine' gave scientific credence to the idea of a tropical world as a primitive and dangerous environment in contradistinction to an increasingly safe and sanitized temperate world" (p. 7). Likewise, Rochester's growing anxiety about the Caribbean's air is expressed through his response to the scent of cinnamon, roses and orange blossoms. Initially seductive, these tropical smells soon become overwhelming, reinforcing his perception of the air as toxic – an embodiment of miasma theory.

This sensory perception culminates in a vivid description: "[t]he smell of vetiver and frangipani, of cinnamon and dust and lime trees when they are flowering. The smell of the sun and the smell of the rain" (Rhys, 1997, p.31). The passage captures both the alluring and suffocating qualities of the environment, suggesting a miasma-laden atmosphere capable of disease and disorientation. As Bewell (1999) notes, "the primary agent of transmission, especially for 'fevers', was bad air, literally the 'mal-aria.' Although physicians differed on what caused the air to become noxious… air itself was seen as the fundamental medium of fevers" (p. 31). Smell in this context is not only linked to disease but also to racialized discourses of disgust and superiority. As a sensory marker, odor becomes entangled in colonial ideologies that deemed non-European bodies and environment inherently unclean. The association of "bad air" with tropical landscapes extended beyond medical belief to support a narrative of white superiority, in which atmospheric conditions were interpreted as indicators of racial and environmental inferiority. Thus, smell becomes both a literal and symbolic vehicle for Rochester's fear of contamination – physical, moral and racial – by the colonial Other.

From Picturesque to Pathological

The elements Rochester observes in the Caribbean landscape become direct sources of potential contamination for him. While he initially admires the landscape's sublime beauty, filtered through European aesthetic ideals, this appreciateion is quickly overshadowed by a sense of unease and fear. The picturesque transforms into something sinister and manacing, a vision of decay and disease which reflects his disillusionment. This shift in perception is reflected in his letter to his father upon arriving at the honeymoon estate with Antoinette:

> Dear Father, we have arrived from Jamaica after an uncomfortable few days. This little estate
> in the Windward Islands is part of the family property and Antoinette is much attached to it.
> … This place is very beautiful but my illness has left me too exhausted to appreciate it fully.
> (Rhys, 1997, p. 46)

Rochester's illness, whether psychosomatic or real, is a powerful metaphor for his inner anxieties and underlying colonial fear. His persistent reference to disease and discomfort consistently undermines his fleeting moments of appreciation for the island's remarkable natural beauty. As Emily Senior (2013) observes, " [b]y describing the points of thematic and stylistic exchange between medical topography and landscape aesthetics…establishes the unique qualities of colonial picturesque imagery which was underpinned by medical precepts, and highlights the signif cant role played by medicine in the circum-Atlantic production of colonial landscapes" (p. 507). Rochester's appreciation of the landscape overwhelms him and reveals his inability to truly comprehend or assimilate the sensory richness of his surroundings. To him, nature appears excessive and uncontainable compared to the familiar temperance of England. As he puts it, "[e]verything is too much, I felt as I rode wearily after her. Too much blue, too much purple, too much green. The flowers too red, the mountains too high, the hills too near" (Rhys, 1997, p. 42). This excesive colors, height and size become oppressive. The disjoint syntax and omission of auxiliary verbs in his reflections mirrors his psychological fragmentation and sense of alienation, underscoring his inability to process or belong within the Caribbean landscape.

Similarly, in his observations of tropical regions, James Lind, in *Diseases Incidental To Europeans, Hot Climates* (1811), highlights the disjunction between the medical assessment and aesthetic appreciation

of the land. While he acknowledges the region's visual appeal, describing it as "clothed with a pleasant and perpetual verdure" (p. 32), simultaneously frames it as inhospitable and unhealthy. He notes that the land is "altogether uncultivated, excepting a few spots generally surrounded by forests or thickets of trees, impenetrable to refreshing breezes and fit only for the resort of wild beasts" (p. 32). This ambivalent description captures the tension between beauty and danger which characterizes colonial discourse. Likewise, Rochester views the Caribbean landscape through a lens shaped by such medicalized colonial narratives. For him, the island's natural splendour is persistently undercut by an ingrained suspicion of its health risks, which renders the environment both alluring and threatening.

Colonial epidemiology functioned as a means of evaluating the land, reflecting a broader medical practice that diagnosed landscapes according to their perceived health risks, similar to trophical surveys assessed physical geography. Rochester's sense of being overwelmed by the island's sensory richness mirrors his medicalized view: the richness of the natural environment becomes not a source of pleasure, but a signal of hidden danger and unhealthfulness. This contradiction, where beauty conceals potential har,m, reveals how colonial discourse frequently framed foreign landscapes as both alluring and threatening. In this view, the aesthetic appeal of tropical nature is often recast as deceptive and masks what is ultimately seen as a diseased or degenerate environment.

Climatic Factors

The European colonial view of the land was strongly linked to the percieved helath of the European body, underpinned by the belief that certain climates and atmospheres, especially those in tropical regions, posed a threat to European well-being. As the novel progresses, Rochester increasingly exhibits symptoms of discomfort and suffocation, which he attributes to the oppressive island's climate: "No breeze. No breath of air" (Rhys, 1997, p. 77). David Arnold (1993) explains that colonial ideas of "unhealthiness could be recognized not just by it physological and pathological effects upon the body (espacally the unacclimatized European Body) but also the extreme nature of the climatic and topography" (p. 33). The combiantion of heat, humidity and the percieved toxicityt of the air rendered tropical regions literally and sybmolically deadly. Arnold further notes that this climatic determinism "provided an index of European exoticsm in tropical climates and an expression of inherent differences between European and Indian" (1993, p.37).

These environmental conditions heighten Rochester's sense of contamination, an anxiety which is not merely physical but deeply psychological. As paranoia takes hold, his surroundings become increasingly oppressive, transformed into a hostile suffocating space. He describes the stiffling heat, the incessant presence of insects and large rats and moths that the size of birds. All these contribute to his growing sense of alienation. Even the river's pungent scent of adds to his discomfort, reinforcing the island's percieved threat to his body and mind.

Rhys uses these sensory details to highlight the psychological tensions of colonialism. In doing so, she reveals how colonizers often projected their anxieties onto the landscapes they saught to colonize. Rocherster's response to the island's flora and fauna reflects a deeper rejection of Caribbean culture, shaped by racial prejudice and fear of the unfamiliar. His increasingly discurbed perception of the environment mirrors the colonial logic found in James Lind's writings, which also linked disease to climatic and ecological "impurities." In both cases the tropical landscape becomes a repository for colonial fears. and

As Rocherster, representing the colonizer, fails to locate and trac the source of his deep fears and anxieties, he projects them onto an external source to make it less existentially threatening. However, in doing so, the percieved unity, autonomy and agency of the colonizer's consciouesness is cracked. As Aryan argues, "[w]hen the speaker's consciousness breaks down and is no longer able to attribute to the self the projections of its own consciousness, he is therefore incapable of ascertaining his own agency, authority and existence" (2019, p. 110). This paper also argues that colonial narrative functions to cope with the colonizer's underlying fear of the unfamiliar by projecting it onto an external source. The semi-paranoid tendency to externalize fear and discomfort becomes a defining feature of colonial discourse. As Aryan

(2021) argues, "symptoms of paranoia and anxiety projected onto protagonists of novels who are often writers begin emerging as a feature of creative writing from the 1960s to the 1980s" (p. 338), acquiring a therapeutic and artistic function. These "symptoms," as he contends, become "a significant source of artistic creativity as the writer projects these semiparanoid delusions, fears, and anxieties into characters and stories" (Aryan, 2021, p. 339). By extension, it could be argued that the colonizer's repeated attempts to pathologize the tropical landscape serve as a form of narrative control, a literary mechanism through which to manage the disorientation and fear produced by the unfamiliar. In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, this manifests in Rochester's increasing estrangement not only from the environment but from his own sense of identity. His physical and psychological unease reflects the broader instability of colonial power, which relies on asserting dominance over both land and people while simultaneously being haunted by the threat of contamination, disorder and loss of self. Rhys exposes this paradox, using sensory and psychological disturbance as a critique of the colonial mindset and its fragile foundations.

Obeah and the Imperial Pathology of Superstition

Rochester's anxiety about the Caribbean extends beyond its environment to its cultural practice, particularly Obeah, which Antonietta uses on him. He percieves it as a toxic and corrupting force, a drug that makes him paranoid and allows him to externalize and displace his desire for Antoinette. Carine M. Mardorossian (2003) argues that "[o]nly foul play and an intoxicating drug could possibly drive a respectable Victorian gentleman like him to feel love and sexual desire for a woman whose mixed blood … mark her as belonging to an inferior species" (p. 137). By attributing his desire to Obeah, Rochester preserces a sense of racial superiority and moral purity tied to his white English identity. Howerver, his paranoia and obsession with Obeah are rooted in colonial stereotypes that equate Afro-Caribbean spiritual practices with witchcraft, zombification and poison. These anxieties are further reinforced as he reads the English text *The Glittering Coronet of Isles,* which introduces its "Obeah" chapter with a demonizing tone of fear:

> A zombi is a dead person who seems to be alive or a living person who is dead. A zombi can also be the spirit of a place, usually malignant … Voodoo as it is called in Haiti - Obeah in some of the islands, another name in South America. They confuse matters by telling lies if pressed … Cases of sudden or mysterious death are attributed to a poison known to the negroes which cannot be traced. (Rhys, 1997, p. 67)

Rochester's urgent desire to understand Obeah reveals deeper European anxieties about native cultural practices. As Kelly Wisecup (2013) explains, "European knowledge had continued to progress, thus surpassing ancient civilizations. The knowledge and practice of Obeah was only restored in the present as a dangerous, superstitious practice employed by robbers, fugitives, and diseased outcasts" (p. 417). For the European, Obeah stands for cultural regression and threat, associated with danger and death. For Rochester, its most disturbing aspect lies in its link to death and the supernatural, which he expresses through his reference to "zombies." This mirrors the colonial fears of spiritual practices and highlights the belief that Obeah blurs the boundary between life and death.

Rochester's paranoia manifests in his suspicion that he has been poisoned, attributing his fever and physical condition to the influence of Obeah. Despite its role as a traditional healing practice with a diverse medical uses during the colonial period, Europeans interpretations frequently reduced it to a sinister and harmful force. In *Toxic Histories: Poison and Pollution in Modern India*, David Arnold (2016) explains that "in all these varied registers of poisoning and pollution, there is the suggestion of something that is not just harmful but abnormal and abhorrent: they are acts against nature, however that nature and its presumed purity happen to be construed … the emergence of a 'toxic discourse' and the 'fear of a poisoned world'" (pp. 11-12). Arnold's concept of "toxic discourse" reveals how the British empire framed unfamilair indigenous practices not only as unscientific but as morally and psychically corrupting. Obeah becomes emblematic of what colonizers feared most: a "poisoned world" in tropics.

The Embodiment of Contagious Colonial Bodies

Rochester's anxiety about the Caribbean landscape and its perceived threat to British health extends to his perception of the people around him, whose bodies he identifies as potential carriers of contagion. This is most evident in his relationship with Antoinette as he increasingly associates her physical features with the wild, excessive, unruly nature of the island itself:

> Long, sad, dark alien eyes. Creole of pure English descent, she may be, but they are not English or European either. And when did I begin to notice all this about my wife Antoinette?... Or did I notice it before and refuse to admit what I saw? (Rhys, 1997, p. 40)

Rochester attributes Antoinette's alien and exotic appearance to her Creole heritage, perceiving her mixed African ancestry as impure compared to the presumed purity of English blood. He pathologizes her body. As Senior (2018) notes, " there exists a "cultural association between Creole bodies and disease and the complexity of British national feeling which underpinned anti-Creole sentiment" (p. 130). British settlers projected anxieties about the West Indies as an inherently diseased and degenerative space onto its inhabitants. H. Adlai Murdoch (2015) argues that, "Rochester arguably dis-places his own alienation and lack of subjective grounding onto Antoinette even as he acknowledges the implicit threat of identitarian contamination posed by the foreignness of the Creole"(p. 162). Similarly, Paul Gilroy (2000) contextualizes this fear noting that "[w]hen national and ethnic identities are represented and projected as pure, exposure to difference threatens them with dilution and compromises their prized purities with the ever-present possibility of contamination" (p. 105). Rochester's rejection of Antoinette – "I had no wish to touch her, and she knew it" (Rhys, 1997, p. 90) – reflects a deep-seated anxiety about both the destabilization of English identity through intimate contact with racial and cultural otherness. Her Creole identity becomes a symbol of physical contagion.

As the events unfold, Rochester reveals that he suffers from a fever shortly after marrying Antoinette. As he puts it, "I was married a month after I arrived in Jamaica and for nearly three weeks of that time I was in bed with fever" (Rhys, 1997, p. 40). Historically, venereal diseases were closely linked to colonial contact and racialized bodies. Geoffroy de Laforcade et al., (2022) explain that colonial fears of contagion and moral corruption were deeply ingrained in the European consciousness during the age of exploration and colonization. "It engendered discourses of witchcraft and monstrosity during the age of encounter, conquest, and colonization, as the intimate, licentious contact between bodies and cultures produced fears of contagion and degeneration". (p. 5).

Rochester's perception of Antoinette reflects this moment of erotic attraction and moral panic. As he notes, "[t]he girl is said to be beautiful; she is beautiful, and yet" (Rhys, 1997, p. 42). Rochester frequently draws implicit parallels between her and the Caribbean landscape. This moment of hesitation – "and yet" – captures his inner conflict. This projection of mixed feelings about the land onto Antoinette aligns with Pamela K. Gilbert's (1997) argument that "the way we read the world is not only conditioned by our bodies, the way we read our bodies themselves that conditioned by discursive environment in which our bodies became known to us" (p. 47). She further contends that "the physical body and geographical space are never entirely separable" (p. 47).

Colonial medicine often evaluated diseased landscapes in relation to their inhabitants, viewing he perceived moral and physical deficiencies as a product of native populations. James Ranald Martin (1837) draws a clear connection between environmental conditions and racialized moral judgment, asserting "a slothful, squalid-looking population invariably characterizes an unhealthy country" (p. 138). This conflation of physical environment and moral degeneracy is echoed in Rochester's perception of the Caribbean, which he describes as populated by "somber people in a somber place" (Rhys, 1997, p. 41).

Antoinette's Creole identity is framed in terms of illness and health, making her a target of discrimination as a potential threat to the ideal of English cultural and racial purity. Her identity is entangled with colonial notions of contamination. European hygiene policies further entrenched this symbolic divide by linking contagion to moral and cultural inferiority As Adrienne Ronee Washington and Briana Lee Robinson

(2022) argue "[t]his metaphor is therefore particularly salient and significant during a period marked by racialized (as well as gendered and classed) ideas of purity, cleanliness, and civility and extreme intolerance or (xeno)phobia for the perceived uncleanliness of racialized others as pollutive, social ills" (p. 177). This observation aligns with Susan Sontag's argument in *Illness as Metaphor* (1978) that illness becomes morally coded as a symbol of deviance and otherness. As she notes, "[n]othing is more punitive than to give a disease a meaning – that meaning being invariably a moralistic one ... First, the subjects of deepest dread (corruption, decay, pollution, anomie, weakness) are identified with the disease" (p.58). Antoinette's Creole identity is framed as impure, corrupting and morally suspect. As Senior (2018) observes, "Creoles come to stand for consanguineous pollution, moral confusion, and ill-health, as well as postcolonial national identities. They bring with them chaotic potential" (p. 151). Rhys demonstrates how Antoinette becomes a projection of colonial fears. Her For Rochester, her perceived mental instability and ambiguous bloodline are evidence of inherited moral and racial decay. His growing suspicion is fueled by Daniel Cosway's letter, which implies not only familial illegitimacy but also hints at incestuous relations, reinforcing Rochester's view of Antoinette's lineage as degenerate and corrupt. These colonial anxieties around tainted blood and moral contamination allow Rochester to justify his emotional detachment and ultimate betrayal, framing Antoinette not as a person, but as a symptom of a diseased and dangerous world.

Rochester's final description of the island landscape before leaving for England with Antoinette contrasts sharply with his initial romanticized perception of the island. As he puts it:

> I was tired of these people. I disliked their laughter and their tears, their flattery and envy, conceit and deceit. And I hated the place. I hated the mountains and the hills, the rivers and the rain. I hated the sunsets of whatever colour, I hated its beauty and its magic and the secret I would never know I hated its indifference and the cruelty which was part of its loveliness. Above all I hated her. For she belonged to the magic and the loveliness. ... So we rode away and left it - the hidden place. (Rhys, 1997, p. 111)

This shift marks the gradual deterioration of Rochester's perception. His initial fascination with the island's hidden beauty has now turned into a somber image. He expresses his hatred and disdain for the land and its inhabitants, including Antoinette. At this point, everything around him becomes a source of threat. The natural landscape, once alluring, is now experienced as chaotic and contaminated. His disdain is evident in his dehumanizing characterization of the local people whose emotional expressions he reduces to a mix of "laughter and their tears, their flattery and envy, conceit and deceit" (Rhys, 1997, p. 111). As Tülay Dağoğlu notes, "[w]estern expression and perspective of the Orient are nothing more than stereotypes and a problem of representation defined as 'Orientalism' by Edward Said, who is a pioneer in indicating the West's domination of the East through a discourse of false images and depictions resulting from their dreams, fantasies and assumptions" (p. 21).

Conclusion

To conclude, colonialism, disease and medicine were deeply intertwined in shaping how the Caribbean and its people were perceived. Through the lens of epidemiology and fears of infected environments, British imperial discourse portrayed tropical regions as inherently diseased and in need of control. In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Jean Rhys challenges this view by contrasting the vibrant, unruly Caribbean with the supposed order of England. Her portrayal of landscape, climate and bodies reveals how colonial standards of hygiene were used to pathologize both space and identity. Rochester's fear and revulsion toward the island and Antoinette reflect anxieties about racial, cultural and environmental contamination. His psychological unravelling reveals the colonial obsession with purity and the fear of the Other. Rhys critiques the imperial medical gaze that renders the colonized world as morally and physically corrupt, drawing on binaries such as healthy/sick and civilized/savage to justify dominance. By interweaving disease metaphors, racial identity and landscape, Rhys dismantles colonial narratives. She exposes the contradictions in imperial ideology by showing how beauty and illness coexist. Ultimately, *Wide Sargasso*

Sea offers a powerful postcolonial critique of how medical and environmental discourses were used to define, control and dehumanize colonized peoples and places.

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Kamusal Alanlarda Yön Bulma Sistemlerinin Göstergebilimsel Analizi: Türkiye ve Londra Metro Sistemleri Karşılaştırması

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ÖZ

Kamusal alanlarda yön bulma sistemleri, bireylerin mekân içinde bağımsız hareket edebilmesi için kritik bir rol oynar. Bu çalışmanın önemi, yönlendirme işaretlerinin engelli bireyler için erişilebilir olmasının, hem sosyal eşitlik hem de kapsayıcı kentleşme açısından büyük bir gereklilik olmasından kaynaklanmaktadır. Türkiye ve Londra metro sistemlerindeki yönlendirme işaretleri, göstergebilimsel bir yaklaşımla analiz edilerek, bu sistemlerin kullanıcılar açısından ne ölçüde anlaşılır ve erişilebilir olduğu değerlendirilmiştir. Araştırma, yön bulma sistemlerinin farklı kullanıcı grupları tarafından nasıl algılandığını inceleyerek, erişilebilirlik ve tasarım süreçlerine yönelik bulgular sunmaktadır.

Bu çalışma, yön bulma sistemlerinin yalnızca fiziksel bir işaretleme aracı değil, aynı zamanda toplumsal kapsayıcılığı artıran bir tasarım unsuru olarak ele alması literatüre katkı sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir. Pratik olarak ise, kent planlamacıları, tasarımcılar ve politika yapıcılar için daha kapsayıcı ve erişilebilir yönlendirme sistemlerinin nasıl geliştirilebileceğine dair rehber niteliği taşıyacağı düşünülmektedir. Elde edilen bulgular doğrultusunda, mevcut yönlendirme sistemlerinin iyileştirilmesi için öneriler geliştirilmiş ve engelli bireylerin kamusal alanlarda daha bağımsız hareket edebilmesine katkı sağlayacak çözümler sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Erişilebilirlik, Yön Bulma Sistemleri, Tipografi, Renk Kullanımı, Grafik Tasarım

SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF WAYFINDING SYSTEMS IN PUBLIC SPACES: COMPARISON OF TURKEY AND LONDON METRO SYSTEMS

ABSTRACT

Wayfinding systems in public spaces play a critical role in enabling individuals to move independently through space. The importance of this study stems from the fact that the accessibility of wayfinding signs for people with disabilities is a major requirement for both social equality and inclusive urbanization. By analyzing the wayfinding signs in the Turkish and London subway systems with a semiotic approach, the extent to which these systems are comprehensible and accessible to users is

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evaluated. By examining how wayfinding systems are perceived by different user groups, the research provides findings on accessibility and design processes.

The contribution of this study is to consider wayfinding systems not only as a physical signage tool, but also as a design element that enhances social inclusion. In practical terms, it will provide guidance for urban planners, designers and policy makers on how to develop more inclusive and accessible wayfinding systems. In line with the findings, suggestions have been developed for the improvement of existing wayfinding systems and solutions that will contribute to more independent movement of disabled people in public spaces have been presented.

GİRİŞ

Dünya genelinde her gün milyonlarca insan, toplu taşıma sistemlerini kullanarak şehir içinde hareket etmektedir. Metro sistemleri, kent yaşamının ayrılmaz bir parçası olup, hızlı, güvenilir ve erişilebilir ulaşım sağlamada kritik bir rol oynamaktadır. Ancak, bu sistemler her birey için aynı derecede erişilebilir olmayabilir. Özellikle engelli bireyler için yön bulma sistemlerinin etkinliği, bağımsız hareket edebilme açısından büyük bir önem taşımaktadır.

Engelli bireylerin kamusal alanlarda yön bulma deneyimlerini iyileştirmek amacıyla, yönlendirme sistemlerinde kullanılan grafik tasarım unsurlarının erişilebilirlik üzerindeki etkileri kapsamlı bir şekilde ele alınmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, özellikle Türkiye ve Londra metro sistemlerindeki yönlendirme uygulamaları karşılaştırılarak, grafik tasarım unsurlarının engelli kullanıcılar için ne ölçüde etkili olduğu değerlendirilecektir. Londra metrosu, dünya genelinde en eski ve en iyi planlanmış metro sistemlerinden biri olarak bilinirken, Türkiye'deki metro sistemleri ise farklı şehirlerde yeni ve gelişmekte olan yönlendirme yaklaşımları ile dikkat çekmektedir. Bu karşılaştırma, farklı tarihsel ve tasarımsal yaklaşımların erişilebilirlik üzerindeki etkilerini ortaya koyarak, yönlendirme sisteminin evrensel erişilebilirlik ilkeleri doğrultusunda nasıl iyileştirilebileceğine dair önemli bulgular sunacaktır.

Yön bulma sistemlerinde düzen, kontrast ve görsel hiyerarşi gibi grafik tasarım unsurlarının nasıl kullanıldığına dair kapsamlı bir analiz gerçekleştirilerek, erişilebilirliğin artırılması için öneriler sunulacaktır. Bu noktada, grafik tasarımın yalnızca estetik bir unsur değil, aynı zamanda kullanıcı deneyimini doğrudan etkileyen bir erişilebilirlik faktörü olduğu unutulmamalıdır.

Araştırma, nitel bir yaklaşım benimseyerek, göstergebilimsel analiz ve karşılaştırmalı inceleme yöntemlerini kullanmaktadır. Öncelikle, yön bulma sistemleri bağlamında mevcut literatür taranmış,

ardından Türkiye ve Londra metro sistemlerindeki yönlendirme uygulamaları yerinde gözlemler ve dokümantasyon yoluyla incelenmiştir. Araştırmada temel olarak şu sorulara yanıt aranacaktır:

➢ Türkiye ve Londra metro sistemlerinde kullanılan yön bulma işaretleri erişilebilirlik açısından nasıl farklılık göstermektedir?

➢ Grafik tasarım unsurları (düzen, kontrast, semboller vb.) yönlendirme sistemlerinin anlaşılırlığını nasıl etkilemektedir?

➢ Bu sistemlerin engelli bireyler için yeterliliği ve geliştirilmesi gereken yönleri nelerdir?

Bu çalışma, yalnızca mevcut sistemlerin analizini yapmakla kalmayıp, kent planlamacıları, tasarımcılar ve politika yapıcılar için daha erişilebilir yönlendirme sistemlerinin nasıl geliştirilebileceğine dair öneriler sunmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Pouya (2021) "Engelli bireylerin erişilebilirliğinin arttırılması ve farkındalığın sağlanması için evrensel donatı tasarımlarının önemi ve buna ilişkin peyzaj alanlarında bazı tasarım önerilerin verilmesi'' adlı çalışmasında, erişilebilir yönlendirme tasarımının görme engelli bireyler için ne denli önemli olduğunu vurgulamıştır. Bu bağlamda, grafik tasarım unsurlarının yalnızca görsel algıya dayalı olmadığı, aynı zamanda dokunsal ve alternatif algılama yöntemleriyle de desteklenmesi gerektiği belirtilmiştir.

Benuğur (2014) ''Grafik Tasarım Eğitiminde Görme Engelliler İçin Sosyal Sorumluluk Tasarımı'' başlıklı araştırmasında, Türkiye'deki grafik tasarım programlarını inceleyerek, sosyal sorumluluk projelerinin ders müfredatlarında yeterince yer almadığını ve görme engellilere yönelik tasarımın artırılması gerektiğini belirtmiştir. Benzer şekilde, Kavuran ve Uslu (2022) ''Kamusal Mekânlarda Görme Engelli Kullanıcılar İçin Erişilebilirliğin Değerlendirilmesi'' çalışmasında, Ankara Batı Adalet Sarayı örneği üzerinden evrensel tasarım ilkelerine uygun olup olmadığını incelemiş ve erişilebilirliğin artırılması için çeşitli öneriler sunmuştur.

Çepehan ve Hilmi (2020) ''Evrensel Tasarım Kapsamında Herkes İçin Erişilebilir Tasarım'' isimli çalışmalarında, kamusal alanlarda engelli bireylerin erişilebilirliğini artırmak için tasarım ilkelerini ve standartlarını detaylandırmıştır. Rapor, renk kontrastı, tipografi ve yönlendirme sistemlerinde simgelerin önemine dikkat çekerek, erişilebilir bir çevre oluşturma konusunda öneriler sunmaktadır.

Bu kapsamda yapılan literatür taraması, yön bulma sistemlerinin grafik tasarım unsurları açısından nasıl optimize edilebileceğini incelemekte ve engelli bireyler için daha erişilebilir yönlendirme sistemlerinin tasarlanmasına katkı sunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Türkiye ve Londra metro sistemlerinin karşılaştırılması, farklı planlama yaklaşımlarının erişilebilirlik açısından sunduğu avantajları ve eksiklikleri belirlemeyi mümkün kılmaktadır.

Bu çalışmada öncelikle yön bulma sistemlerinin erişilebilirlik bağlamındaki teorik çerçevesi incelenecek, ardından Türkiye ve Londra metro sistemlerindeki yönlendirme uygulamaları karşılaştırmalı olarak ele alınacaktır. Çalışmanın sonunda, erişilebilir yönlendirme tasarımına yönelik öneriler sunularak, engelli bireylerin bağımsız hareket edebilmesini destekleyecek stratejik yaklaşımlar tartışılacaktır.

KAMUSAL ALANLARDA YÖN BULMA VE ERİŞİLEBİLİRLİK

Kamusal alanlarda yön bulmak ve erişilebilirliği sağlamak, tüm bireyleri kapsayan, kapsayıcı ortamların oluşturulması açısından büyük önem taşımaktadır. Erişilebilirlik yalnızca fiziksel erişimi değil, aynı zamanda bu alanların kullanılabilirliğini artırmak için yardımcı teknolojilerin entegrasyonunu ve düşünceli kentsel planlamayı da içermektedir. Kamusal alanlardaki engelleri belirleyerek evrensel erişilebilirlik standartlarına uyumu sağlamak amacıyla yapılan erişilebilirlik değerlendirmeleri ve çevresel uyarlamalar, şehir planlamasında kritik bir role sahiptir. Bu bağlamda, dokunsal okuyucular ve 2D pin matrisli ekranlar gibi yardımcı teknolojiler, özellikle görme engelli bireylerin bilgiye erişimini önemli ölçüde artırabilir (Sarsak & Morales & Chockalingam, 2024:1). Ancak, bu teknolojilerin kamusal alanlara entegre edilmesi sürecinde altyapı yeterliliği ve kullanıcı ihtiyaçlarının gözetilmesi gerekmektedir. Bu doğrultuda, erişilebilirlik çözümlerinin kent planlamasına entegre edilmesi, kapsayıcı ve sürdürülebilir kentsel gelişim açısından önemli bir adımdır.

Kentsel sürdürülebilirliğin teşvik edilmesi ve toplumsal refahın artırılması açısından, bitki örtüsüyle çevrili kamusal alanların dağılımı ve erişilebilirliği önemli bir konudur. Latin Amerika şehirlerinde yapılan çalışmalar, yeşil alanlara erişilebilirliğin şehirden şehre değiştiğini göstermektedir. Bazı şehirlerde 15 dakikalık yürüme mesafesinde iyi erişim sağlanırken, diğerlerinde bu alanlara ulaşmak için daha fazla çaba gerekmektedir (Montoya-Tangarife et al., 2022:1-14). Şehir planlamasında yeşil alanlara erişimin arttırılması, yalnızca fiziksel çevrenin iyileştirilmesi açısından değil, aynı zamanda toplumun genel yaşam kalitesini artırmak adına da önem taşımaktadır. Şehir planlamasında yeşil alanlara erişimin artırılması, yalnızca fiziksel çevrenin iyileştirilmesi açısından değil, aynı zamanda toplumun genel yaşam kalitesini artırmak adına da önem taşımaktadır. Bununla birlikte, yeşil alanların erişilebilirliğinin sağlanması, yalnızca mesafe ile sınırlı kalmayıp, bu alanlara ulaşımın kolaylaştırılması, fiziksel engellerin kaldırılması ve kullanıcı odaklı tasarım ilkelerinin benimsenmesini de gerektirmektedir. Dolayısıyla, şehirlerin planlanması sürecinde yeşil alanların kapsayıcı bir anlayışla düzenlenmesi, sürdürülebilir kentleşme hedeflerine ulaşmada önemli bir araç olarak değerlendirilmektedir.

Engelli ve yaşlı bireylerin kamusal alanları daha rahat kullanabilmesi için tasarım süreçlerinde kapsayıcı yaklaşımların benimsenmesi gerekmektedir. Kapsayıcı tasarımlar, bireylerin topluma tam anlamıyla katılımını sağlarken aynı zamanda kültürel çeşitliliği de desteklemektedir. Bununla birlikte, toplu taşıma

ve altyapıdaki erişilebilirlik engelleri, sosyal dışlanmaya neden olmakta ve kapsayıcı kentsel planlamanın gerekliliğini gözler önüne sermektedir (Pineda, 2022). Engelli bireyler için yalnızca fiziksel erişimin sağlanması yeterli olmayıp, bu bireylerin kamusal alanlarda bağımsız hareket edebilmesini sağlayacak çözümler geliştirilmelidir. Bu doğrultuda, kentsel alanların erişilebilirlik standartlarına uygun olarak tasarlanması, bireylerin sosyal yaşamda aktif rol almasını teşvik edecek ve toplumsal eşitliği güçlendirecektir. Ayrıca, teknolojik yenilikler ve akıllı şehir uygulamalarının bu süreçte etkin şekilde kullanılması, engelli bireylerin günlük yaşamda karşılaştıkları engelleri en aza indirmeye yardımcı olacaktır.

Navigasyon ve yön bulma sistemleri, engelli bireylerin kamusal alanlarda bağımsız hareket etmelerini kolaylaştıran önemli araçlardan biridir. Web hizmetleri ve yönlendirme uygulamaları, belirli konumlara erişimin zorluğuna dayalı olarak özel rehberlik sağlayarak lokomotor bozukluğu olan bireylere yardımcı olabilir. Bununla birlikte, kamusal alanların ağırlıklı kenarlı grafikler olarak modellenmesi, mobilite zorlukları yaşayan kullanıcıların özel ihtiyaçlarına uygun yol oluşturma algoritmalarının geliştirilmesine olanak tanımaktadır (Damian, &Lacatusu &Lacatusu & Ionita 2022:640-641). Bu tür teknolojik çözümler, kullanıcı dostu ara yüzler ve yapay zeka destekli yönlendirme sistemleri ile daha etkin hale getirilebilir. Böylece, engelli bireylerin yalnızca fiziksel değil, aynı zamanda dijital olarak da desteklenmesi sağlanarak kapsayıcı kentleşme anlayışı güçlendirilebilir.

Kamusal alanlarda erişilebilirliğin artırılmasına yönelik önemli ilerlemeler kaydedilmiş olmasına rağmen, özellikle kültürel mirasın korunmasını modern erişilebilirlik gereksinimleriyle dengeleme konusunda zorluklar devam etmektedir. Engelli bireylerin şehir yaşamına tam katılımını sağlamak için yalnızca fiziksel düzenlemeler yeterli olmayıp, aynı zamanda teknolojik çözümler ve kullanıcı odaklı tasarımlar geliştirilmelidir. Bu tür zorlukları ele almak ve tüm bireyler için kapsayıcılığı teşvik eden yenilikçi çözümler üretmek adına daha fazla araştırmaya ve disiplinler arası iş birliğine ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır. Gelecekte yapılacak çalışmalar, erişilebilirlik konusundaki mevcut eksiklikleri gidermek ve farklı engel gruplarının ihtiyaçlarına yönelik daha kapsamlı çözümler sunmak açısından büyük önem taşımaktadır. Kapsayıcı şehir planlaması, yalnızca bir sosyal sorumluluk alanı değil, aynı zamanda sürdürülebilir kalkınma hedefleri doğrultusunda stratejik bir gereklilik olarak ele alınmalıdır.

YÖN BULMA SİSTEMLERİNİN TANIMI VE ÖNEMİ

Yön bulma sistemleri, kamusal alanlarda bireylerin bağımsız hareket edebilmesini sağlamak açısından kritik bir öneme sahiptir. Bu sistemlerin etkinliğinin sağlanabilmesi için öncelikle yön bulma kavramının detaylandırılması ve sistemin bileşenleri ile işleyişinin netleştirilmesi gerekmektedir. Özellikle engelli bireyler için bu sistemler, özel navigasyon çözümleri sunarak hareket kabiliyetlerini artırmakta ve günlük

yaşamda daha fazla bağımsızlık sağlamalarına yardımcı olmaktadır. Bu noktada, yön bulma sistemlerinin yalnızca fiziksel erişilebilirlik açısından değil, bilişsel ve algısal faktörler bağlamında da değerlendirilmesi gerekmektedir.

Teknolojik gelişmeler, yön bulma sistemlerinin etkinliğini artırarak kişiselleştirilmiş rehberlik ve erişilebilirlik bilgileri sunan entegre çözümler ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bu sistemler, grafik modelleme, web hizmetleri ve mobil uygulamalar gibi yöntemlerle desteklenerek yalnızca bireysel hareketliliği değil, aynı zamanda erişilebilirlik politikalarını da şekillendirmektedir. Kent planlamasında yön bulma sistemlerinin, bireysel erişilebilirliğin ötesinde toplumsal kapsayıcılığı güçlendiren stratejik bir bileşen olarak değerlendirilmesi gerekmektedir. Bu bağlamda, yön bulma sistemlerinin bileşenleri arasındaki ilişkilerin netleştirilmesi, kamusal alan kullanımına etkisinin bütüncül bir çerçevede ele alınmasını sağlayacaktır.

Erişilebilirlik sistemleri, engelli bireylerin sosyal katılımını artırarak onların kamusal alanlarda bağımsız ve güvenli bir şekilde hareket etmelerine olanak tanımaktadır. Bu bağlamda, yön bulma sistemlerinin farklı kullanıcı gruplarına nasıl hizmet sunduğu ve erişilebilirlik ihtiyaçlarına nasıl yanıt verdiği de açıklanmalıdır. Bu sistemler, yalnızca bireylerin hareketliliğini kolaylaştırmakla kalmayıp, aynı zamanda daha kapsayıcı bir toplumun inşasına katkıda bulunarak erişilebilirlik gereksinimlerini karşılayan işletmeler için yeni pazar fırsatları yaratmaktadır (Tsampoulatidis & Dimitropoulos, 2022:1). Bununla birlikte, yön bulma sistemlerinin erişilebilirlik standartlarıyla nasıl örtüştüğü ve hangi kriterlere göre değerlendirildiği de belirtilmelidir.

 Engelli bireyler için tasarlanmış bu sistemlerin yaygınlaştırılması, sürdürülebilir kalkınma hedefleri doğrultusunda toplumsal eşitliği teşvik eden önemli bir adımdır. Ancak, bu sistemlerin etkin bir şekilde uygulanabilmesi için kamusal alanlardaki fiziksel engellerin yanı sıra, kullanıcı ihtiyaçlarına duyarlı teknolojik çözümlerin de geliştirilmesi gerekmektedir. Bu nedenle, akıllı şehir uygulamaları ve insan-merkezli tasarım yaklaşımları, erişilebilirlik stratejilerinin daha etkin hale getirilmesi için önemli fırsatlar sunmaktadır.

Teknolojik gelişmeler, erişilebilirlik sistemlerinin daha işlevsel hale gelmesini sağlamış ve kamusal alanlarda yön bulmayı kolaylaştıran yeni yöntemlerin ortaya çıkmasına zemin hazırlamıştır. Özellikle hareket kabiliyeti kısıtlı bireyler için kamusal alanlar, erişim zorluklarını temsil edecek şekilde ağırlıklı kenarlı grafikler ile modellenebilmekte ve böylece erişilebilirlik engellerini dikkate alan özelleştirilmiş yolların oluşturulmasına imkân tanınmaktadır. Buna ek olarak, RESTful web hizmetleri, belirli mobilite ihtiyaçlarına sahip bireyler için kullanıcı deneyimini artırarak gerçek zamanlı yönlendirme sağlayan çözümler arasında yer almaktadır (Damian & Moraru, 2022). Bu tür dijital modelleme ve veri odaklı çözümler, engelli bireyler için daha güvenli ve erişilebilir yolların belirlenmesine katkı sağlamakla birlikte,

aynı zamanda kentsel altyapının iyileştirilmesine yönelik kanıta dayalı politika geliştirilmesine de olanak tanımaktadır. Dolayısıyla, erişilebilirlik stratejilerinin yalnızca bireysel navigasyon çözümleriyle sınırlı kalmayıp, kent yönetimi ve şehir planlaması süreçlerine entegre edilmesi gerekmektedir.

Tüm bu gelişmelere rağmen, yön bulma sistemleri halen çeşitli zorluklarla karşı karşıya kalmaktadır. Psikososyal engeller ve evrensel olarak tanınan erişilebilirlik standartlarının eksikliği, engelli bireylerin bağımsızlığını tam anlamıyla gerçekleştirmesini engelleyen başlıca sorunlar arasında yer almaktadır. Bu eksikliklerin giderilmesi ve erişilebilirlik çözümlerinin gerçekten kapsayıcı ve etkili hale getirilmesi için teknoloji ve politika alanında sürekli ilerlemelere ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır (Murdoch & Pey& Brook, 2021:667-669). Araştırmaların ve disiplinler arası iş birliklerinin artırılması, yön bulma sistemlerinin daha erişilebilir hale gelmesini sağlayarak engelli bireylerin toplumsal hayata tam katılımını destekleyen yeni çözümler geliştirilmesine katkıda bulunacaktır. Bu doğrultuda, disiplinler arası iş birliklerinin teşvik edilmesi ve kamu-özel sektör ortaklıklarının artırılması, erişilebilir navigasyon sistemlerinin daha geniş kitlelere ulaşmasını sağlayabilir. Ayrıca, kullanıcı geri bildirimlerine dayalı veri toplama süreçlerinin geliştirilmesi, mevcut erişilebilirlik çözümlerinin etkinliğini artıracak ve gelecekteki uygulamalar için önemli bir rehber oluşturacaktır. Sonuç olarak, yön bulma sistemlerinin engelli bireylerin yaşam kalitesini iyileştiren sürdürülebilir ve yenilikçi çözümler sunabilmesi için hem teknolojik hem de yönetişim boyutunda daha bütüncül bir yaklaşım benimsenmelidir.

ENGELLİLER İÇİN ERİŞİLEBİLİRLİK İLKELERİ VE EVRENSEL TASARIM

Evrensel tasarım (UD) ve erişilebilirlik ilkeleri, bireylerin yetenekleri veya engelleri ne olursa olsun, tüm insanlar tarafından kullanılabilen ortamlar, ürünler ve hizmetler yaratmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu ilkeler, topluma eşit erişim ve katılımın sağlanması için giderek daha fazla gerekli olarak kabul edilmekte ve uluslararası düzeyde Engellilerin Hakları Sözleşmesi (CRPD) gibi çerçevelere entegre edilmektedir. Farklı ülkeler, UD ilkelerini uygulamak için çeşitli stratejiler geliştirmiştir. Örneğin, Norveç yukarıdan aşağıya bir yaklaşımı benimseyerek devlet güdümlü politika değişikliklerine odaklanırken, Danimarka aşağıdan yukarıya bir modelle bireysel ve topluluk girişimlerini teşvik etmektedir. İsveç ise UD'yi erişilebilirlik ve kullanılabilirlik ile bütünleştirerek, erişilebilirlik standartlarının yaygınlaştırılmasına yönelik farklı bir perspektif sunmaktadır (Grangaard et al., 2024:5-7). Bu stratejik farklılıklar, erişilebilirliğin yalnızca politika düzeyinde değil, aynı zamanda toplum temelli girişimlerle desteklenmesi gerektiğini göstermektedir. Bu nedenle, farklı ülkelerin başarılı uygulamalarının karşılaştırmalı analizi, erişilebilirlik politikalarının geliştirilmesi için önemli bir referans noktası oluşturmaktadır.

Kamusal alanlarda erişilebilirliğin artırılması, özellikle yaya yolları gibi kritik altyapıların düzenlenmesi açısından büyük bir öneme sahiptir. Yapılan araştırmalar, örneğin Kendari Şehrinde gerçekleştirilen bir

inceleme, mevcut yaya yollarının çoğunun UD standartlarını karşılamadığını ve erişilebilirliği artırmak için rampalar ve kılavuz bloklar gibi fiziksel modifikasyonların gerekli olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Bu tür düzenlemeler, yalnızca fiziksel engelli bireyler için değil, yaşlılar, çocuklar ve geçici hareket kısıtlılığı yaşayan bireyler için de güvenli ve konforlu bir şehir yaşamı sağlamak açısından kritik bir rol oynamaktadır. Kamusal alanlarda kapsayıcı tasarımın teşvik edilmesi, bireylerin bağımsız hareket kabiliyetini artırarak toplumsal hayata katılımlarını kolaylaştırmaktadır (Nahdatunnisa & Tahir, 2024:147-148). Ancak, fiziksel altyapı düzenlemeleri tek başına yeterli olmayıp, bireylerin çevreyi daha iyi algılayabilmesini sağlayacak dijital erişilebilirlik çözümleriyle desteklenmelidir. Bu bağlamda, akıllı şehir uygulamalarının ve sensör tabanlı navigasyon sistemlerinin kullanımı, erişilebilirliğin bütüncül bir yaklaşımla ele alınmasını mümkün kılmaktadır.

Eğitim ortamlarında erişilebilirliğin sağlanması, öğrenme süreçlerini kapsayıcı hale getiren önemli bir bileşen olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Öğrenme için Evrensel Tasarım (UDL), geleneksel eğitim yöntemlerinin ötesine geçerek farklı yetenek ve ihtiyaçlara sahip bireylerin eğitim sistemine tam olarak katılmasını sağlamaktadır. Bu yaklaşım, eğitim materyallerinin erişilebilirliğini artırarak, öğretim süreçlerini öğrencilerin bilişsel ve fiziksel kapasitelerine uygun hale getirmeyi hedeflemektedir . UDL ilkeleri, eğitim ortamlarının tüm öğrenciler için erişilebilir olmasını sağlarken, öğrenme tasarımında esneklik ve adaptasyon ihtiyacını vurgulamaktadır (Choi & Seo, 2024:939). Buna ek olarak, dijital teknolojilerin eğitim süreçlerine entegrasyonu, erişilebilirliği daha da ileriye taşıyan bir faktör olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Özellikle uzaktan eğitim platformlarının engelli bireylere uyumlu hale getirilmesi, eğitimin kapsayıcı ve erişilebilir bir hale gelmesine katkı sağlayacaktır.

Mimari erişilebilirlik açısından yapılan değerlendirmeler, UD ilkelerinin dini ve kültürel alanlara entegrasyonunun önemini de ortaya koymaktadır. Şeyh Zayed Ulu Camii üzerine yapılan bir inceleme, bu tür yapılarda dolaşım alanları, rampalar ve yönlendirme sistemleri gibi unsurların erişilebilirlik standartlarını karşılayacak şekilde tasarlanması gerektiğini vurgulamaktadır (Suhardi et al., 2024:269-270). Kültürel ve dini mekânların da kapsayıcı hale getirilmesi, yalnızca erişilebilirlik açısından değil, aynı zamanda farklı topluluklar arasında eşit katılımın sağlanması açısından da kritik bir unsur olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Bu bağlamda, kültürel miras alanlarında erişilebilirlik uygulamalarının planlanması, tarihi dokunun korunmasını da göz önünde bulundurarak dengeli bir yaklaşım gerektirmektedir. Akıllı yönlendirme sistemleri ve artırılmış gerçeklik çözümleri, bu tür mekânların erişilebilirliğini artırırken tarihi dokuyu koruma noktasında yenilikçi alternatifler sunmaktadır.

Bunun yanı sıra, erişilebilirliğin artırılmasında duyusal, bilişsel ve motor engellerin dikkate alınması büyük bir önem taşımaktadır. Evrensel tasarım ilkeleri, yalnızca fiziksel mekanların düzenlenmesini değil, aynı

zamanda bilgi erişiminin ve sistem tasarımlarının herkes için kullanılabilir hale getirilmesini de kapsamaktadır. Gelecekteki yönelimler arasında, erişilebilirlik sistemlerinde yapay zekâ kullanımının artırılması ve mobil ortamlarda kullanıcı dostu çözümler geliştirilmesi yer almaktadır (Lee & Xie, 2025:6). Bu doğrultuda, kullanıcı deneyimini iyileştiren yapay zeka destekli çözümler, bireylerin mekansal algısını güçlendirebilir ve yön bulma süreçlerini daha etkin hale getirebilir. Özellikle, kişiselleştirilmiş navigasyon sistemleri ve sesli rehber teknolojileri, bireysel ihtiyaçlara uygun yönlendirme sağlayarak erişilebilirlik standartlarının yükseltilmesine katkıda bulunabilir.

Evrensel tasarım ve erişilebilirlik ilkeleri, kapsayıcı bir toplum oluşturmak açısından vazgeçilmez unsurlar olsa da, farklı sektörlerde ve bölgelerde uygulanmalarında çeşitli zorluklar devam etmektedir. Ulusal politika yaklaşımlarındaki çeşitlilik ve sürekli adaptasyon gerekliliği, gerçekten evrensel bir erişilebilirlik anlayışına ulaşmanın karmaşıklığını gözler önüne sermektedir. Bu nedenle, erişilebilirliğin tüm bireyler için garanti altına alınmasını sağlamak amacıyla, uluslararası düzeyde standartların daha geniş çapta benimsenmesi ve uygulanması gerekmektedir. Ayrıca, erişilebilirlik politikalarının uygulanabilirliğini artırmak için kamu, özel sektör ve sivil toplum iş birliği daha fazla teşvik edilmelidir. Bu sayede, yalnızca yasal düzenlemelerle sınırlı kalmayan, aynı zamanda teknolojik ve sosyal boyutları da kapsayan kapsamlı bir erişilebilirlik stratejisi oluşturulabilir.

METRO YÖNLENDİRME SİSTEMLERİNDE GÖSTERGEBİLİMSEL ANALİZ

Metro yönlendirme sistemlerinde göstergebilimsel analiz, kullanıcılara bilgi ve anlam iletmek amacıyla metro sistemlerinde kullanılan işaret ve sembollerin incelenmesini içermektedir. Bu analiz, metro sistemlerinin halk tarafından nasıl tasarlandığını, algılandığını ve kullanıldığını ortaya koyarak, yönlendirme sistemlerinin etkinliği ve işaretlerin kültürel ve sosyal bağlamları nasıl yansıttığına dair içgörüler sağlamaktadır. Göstergebilim, anlam üretme süreçlerini ele alarak, metro yönlendirme işaretlerinin yalnızca yön gösteren öğeler değil, aynı zamanda tarihsel, kültürel ve toplumsal bağlamda da birer anlatı aracı olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

Metro istasyonlarının isimlendirilmesi, yalnızca bir yön bulma unsuru olarak değil, aynı zamanda sosyo-ekonomik ve politik değişimlerin bir yansıması olarak değerlendirilebilir. Örneğin, Moskova'daki metro istasyonlarının adlandırılması, devrim sonrası geçmişi anmaktan coğrafi adlara doğru bir evrim gösterirken, Paris metrosu, coğrafi isimlerden daha ideolojik adlandırma geleneklerine geçiş yapmıştır. İstasyon adlarının etimolojisi ve tematik gruplandırılması, metro sistemlerine gömülü olan kültürel önemi vurgulamakta ve ulusal değerler ile tarihsel anlatılar hakkında önemli içgörüler sunmaktadır. Metro sistemlerinde yön bulma süreçleri, sadece işaretlerin algılanabilirliğiyle sınırlı olmayıp, istasyon

adlarının taşıdığı anlamın da kullanıcıların kent algısını nasıl şekillendirdiğini ortaya koymaktadır (Suleimanova, 2023).

Göstergebilimsel analiz, kentsel tasarım ve spekülatif kentleşme bağlamında da önemli bir çerçeve sunmaktadır. Göstergebilimsel araçlar, hem gerçek hem de kurgusal kentsel ortamları analiz etmek için kullanılabilir ve şehirlerin nasıl temsil edildiğini ve algılandığını anlamaya yönelik bir yaklaşım geliştirilmesini sağlar. Özellikle yazarlık ve aktör-ağ toplulukları gibi kentsel göstergebilim katmanları, kentleşme süreçlerinin nasıl şekillendiğini anlamak için kapsamlı bir analiz sunmaktadır. Metro sistemlerinin göstergebilimsel analizi, yalnızca mevcut yönlendirme sistemlerini değerlendirmekle kalmaz, aynı zamanda gelecekteki kentsel senaryoları tasavvur etmek ve olası gelişmeleri öngörmek açısından spekülatif tasarım anlayışına da katkı sağlar (Thibault et al., 2024). Bu bağlamda, göstergebilimsel analiz, kamusal alanlardaki yönlendirme sistemlerinin gelecekte nasıl daha erişilebilir ve kullanıcı dostu hale getirilebileceğine dair yeni açılımlar sunabilir.

Metro sistemlerinde çoklu sensörlü sistemler, göstergebilim ilkelerinin teknolojik altyapılarla bütünleştiği alanlardan biridir. Göstergebilim, anlamlı yorumlar oluşturmak için işaretlerin çıkarıldığı ve işlendiği bir analiz aracı olarak, çok sensörlü sistemlerin bilgi füzyonu ve durumsal farkındalığı geliştirmesi için bir çerçeve sunmaktadır (Myler, 2016). Metro sistemlerindeki bilgi akışı ve yönlendirme süreçleri, yolcu hareketlerinin izlenmesi, trafik yoğunluğunun belirlenmesi ve hat geçiş sürelerinin optimize edilmesi gibi operasyonel faktörlerle iç içe geçmiştir. Ancak, göstergebilimsel analiz yalnızca yönlendirme sistemlerinin anlam üretme süreçlerine değil, metro sistemlerinin performans iyileştirme süreçlerine, enerji tüketimine ve verimlilik gibi operasyonel yönlerine de odaklanmalıdır (D'Acierno et al., 2017). Metro sistemlerinin erişilebilirliği ve sürdürülebilirliği artırmak, yalnızca yolcular için daha iyi yönlendirme sistemleri oluşturmayı değil, aynı zamanda işlevselliği yüksek ve kullanıcı dostu sistemlerin geliştirilmesini de içermektedir. Bu nedenle, göstergebilimsel analizin operasyonel stratejilerle bütünleşmesi, metro sistemlerini yalnızca verimli hale getirmekle kalmaz, aynı zamanda bu sistemlerin kültürel olarak da anlamlı ve toplumsal bağlam içinde okunabilir olmasını sağlar.

Genel olarak, metro yönlendirme sistemlerinde göstergebilimsel analiz, işaretlerin, sembollerin ve yön bulma unsurlarının sadece görsel göstergeler olarak değil, aynı zamanda toplumsal ve kültürel anlam taşıyan yapılar olarak değerlendirilmesi gerektiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Metro sistemlerinde kullanılan yönlendirme işaretlerinin tarihsel, ideolojik ve pratik boyutları ile ele alınması, bu sistemlerin hem tasarım hem de kullanım süreçlerinin daha iyi anlaşılmasını sağlamaktadır. Spekülatif kentsel tasarım ve göstergebilim ilkeleri, gelecekte daha erişilebilir, kültürel olarak uyumlu ve kullanıcı odaklı yönlendirme sistemlerinin oluşturulmasına yönelik önemli bir çerçeve sunmaktadır.

ARAŞTIRMANIN METODOLOJİSİ

Araştırmanın Önemi

Kamusal alanlarda yön bulma sistemleri, bireylerin bağımsız hareket edebilmesi açısından kritik bir rol oynamakta olup, engelli bireylerin erişilebilirliğini artırmak için önemli bir faktör olarak görülmektedir. Bu çalışma, göstergebilimsel analiz yöntemi ile yön bulma işaretlerinin erişilebilirlik açısından değerlendirilmesini amaçlamaktadır. Yön bulma sistemlerinin grafik tasarım unsurları, görsel algı, anlaşılırlık ve erişilebilirlik kriterleri çerçevesinde analiz edilerek, farklı kültüre sahip bireyler tarafından nasıl algılandığı incelenmiştir.

Araştırmanın Problemi

Toplu taşıma sistemlerinde yönlendirme işaretleri, kullanıcıların doğru bir şekilde hareket etmelerini sağlamak için tasarlanmıştır. Ancak, bu sistemlerin her kullanıcı grubu için eşit ölçüde anlaşılabilir olup olmadığı, erişilebilirlik kriterlerine ne ölçüde uygun olduğu tartışmalıdır. Farklı kültüre sahip bireyler için yön bulma sistemlerinin algılanabilirliği değişebileceği gibi, renk, tipografi ve sembollerin etkisi de kullanıcı deneyimini önemli ölçüde etkileyebilir.

Araştırmanın Amacı

Bu araştırma, Türkiye ve Londra metro sistemlerinde kullanılan yön bulma işaretlerinin göstergebilimsel analizini yaparak, erişilebilirlik ve anlaşılırlık açısından değerlendirilmesini amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmanın temel hedefleri şu şekilde belirlenmiştir:

➢ Türkiye ve Londra metro sistemlerindeki yön bulma işaretlerinin göstergebilimsel açıdan analiz edilmesi,

➢ Görsel iletişim ve grafik tasarım unsurlarının erişilebilirlik üzerindeki etkisinin değerlendirilmesi,

➢ Kullanıcı algısı çerçevesinde yön bulma sistemlerinin etkinliğinin incelenmesi,

➢ Engelli bireyler için erişilebilir yön bulma çözümlerinin uygulanabilirliğinin belirlenmesi.

Araştırmanın Yöntemi

Bu çalışmada nitel araştırma yöntemi benimsenerek, yön bulma sistemlerinin erişilebilirlik çerçevesinde analiz edilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Peirce'in ikon, indeks ve sembol kavramları kullanılarak, yön bulma işaretlerinin anlam kazanma süreçleri değerlendirilmiştir.

Araştırmada, göstergebilimsel analiz yöntemi kullanılarak Türkiye ve Londra metro sistemlerindeki yön bulma işaretleri erişilebilirlik bağlamında incelenmiştir. Bu analiz, yönlendirme işaretlerinde kullanılan

piktogramlar, işaret dili sembolleri, yönlendirme okları ve diğer göstergelerin kullanıcılar tarafından nasıl algılandığını ve anlamlandırıldığını ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Özellikle Peirce'in göstergebilim yaklaşımına göre, işaretler gösteren (signifier) ve gösterilen (signified) olarak iki bileşenden oluşmaktadır.

Araştırma kapsamında, doküman analizi, görsel materyallerin incelenmesi ve erişilebilirlik standartlarına ilişkin mevcut düzenlemelerin karşılaştırılması gibi nitel veri toplama yöntemleri kullanılmıştır. Böylece, Türkiye ve Londra metro sistemlerinde kullanılan yönlendirme işaretlerinin erişilebilirlik açısından nasıl yorumlandığı ve uygulandığı hakkında kapsamlı bir değerlendirme sunulmuştur.

BULGULAR

TÜRKİYE METRO SİSTEMLERİNDE KULLANILAN İŞARET VE SEMBOLLERİN ANLAMLANDIRILMASI

Metro yönlendirme sistemlerinde kullanılan işaret ve semboller, yolcuların güvenli ve verimli bir şekilde seyahat etmelerini sağlamak için kritik öneme sahiptir. Bu işaretler, kullanıcıların istasyonlarda ve trenlerde doğru yönlendirilmesine yardımcı olurken, aynı zamanda evrensel bir dil oluşturarak farklı dil ve kültürlerden gelen insanların da sistemi anlamasını kolaylaştırır. Göstergebilim, işaretlerin yalnızca fiziksel birer sembol olmadığını, aynı zamanda toplumsal ve kültürel bağlam ile anlam kazandığını ortaya koymaktadır. Peirce'e göre, işaretler üç kategoriye ayrılmaktadır: ikonlar, indeksler ve semboller. İkonlar, doğrudan temsil ettiği nesneye benzeyen işaretlerdir. Örneğin, İstanbul metrosunda kullanılan "M" harfi, metro istasyonlarını belirtmek için yaygın bir semboldür. Bu sembol, kullanıcıların metro girişlerini kolayca tanımasını sağlar.

Görsel 1: Metro Yönlendirme İşaretleri

Kaynak: Behance (https://www.behance.net/gallery/Metro-Yonlendirme-Tabelalari)

İkonik göstergeler, doğrudan temsil ettiği nesneye benzeyen işaretlerdir. Metro giriş tabelaları, asansör ve yürüyen merdiven sembolleri, fiziksel olarak temsil ettiği nesneye benzediği için ikonik göstergelere örnek olarak verilebilir. Kullanıcı, bu işaretleri gördüğünde, asansörün ya da yürüyen merdivenin yerini kolayca anlamlandırabilir. Ancak göstergebilim açısından değerlendirildiğinde, bu tür işaretlerin kültürel ve dilsel farklılıklar nedeniyle bazen yanlış yorumlanabileceği göz önünde bulundurulmalıdır.

Görsel 2: Metro İkonları ve İşlevleri

Kaynak: Arel Üniversitesi (https://earsiv.arel.edu.tr/metro-ikonlari)

İndeksik göstergeler, neden-sonuç ilişkisiyle anlam kazanan işaretlerdir. Ok işaretleri, en temel indeksik göstergelerden biridir. Örneğin, hat değiştirme alanlarında kullanılan yön okları, kullanıcıları belirli yönlere yönlendirdiği için doğrudan nedensel bir ilişki kurmaktadır. Acil çıkış işaretleri de indeksik göstergeler arasında yer alır. Tehlike anında çıkış yönünü gösteren bu işaretler, genellikle yeşil zemin üzerine beyaz koşan adam figürüyle temsil edilmektedir. Bu semboller, uluslararası standartlara uygun olarak tasarlanmış olup kullanıcıyı yönlendirme işlevi taşımaktadır.

Görsel 3: Acil Çıkış İşaretleri

Kaynak: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi (https://www.ibb.gov.tr/metro-acil-cikis-isaretleri)

Metro sistemlerinde kullanılan bazı işaretler sembolik göstergeler olarak değerlendirilir. Metro hatlarının farklı renklerle kodlanması, kullanıcıların farklı hatları ayırt etmesini sağlayan önemli bir göstergedir. İstanbul metrosunda M2 hattı yeşil, M1 hattı kırmızı renkle temsil edilmektedir. Bu renklerin doğrudan fiziksel bir referansı bulunmamaktadır; ancak kullanıcı deneyimi ve kültürel normlarla anlam kazandıkları için sembolik göstergeler olarak değerlendirilir. Benzer şekilde, metro istasyon isimleri de sembolik göstergeler arasındadır. Örneğin, Taksim veya Kızılay gibi merkezi durak isimleri, yalnızca bir ulaşım noktasını temsil etmenin ötesinde, şehir belleğinin ve tarihsel anlatıların bir parçası olarak da işlev görmektedir.

Görsel 4: Metro Hatları ve Renk Kodlamaları

Kaynak: İstanbul Ulaşım A.Ş. (https://www.metro.istanbul/hatlar)

Türkiye'de metro yönlendirme sistemlerinde kullanılan işaret ve semboller, ikon, indeks ve semboller olarak farklı işlevlere sahiptir. İkonik göstergeler, görsel temsiliyet yoluyla anlam üretirken, indeksik göstergeler kullanıcıları belirli yönlere yönlendiren nedensel ilişkiler kurmaktadır. Sembolik göstergeler ise kültürel ve tarihsel bağlam içinde anlam kazanmakta ve metro kullanıcıları için hafızaya dayalı bir yönlendirme sağlamaktadır. Göstergebilimsel analiz, Türkiye metro sistemlerinde yön bulma işaretlerinin büyük ölçüde uluslararası standartlara uygun olduğunu, ancak bazı göstergelerin kültürel ve dilsel farklılıklar nedeniyle uluslararası yolcular için daha az anlaşılır olabileceğini ortaya koymaktadır. Kullanıcı dostu ve erişilebilir yön bulma sistemleri oluşturabilmek için, göstergebilimsel açıdan daha açık, evrensel ve çok dilli işaret sistemlerine geçiş yapılması önerilmektedir.

LONDRA METRO SİSTEMİNDEKİ İŞARET VE SEMBOLLERİN ANLAMLANDIRILMASI

Londra Metro Sistemi, dünyadaki en eski ve en kapsamlı yeraltı ulaşım ağlarından biri olarak, yolcuların güvenli ve verimli bir şekilde seyahat etmelerini sağlamak amacıyla çeşitli yönlendirme işaretleri ve semboller kullanmaktadır. Bu işaretler, kullanıcıların istasyonlarda ve trenlerde doğru yönlendirilmesine yardımcı olurken, aynı zamanda evrensel bir dil oluşturarak farklı dil ve kültürlerden gelen insanların da

sistemi anlamasını kolaylaştırır. Göstergebilimsel açıdan bakıldığında, bu işaretler ve semboller yalnızca fiziksel birer gösterge olmanın ötesinde, toplumsal ve kültürel bağlamlarla da anlam kazanmaktadır.

Görsel 5: Londra Metro Sistemi Genel Haritası

Kaynak: Transport for London (https://tfl.gov.uk/maps/track/tube)

Londra metrosunda yönlendirme işaretleri, renk kodlamaları ve hat numaraları ile desteklenmiş bir yönlendirme sistemine sahiptir. Her hattın farklı bir renkle ifade edilmesi, hatların birbirinden ayrılmasını kolaylaştırarak yolcuların rotalarını daha hızlı planlamalarına yardımcı olmaktadır. Göstergebilim açısından bu renkler sembolik göstergeler olarak değerlendirilir, çünkü doğrudan fiziksel bir referansa sahip olmamalarına rağmen kullanıcıların zamanla bu renklere aşina olmasıyla anlam kazanırlar.

Charles Sanders Peirce'in göstergebilim teorisine göre, işaretler üç kategoriye ayrılır: ikonlar, indeksler ve semboller. İkonlar, temsil ettikleri nesneye doğrudan benzeyen işaretlerdir. Örneğin, Londra metrosunda kullanılan "Underground" logosu, kırmızı bir daire içinde mavi bir çubuk üzerinde beyaz harflerle yazılmıştır ve bu tasarım, metro istasyonlarını belirtmek için yaygın bir semboldür.

Görsel 6: Londra Metro Girişi – Underground Logosu
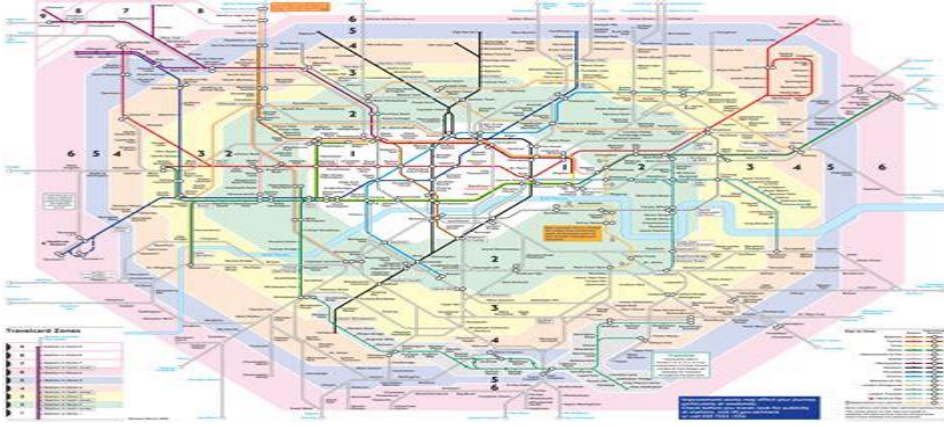
Bu sembol, kullanıcıların metro girişlerini kolayca tanımasını sağlar. İkonik bir gösterge olarak değerlendirilir çünkü temsil ettiği nesneye görsel olarak benzerlik göstermektedir. Londra'daki metro girişlerinde neredeyse her istasyonda aynı logonun kullanılması, bu işaretin evrensel bir anlam kazanmasını sağlamıştır. Kullanıcı, metroya girmek istediğinde herhangi bir yazıyı okumak zorunda kalmadan sadece bu simgeyi takip ederek yönünü belirleyebilir.

İndeksik göstergeler, neden-sonuç ilişkisiyle anlam kazanan işaretlerdir. Örneğin, istasyon içindeki yönlendirme okları, belirli bir hattın veya çıkışın yönünü gösterir ve kullanıcıları o yöne yönlendirir. Acil çıkış işaretleri de indeksik göstergeler arasında yer alır; tehlike anında çıkış yönünü gösteren bu işaretler, genellikle yeşil zemin üzerine beyaz koşan bir figürle temsil edilir ve uluslararası standartlara uygun olarak tasarlanmıştır.

Görsel 7: Londra Metro İçi Yönlendirme İşaretleri

Kaynak: Transport for London (https://tfl.gov.uk/)

Bu yönlendirme işaretleri, kullanıcıların belirli bir noktaya yönlendirilmesini sağladığı için indeksik göstergeler olarak değerlendirilir. Kullanıcı, bu işaretleri takip ettiğinde bir noktadan diğerine ulaşmak için bilgi alır ve hareketini yönlendirir. Bu tür yönlendirme işaretlerinin uluslararası standartlarda olması, farklı ülkelerden gelen yolcuların sistemi kolayca anlayabilmesini sağlamaktadır.

Sembolik göstergeler ise, kültürel ve toplumsal anlaşmalar sonucu anlam kazanan işaretlerdir. Londra metrosunda hatların farklı renklerle kodlanması, kullanıcıların farklı hatları ayırt etmesini sağlayan önemli bir göstergedir. Örneğin, Central Line kırmızı, Piccadilly Line mavi renkle temsil edilir. Bu renkler, doğrudan fiziksel bir referansa sahip olmamakla birlikte, kullanıcı deneyimi ve kültürel normlarla anlam kazanır ve sembolik göstergeler olarak değerlendirilir.

Görsel 8: Londra Metro Hatları ve Renk Kodlamaları

Kaynak: Transport for London (https://tfl.gov.uk/maps)

Bu sistem, hem Londralılar hem de turistler için standartlaştırılmış bir yönlendirme yöntemi olarak büyük bir başarı elde etmiştir. Metro hatlarının renklerle ayrılması, kullanıcıların zihinsel haritalarını oluşturmasına yardımcı olur ve böylece sistemin daha sezgisel bir şekilde kullanılmasını sağlar.

Ayrıca, metro istasyonlarının isimlendirilmesi de sembolik göstergeler arasında yer alır. Örneğin, "Baker Street" veya "King's Cross" gibi istasyon isimleri, yalnızca bir ulaşım noktasını belirtmenin ötesinde, şehir belleğinin ve tarihsel anlatıların bir parçası olarak da işlev görür. Bu isimler, belirli bir bölgenin tarihi veya kültürel özelliklerini yansıtarak, kullanıcılara mekânsal bir bağlam sunar.

Göstergebilimsel analiz, Londra metrosundaki yönlendirme işaretlerinin büyük ölçüde uluslararası standartlara uygun olduğunu ve farklı kültürel arka planlara sahip kullanıcılar tarafından genellikle doğru bir şekilde anlaşıldığını ortaya koymaktadır. Ancak, bazı sembollerin ve işaretlerin kültürel ve dilsel farklılıklar nedeniyle uluslararası yolcular için daha az anlaşılır olabileceği de göz önünde bulundurulmalıdır. Bu nedenle, kullanıcı dostu ve erişilebilir yönlendirme sistemleri oluşturmak için, göstergebilimsel açıdan daha açık, evrensel ve çok dilli işaret sistemlerine geçiş yapılması önerilmektedir.

KARŞILAŞTIRMALI GÖSTERGEBİLİMSEL ANALİZ SONUÇLARI: TÜRKİYE VE LONDRA ÖRNEKLERİNDEN ÇIKARIMLAR

Göstergebilimsel analiz, metro yönlendirme sistemlerinde kullanılan işaret ve sembollerin yalnızca fiziksel göstergeler olmaktan öte, toplumsal, kültürel ve tarihsel bağlam içinde nasıl anlam kazandığını ortaya koymaktadır. Türkiye ve Londra metro sistemleri, yönlendirme işaretleri açısından hem benzerlikler hem de farklılıklar göstermekte, bu sistemlerin erişilebilirlik ve anlaşılırlık açısından sunduğu imkanlar ve sınırlamalar farklı kullanıcı deneyimleri yaratmaktadır. Bu bağlamda yapılan karşılaştırmalı

analiz, yönlendirme işaretlerinin kullanıcı odaklı tasarım açısından nasıl optimize edilebileceğine yönelik önemli çıkarımlar sunmaktadır.

Her iki metro sisteminde de işaret ve semboller, Peirce'in göstergebilim kategorilerine (ikonlar, indeksler ve semboller) uygun olarak ele alınmış ve kullanıcıların bu işaretleri nasıl algıladığı analiz edilmiştir. İstanbul ve Londra metro sistemlerinde ikonlar, fiziksel nesnelere benzerliğiyle kolay algılanabilirlik sunarken, indeksler neden-sonuç ilişkisi üzerinden kullanıcıları yönlendirmektedir. Bununla birlikte, semboller, kültürel ve tarihsel bağlamda anlam kazandığından, özellikle uluslararası kullanıcılar açısından yorumlama zorlukları doğurabilmektedir.

İstanbul metrosunda kullanılan yönlendirme sistemleri büyük ölçüde uluslararası standartlarla uyumlu olmakla birlikte, bazı yönlendirme işaretlerinde kültürel ve dilsel faktörlerin etkisi gözlemlenmiştir. Örneğin, hat adlandırmalarının genellikle renk kodları ile desteklenmesi kullanıcıların yön bulmasını kolaylaştırırken, bazı semboller ve yer isimleri, özellikle yabancı turistler için anlamlandırma güçlüğü yaratabilmektedir. Londra metrosunda ise yönlendirme sistemleri, uluslararası kullanıcılar için daha açık ve standart hale getirilmiş olup, hat renk kodlamaları ve evrensel semboller ile desteklenmiştir. Özellikle, Londra metrosunda kullanılan "Underground" logosu ve yönlendirme sisteminde benimsenen renk kodları, global kullanıcılar açısından daha sezgisel ve tanıdık bir yapı sunmaktadır.

Göstergebilimsel analiz kapsamında her iki metro sistemindeki yönlendirme işaretleri değerlendirildiğinde, ikonların en kolay anlaşılan işaretler olduğu, indekslerin yönlendirme açısından kritik bir rol oynadığı ve sembollerin ise kültürel bağlamla daha güçlü ilişkili olduğu görülmüştür. Bu bağlamda İstanbul metrosunda kullanılan yönlendirme işaretlerinin bazı noktalarda daha evrensel hale getirilmesi gerektiği, örneğin çok dilli tabela kullanımının artırılması gerektiği belirlenmiştir. Londra metrosu ise erişilebilirlik açısından belirli standartlara sahip olmakla birlikte, bazı sembollerin farklı kültürel gruplar tarafından farklı yorumlanabileceği ve işaretlerin uluslararası kullanıcılar için daha sezgisel hale getirilmesi gerektiği ortaya çıkmıştır.

Türkiye ve Londra örneklerinden çıkarılabilecek bir diğer önemli bulgu, tipografi ve renk kullanımı açısından her iki metro sisteminin erişilebilirlik standartlarına göre düzenlenmiş olmasına rağmen, bazı farklılıkların bulunmasıdır. Londra metrosunda kullanılan yönlendirme işaretleri genellikle yüksek kontrastlı, büyük puntolu ve açık arka planlı tipografi ile desteklenerek kullanıcı deneyimini artırmaktadır. İstanbul metrosunda da tipografi ve renk kullanımı açısından benzer standartlara uyulsa da, bazı durak ve geçiş noktalarında yönlendirme işaretlerinin yeterince belirgin olmadığı ve kullanıcılar için anlaşılabilirlik açısından iyileştirilmesi gerektiği gözlemlenmiştir.

Bunun yanı sıra, her iki metro sisteminde de görme engelli bireyler için dokunsal yönlendirme sistemlerinin kullanımı bulunmaktadır. Ancak, Londra metrosunda bu sistemlerin daha yaygın olduğu ve özellikle asansörler, merdivenler ve çıkış noktalarında dokunsal yönlendirme unsurlarının daha belirgin şekilde yer aldığı görülmektedir. İstanbul metrosunda ise benzer sistemlerin uygulandığı fakat tüm istasyonlarda tutarlı bir şekilde sunulmadığı tespit edilmiştir.

Sonuç olarak, İstanbul ve Londra metro sistemleri arasındaki göstergebilimsel analiz, yönlendirme işaretlerinin tasarımında kültürel, dilsel ve erişilebilirlik standartlarının dikkate alınmasının önemini ortaya koymaktadır. Londra metrosu, uluslararası kullanıcılar için daha sezgisel ve evrensel bir yönlendirme sistemi sunarken, İstanbul metrosunda kültürel bağlamın daha belirgin olduğu, ancak uluslararası kullanıcılar açısından bazı iyileştirmelere ihtiyaç duyulduğu belirlenmiştir. Bu doğrultuda, her iki metro sisteminde yönlendirme işaretlerinin erişilebilirlik açısından daha kapsayıcı hale getirilmesi için aşağıdaki öneriler geliştirilebilir:

➢ **Daha Sezgisel ve Evrensel İşaret Kullanımı:** Türkiye metrosunda yönlendirme işaretlerinin daha açık ve uluslararası standartlara uygun hale getirilmesi, Londra metrosunda ise bazı sembollerin farklı kültürel yorumlara açık olması nedeniyle daha evrensel simgelerle desteklenmesi önerilmektedir.

➢ **Çok Dilli ve Yüksek Kontrastlı Tipografi Kullanımı:** İstanbul metrosunda yönlendirme işaretlerinde birden fazla dil seçeneğinin sunulması, Londra metrosunda ise yazı karakterlerinin daha belirgin hale getirilmesi erişilebilirliği artıracağı düşünülmektedir.

➢ **Dokunsal Yönlendirme Unsurlarının Artırılması:** Her iki metro sisteminde de görme engelli bireyler için dokunsal yönlendirme sistemlerinin daha yaygın hale getirilmesi, erişilebilirliği güçlendireceği düşünülmektedir.

➢ **Yön Bulma Sistemlerinin Kültürel ve Tarihsel Bağlam İçinde Değerlendirilmesi:** Metro istasyon isimlendirmelerinin ve yönlendirme işaretlerinin yalnızca işlevsel değil, aynı zamanda kültürel ve toplumsal bir anlatı sunduğu göz önünde bulundurularak, uluslararası kullanıcıların bu sistemleri anlamlandırmasına yönelik bilgilendirici unsurlar eklenebilir.

➢ **Renk Kodlamalarının ve Görsel Hiyerarşinin Güçlendirilmesi:** İstanbul ve Londra metro sistemlerinde yönlendirme işaretlerinin belirginliği ve anlaşılırlığını artırmak için daha güçlü renk kontrastları ve görsel düzenlemeler uygulanabilir.

Bu bağlamda, göstergebilimsel analiz yöntemi ile yapılan değerlendirmeler, metro yönlendirme sistemlerinin yalnızca yön gösteren araçlar olmanın ötesinde, kültürel, tarihsel ve erişilebilirlik açısından

da önemli birer iletişim aracı olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Kullanıcı deneyimini iyileştirmek adına tasarımın kültürel bağlam ve erişilebilirlik kriterleri ile birlikte ele alınması, kamusal alanlarda daha kapsayıcı yönlendirme sistemlerinin oluşturulmasını sağlayacaktır.

DEĞERLENDİRME VE SONUÇ

Metro sistemlerinde yön bulma işaretleri, yalnızca fiziksel yönlendirme işlevi görmekle kalmaz, aynı zamanda kültürel, dilsel ve tarihsel bağlamları da içeren önemli bir iletişim aracı olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Grafik tasarım unsurlarının erişilebilirlik üzerindeki etkileri göstergebilimsel bir yaklaşımla ele alındığında, bu unsurların kullanıcı deneyimi açısından belirleyici olduğu görülmektedir. Türkiye ve Londra metro sistemleri arasında yapılan karşılaştırmalı analiz, yön bulma sistemlerinde kullanılan sembollerin, tipografinin ve renk kodlamalarının etkili olup olmadığını anlamak açısından önemli bulgular sunmaktadır.

Her iki metro sisteminde de belirli tasarım standartları takip edilmekte, ancak kullanıcı deneyimi açısından farklılıklar ortaya çıkmaktadır. Londra metrosunda yönlendirme işaretleri daha sezgisel ve uluslararası kullanıcılar için anlaşılabilir olacak şekilde tasarlanmıştır. Yüksek kontrastlı tipografi, belirgin renk kodlamaları ve evrensel semboller ile desteklenen bu sistem, farklı dil ve kültürlerden gelen bireyler için erişilebilirliği artırmaktadır. İstanbul metrosunda ise yönlendirme işaretleri genel olarak belirli standartlara uygun olmakla birlikte, bazı durumlarda kültürel ve dilsel bağlamlara daha bağımlı olduğu için uluslararası kullanıcılar açısından anlaşılabilirliğinin artırılması gerekmektedir.

Tipografi kullanımı açısından Londra metrosunda yüksek kontrastlı, büyük puntolu harflerle tasarlanan işaretler daha okunaklı bir yapı sunarken, İstanbul metrosunda bazı yönlendirme işaretlerinin yeterince belirgin olmadığı görülmüştür. Renk kodlaması açısından her iki metro sisteminde de farklı hatları ayırt etmeye yönelik renkli yönlendirme sistemleri kullanılmıştır. Londra metrosunda bu renklerin daha belirgin ve tutarlı olduğu, İstanbul metrosunda ise bazı bölgelerde renk kontrastlarının düşük kaldığı tespit edilmiştir. Görsel hiyerarşi ve düzen açısından Londra metrosunun daha sistematik bir yönlendirme yapısına sahip olduğu, İstanbul metrosunda ise yönlendirme işaretlerinin yerleşiminde bazı tutarsızlıkların bulunduğu belirlenmiştir.

Göstergebilimsel perspektiften yapılan incelemelerde, ikon, indeks ve semboller farklı bağlamlarda değerlendirilmiştir. Metro girişlerinde kullanılan semboller açısından Londra metrosunda daha evrensel ve standart bir sistem benimsenirken, İstanbul metrosunda yerel tasarım unsurlarının daha fazla kullanıldığı görülmüştür. Yönlendirme okları gibi indeksik göstergeler her iki metro sisteminde de yaygın şekilde kullanılmakla birlikte, İstanbul metrosunda bazı yönlendirme oklarının konumlandırılmasında eksiklikler olduğu belirlenmiştir. Sembolik göstergeler açısından Londra metrosunda standardizasyon ön

planda tutulurken, İstanbul metrosunda bazı sembollerin kültürel bağlamlara daha fazla bağlı olduğu ve bu nedenle uluslararası kullanıcılar için daha az anlaşılır olabileceği gözlemlenmiştir.

Görme engelli bireyler için dokunsal yönlendirme sistemleri açısından Londra metrosunun daha gelişmiş bir altyapıya sahip olduğu, İstanbul metrosunda ise bu tür unsurların bazı istasyonlarda sınırlı kaldığı görülmüştür. Sesli yönlendirme sistemleri her iki metroda da bulunmakla birlikte, Londra metrosunda daha yaygın ve entegre bir biçimde kullanıldığı tespit edilmiştir. Çok dilli yönlendirme sistemleri açısından Londra metrosunun daha fazla dil seçeneği sunduğu, İstanbul metrosunda ise yönlendirme işaretlerinde yabancı dillerin kullanımının sınırlı olduğu belirlenmiştir.

Tipografi ve renk kullanımının erişilebilirliği artırmak amacıyla daha dikkatli seçilmesi, İstanbul metrosunda yönlendirme işaretlerinin okunaklılığını artırarak kullanıcı deneyimini iyileştirecektir. Evrensel işaret kullanımı, Londra metrosunda uygulandığı gibi İstanbul metrosunda da yaygınlaştırılarak uluslararası yolcular için daha anlaşılır hale getirilmelidir. Yönlendirme tabelalarında çok dilli bilgilendirme yapılması, özellikle turistlerin metro sistemini daha kolay kullanmasına katkı sağlayacaktır. Görme engelli bireyler için dokunsal yönlendirme sistemleri ve sesli yönlendirme çözümlerinin artırılması, İstanbul metrosunun erişilebilirlik düzeyini önemli ölçüde geliştirecektir. Yönlendirme işaretlerinin konumlandırılmasında tutarlılığın sağlanması, kullanıcıların yönlerini daha hızlı belirleyerek zaman kaybını en aza indirmelerine yardımcı olacaktır.

Göstergebilimsel analizler, metro yönlendirme işaretlerinin yalnızca bilgi aktarma işleviyle sınırlı kalmadığını, aynı zamanda kent kimliği, kültürel hafıza ve toplumsal dinamikler açısından önemli bir anlam taşıdığını ortaya koymaktadır. Metro sistemlerinde kullanılan yönlendirme işaretleri, şehirlerin görsel kimliğini oluştururken, kullanıcıların mekânsal deneyimini doğrudan etkileyen unsurlar arasında yer almaktadır. Londra ve İstanbul metro sistemleri arasındaki bu karşılaştırmalı analiz, yön bulma sistemlerinin daha erişilebilir hale getirilmesi için evrensel tasarım ilkelerine dayalı, kullanıcı dostu ve kapsayıcı çözümler geliştirilmesi gerektiğini göstermektedir.

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Echoes of the Father: A Psychoanalytic Study of Mansfield's The Daughters of the Late Colonel

Nabeel AL-IMARI[8]

ABSTRACT

Katherine Mansfield plays an important role in English modern literature. Many of her works were influenced by her New Zealand's childhood memories. It is plainly enough that Josephine and Constantia in her work *The Daughters of the Late Colonel* symbolize Mansfield's childhood memory. By investigating the psychological turmoil experienced by the two daughters, Josephine and Constantia, the article explores how their suppressed desires, dominant power, and moral conflicts shape their decisions and behaviors. Moreover, the continuation of their experiences with father's domination in exerting control over the sisters' subconscious put the role of memory forward in shaping the daughters' psychological struggles. Through a Freudian lens, this analysis reveals how Mansfield's narrative encapsulates the lingering effects of fear, and the struggle for autonomy within a patriarchal framework. Therefore, this article delves deeper into the dynamics of Freudian psychoanalytic theory, particularly the tripartite structure of personality—the id, ego, and superego and its articulation in *The Daughters of the Late Colonel*.

Keywords: Katherine Mansfield, The Daughters of the Late Colonel, Childhood memory, Freudian psychoanalysis

Babanın Yankıları: Mansfield'ın Geç Albayın Kızları Üzerine Psikanalitik Bir İnceleme

ÖZ

Katherine Mansfield, İngiliz modern edebiyatında önemli bir yere sahiptir. Birçok eseri, Yeni Zelanda'daki çocukluk anılarından etkilenmiştir. *The Daughters of the Late Colonel* adlı eserindeki Josephine ve Constantia karakterleri, Mansfield'ın çocukluk hatıralarını simgeler. Bu makale, kız kardeşlerin yaşadığı bastırılmış arzular, otorite baskısı ve ahlaki çatışmalar üzerinden psikolojik karmaşalarını inceler. Babalarının denetiminin, bilinçdışı üzerindeki etkileri, hafızanın bu psikolojik mücadelelerdeki rolünü ortaya koyar. Freudcu bir bakış açısıyla yapılan çözümleme, Mansfield'ın anlatısının korkunun kalıcı etkilerini ve ataerkil düzende bireysel özgürlük mücadelesini nasıl yansıttığını gösterir. Bu bağlamda makale, Freud'un id, ego ve süperego'dan oluşan kişilik yapısının eserdeki yansımalarını ele alır.

Keywords: Katherine Mansfield, Albayın Kızları, Çocukluk anısı, Freudyen psikanaliz

INTRODUCTION

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It is widely acknowledged that one of the most prominent authors in New Zealand is Katherine Mansfield who faced a considerable amount of loneliness, illness, jealousy, and alienation throughout her creative years. These feelings were painfully depicted in her work, especially regarding the marriage and familial relationships of her middle-class characters (Mugdad, n-d, p.1). Nevertheless, she becomes successful in introducing the confessional tradition of writing style and her own experience in the twentieth century through investigating the inner life in an approach that makes her one of the most outstanding psychological writers of her era. She constantly explores her own conflicted personality, her parents' personalities, and eventually, human nature. The psychological realization stands at the heart of all of Katherine Mansfield's best stories. She feels motivated to address both the conscious and unconscious aspects that affect behavior in people. Similar to Freud, she looked over herself to understand the unconscious mind. It is hard to separate Katherine Mansfield's art from her life. Katherine Mansfield's childhood memories influenced her thoughts and feelings to an unusual degree (Hankin, 1983, ch.ix). This article, however, seeks to examine Katherine Mansfield's *The Daughters of the Late Colonel* through the lens of Freud's theory of personality, particularly exploring how the id, ego, and superego shape the psychological and emotional sufferings of the two sisters. In contrast to the other researches that explore themes of colonial influence, gender roles, or repression, this study distinguishes itself by emphasizing the interplay between the daughters' internal conflict and their subjugation to patriarchal authority. By putting Freud's structural model of the psyche into practice, this article uncover how their suppressed desires (id), restricted rationality (ego), and internalized societal expectations (superego) contribute to their psychological turmoil. It will, therefore, be evident that the sisters' memories in the story are an outcome of the horrific experiences they went through with their father.

Relevantly, the id, ego, and superego are the three fundamental elements of Freud's structural model of the psyche. In this respect, the defense mechanisms that aid to fulfill the id's desires without clashing with the outside world encompass fantasy, identification, sublimation, displacement, and dreams. Children get psychic energy via the id at three psychological stages: infantile sexuality, latent phase, and genital stage. During these stages, sexual energy, particularly libido, takes on biological, social, and psychological measurements. In addition, the ego arises from the id at infancy with the aim of meeting the id's needs in a way that makes it safe and acceptable to society. The ego functions as a conflict between the conscious and unconscious minds by guiding and controlling the primitive impulses that follow the external world and superego. The ego's ability to please the id is an indication of its strength. As a result, during the story, Josephine and Constantia struggle with their natural tendencies and societal norms. Dreams also serve as the royal gateways to the unconscious mind, the dynamic mechanism by which the ego maintains its authority. While the superego maintains ethical values and urges individuals to act in ways that are acceptable to society. Thus, in accordance with Freud's psychoanalytic theory, the life and death instincts interact and counterbalance one another, indicating that both of them exhibit a common source. Life aims

to the dialectical synthesis of birth and death, and death is the ultimate realization of the life instinct, governed by the pleasure principle (Sibi, 2020, pp. 75-77). Therefore, this study suggests that Katherine Mansfield's depiction of Josephine and Constantia in *The Daughters of the Late Colonel* reflects her own childhood memories and uncovers deep psychological conflicts deeoly-seated in patriarchal power, as interpreted through Freudian psychoanalytic theory—particularly the dynamics of the id, ego, and superego.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This research revolves around the basic question of how parental memory influences the sisters' mental growth. Katherine Mansfield's work *The Daughters of the Late Colonel* is more than a quiet contemplation on melancholy; it is a psychological snag where suppressed fears, violated identities, and the throttling fist of parental memory hunt its protagonists. This article, however, examines how the daughter's psychological slump can be linked with Freud's theory of personality (id, ego, and superego), revealing the unconscious powers that drive their actions. Freud's *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* (1917) offers the theoretical foundation for recognizing the id's repressed desires, the ego's rational turmoil, and the superego's subjugation voice of authority, all of which appears in the sisters' incapacity to cut ties with their tyrannical father, even after his death. Mansfield's 2012 edition of *The Daughters of the Late Colonel* provides contextual evidence of their emotional struggles, symbolizing how deep-seated psychological conditioning dictates their every action. Based on Freud's viewpoints, Duncan Bell's *Memory, Trauma, and World Politics* (2006) examines how trauma deforms memory and identity, highlighting how the sisters were left imprisoned psychologically by their experiences with their father. The influence of their father continues to hunt them throughout inherent submission and emotional suppression, despite his absence physically. Likewise, C. A. Hankin's *Katherine Mansfield and Her Confessional Stories* (1983) provides a deeper psychological analysis, uncovering how the sisters' unconscious minds betray their desperate yet unrecognized yearning for freedom. This paper postulates that the core of Mansfield's work lies in the psychoanalytic struggle between memory and identity. Josephine and Constantia are not only shaped by societal expectations but also by deep-seated psychological powers that keep them restricted in a state of lethargy. Their incapacity to break free from their father's influence is not just a reflection of social norms but a manifestation of inner fear, suppression, and unresolved trauma, preventing them from forging their own ways. This article will thus highlight how *The Daughters of the Late Colonel* is not just a study of sorrow and suppression, but a powerful examination of psychological imprisonment, where the past is never truly eliminated, and the mind becomes its own worst antagonist.

The Daughters of the Late Colonel **and the Freudian theory of personality (id, ego and superego);**

The assumption that the story can be read through Freudian lenses can initially be validated based on exemplification of the id concept by referring to the psychotic state of the two sisters. As the title of "*The Daughters of the Late Colonel*" suggests, the relationship between father and daughters is crucial in the story. Father's dominance left the daughters act unconsciously, haunted by his memory despite his death. Moreover, the daughters' suppressed feelings and desires make them at some points act without considering the consequences. Likewise, Çameli (2024, p.71), suggests that the title indirectly calls attention to the story's correlation with the daughters' experiences whose existence in the universe is defined in accordance to their being progeny of a military person. They are known as the daughters of the colonel which indicates that they are forced to be subject to superior power of the father in their upbringing. That superior power, however, puts the girls in a psychological traits that is not easy to get rid even after the death of their father. Thus, Fajrin (2023), defined psychological suspense as a literary genre that promotes tension, anxiety, and anticipated behaviors while keeping the reader questioning the reasons and actions of the characters (p.9).

Mansfield (2012) from the opening sentence "The week after was one of the busiest weeks of their lives" (p.266). It is clear that the daughters will start to do and arrange something that they have never practiced or done in the time when their father was alive. According to Hankin (1983), it is evident that their main reaction to the death has not been grieving. The two ladies are experiencing a sense of responsibility for the first time in their life as they engage in the mourning ritual, thus, they are concentrating their efforts on doing what is required and making the right expressions (P. 200). As explained by Freud (1917), the id suppression educates us that the two may be opposite each other, that the sexual instincts seem to be conquered in this dispute and have to turn to other regressive ways to achieve fulfillment, and that they seek satisfaction in their invulnerability as a ways of covering up for their defeat. We find out that the mental state of anxiety is far more strongly linked to sexual instincts compared to ego instincts (ch.26).

> "But,' cried Josephine, flouncing on her pillow and staring across the dark at Constantia, 'father's head!' And suddenly, for one awful moment, she nearly giggled" (Mansfield, 2012, p.266).

In this exact moment, Josephine's desire to laugh at the idea of "father's head" demonstrates a sudden reaction from her id or unconscious mind. Although she should be sad and mourning upon her father's death, her giggling uncovers hidden emotions like anger or relief from the ruling of her father. In addition, this swift and not meticulous response proves how strong feelings that are being suppressed can, with all of a sudden, come out, particularly in stressful occasions. According to the researchers (Hanson, Kimber, & Martin, 2016) we can determine that the characters who are unable to access what is possible from the past or the future display memory inhibition, a concept addressed in Mansfield's The Daughters of the Late Colonel. The way their father haunts them after his death implies that the middle-aged sisters,

Constantia and Josephine, were permanently devastated by the decades of bullying they underwent (p.31). Moreover, Parents possess an important impact on all individuals' early psychology who grow on to build up psychoneurotic conduct. Part of the permanent stock of psychic impulses that arise in early childhood and are as essential as the building blocks of ensuing neurosis is falling in love with one parent and resenting the other (Freud, 1900/2004, p. 85). Putting it on the Freudian scale of id makes it obvious that the father played a dominant part in the story; he haunted and led the daughters' actions and thoughts throughout the story. Therefore, their childhood memory affected them psychologically in their adult stage.

Freud thought that childhood events shape who we become as adults, thus he gave the early years of a child a lot of weight. In the early stages of childhood, the vital stage in shaping adult personality is the phallic stage around 3-5 years. A girl, in this stage, shapes an unconscious emotional bond to her father and experiences contest with her mother. Such desires and conflicts are to be resolved; otherwise, they can cause emotional damages and make it even harder to grow up properly later in life, just like Constantia and Josephine. (Patel, 2023, p.3). In the case of the daughters, the story demonstrates that they have never gone detached to their father. The way he governs them continued even after his death. Therefore, their continual indecision and hesitation, like what to do with his stuff or contacting their brother, offers that they lack independence and cannot act by themselves. Their hesitation by making even the smallest choices shows deep-seated dependency and emotional unripens. Such kind of behavior, however, is directly connected to Freud's perspective of that unresolved childhood experiences may case a long-term psychological effects. The constriction and ruling presence of their father throughout their formative years may prevent them from developing a sense of self-individuation or independence. As a consequence, the daughters remained trapped and stuck in a childlike state of fear and obedience, prevented to vouch their true self or move on independently forward with their lives. As stated by Patel, 2023, Freud would consider this as a fixation at the Electra stage, when the emotional energy that should have been redirected into more mature relationships and autonomy is still connected to the father figure (p.3). The daughters' repressed feelings, passive demeanor, and bewildered conduct are not just a result of sorrow or despair; rather, they are indications of a persisting psychological pattern that has its roots in early developmental trauma. The sisters' story thus stands as an instance of how unresolved issues from childhood may lead to emotional paralysis that lasts a lifetime and forms an individual's entire adult experience.

> If the huge wardrobe had lurched forward, had crashed down on Constantia,
> Josephine wouldn't have been surprised. On the contrary, she would have thought

it the only suitable thing to happen. But nothing happened. (Mansfield, 2012, p. 273).

The sisters' deep sense of powerlessness and emotional paralysis can be seen in this moment, where Josephine imagines the wardrobe dropping down on Constantia but nothing really happens. They are always in an anxious frame of mind, waiting for some big catastrophe or occurrence to make them change, but they are unable to act or flee their father's leftover authority. The absence of any actual event underlines their lack of engagement and emotional stagnation, while the imagined disaster symbolizes their repressed emotions and inner conflicts. This effectively shows how their unresolved attachments from childhood have left them psychologically stuck and caught between inaction and fear. Furthermore, as long as they are haunted by memories of their father and the ways that they behave weirdly due to the ways in which their father used to control them, their personalities will not fully develop. And, because of their fear that their father will not be satisfied, they are struggling to make decisions or to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong.

Kennedy (2012) shows that an individual's libido is the main trigger of their actions and that their later sexual activity is impacted by their stage of psychosexual growth. Freud was mainly fascinated in abnormal sexual conduct and its underlying causes (p. 9). As an example, Mansfield (2012) recounts that Josephine encountered an awful experience at the cemetery during the coffin's descent, comprehending that she and Constantia had performed this action without obtaining his approval (p.271). Josephine felt scared of her dead father, because she did not take his permission while burying him. Therefore, the father is lurking in her mind, and she is afraid of doing anything without his consent. The sisters' dominant father who ruled their actions in their childhood disturbs their feelings and when they lose him, they start to be distracted by his memory, and the way he wants them to act.

> Buried. You two girls had me buried!' She heard his stick thumping. Oh, what would they say? What possible excuse could they make?..... The other people seemed to treat it all as a matter of course. (Mansfield, 2012, p. 271).

The memory of their father resonates in their mind, thereby, they doubted what their father would do if he figured out what they did to his body without his consent. It is plain enough that Mansfield tries to portray that the impact of childhood on both sisters had affected their unconscious mind to an extent. Therefore, Josephine and Constantia think that their father is still there and they are not free to do anything without his permission. The sisters' repressed feelings cannot be expressed by words, though they act weirdly and their experience with their father is still hunting them. Also, the story is stuck in repetitive cycles that end up displaying the protagonists' routine and their eternal imprisonment in a childish role. As stated by Baral (2019), repressed memories of traumatic incidents are what trigger the neurosis. Constrained to the individual's unconscious level of awareness; relief can be gained by bringing them to awareness (p.2).

> She had the most extraordinary feeling that she had just escaped something simply awful…… He was watching there, hidden away – just behind the door-handle – ready to spring. (Mansfield, 2012, p.273)

It was tough for both sisters to accept his death, because he ruled them and when he no longer exists, they feel lost. It is not about the way they feel sorry for the death of their father, instead, the way they take a responsibility that they have never experienced or taken before. Thus, Josephine remembered her father in every single corner of his room and she is struggling with her sentiments, and trying to find a way to express her words by telling Constantia what she sees in her father's drawer. According to Kennedy (2012), the notion is that libido, which is unfulfilled in the real world, may turn its attention to a former object on which it was already hooked. The main consequence is that, determined by the most powerful fixations that he encounters throughout his childhood, an individual's sexuality becomes, in a sense, infantile (pp. 11–12). Nevertheless, Rennison (2001) claims that we are all born with an id mind, a scalding mass of completely selfish desires and the motives aimed to fulfill and complete gratification of those desires immediately. The driving force behind what Freud calls the pleasure principle is the id. As we grow up and develop, we think we ought to leave the id behind, restrain its insistent demands and push them to the real world and the other people in it. The fact, however, we never do truly leave the id behind. Its orders may be suppressed but they remain, expressing themselves in different ways as dreams, neurotic symptoms and Freudian slips. In most respects, the id plays the same role in Freud's later model of the mind as the unconscious does in his earlier one (pp.38-39).Constantia made it obvious in Mansfield's (2012) question, "Do you think father would mind if we gave his top-hat to the porter?" (p.266). As this section illustrates how their unwillingness to part with an old piece of clothing reveals that their internalized fear and guilt, which have been developing through years of supremacy, are still repressing their desire for autonomy (id). The question highlights how the id's need for independence and change clashes with the superego's long-standing authority, which was formed by their father's oppressive influence.

Bell (2006) argues that memory and identity are inseparably connected, and that memory turns to a place where people look for pieces of a meaningful past, especially during difficult occurrences (p.5). Since their father's supremacy has largely defined Josephine and Constantia's sense of self, they are left in vacuum of identity following his steps. Rather than moving forward, they push themselves to reassemble their lives by recalling their father's memories regularly, in an effort to figure out what he would have desired or approved of. The story, however, is deeply-seated in psychological traits and emotional turmoil of the sisters' relationship with their oppressive father, whose passing leads to not freedom but disorientation, paralysis, and a fixation on the past. According to Bell (2006), trauma is socially and mentally constructed, and it appears traumatic when individuals or organizations view an event as drastically altering their perspectives of the world and the future. While the death of Colonel isn't particularly painful in and of itself, the sisters encounters trauma because it changes the only framework

they've ever known, leaving them without a distinct identity, aim , or path. Not only are their memories of their father emotional, but they also act like constraining walls that prevent them from transforming or creating new identities (p.7).

Freud (1960) claims that The ego aims to alter the pleasure principle, which controls the id without restriction, with the reality principle for exerting an affect from the outside world on the id and its motives. The role that recognition plays in the ego is the same as that of desire in the id. In contrast to the id, which serves as a slave for the passions and desires, the ego is identified for what could be indicated as reason and common sense. The significance function of the ego is illustrated by the fact that it typically has control over how things are approached. Hence, the ego's relationship to the id is identical to a man riding a horse who must restrict the horse's superior strength; the difference being that the rider tries to do so utilizing his own power , while the ego utilizes borrowed powers. One may take the analogy a step farther. The ego has an inclination to put the id's willingness into action as if it were its own, just like a rider is frequently required to control and direct his horse where it wishes to go if he is not to be detached from it (p.19). Rennison (2001), moreover, postulates that the ego is the logical and conscious part of the mind that enables people to react with the world by understanding and adjusting to the reality principle. It appears from the id but eventually takes control, acting as a moderator between instinctual desires and societal expectations. The ego helps shape a person's sense of self, reaching when and how pursuits can be fulfilled in a socially acceptable way. While much of its function is conscious, Freud emphasized that some of its monitoring and ruling processes occur unconsciously, affecting behavior without the person's recognition. To clarify the relationship between the ego and the id, Freud utilizes the analogy of a rider and a horse—the rider (ego) usually directs and restricts the horse (id), assuring it moves in the right way. Moreover, just as a horse may sometimes overpower its rider, so too can instinctual motives at times override the ego's control, leading to irrational or impulsive behavior. (p.39). The instinctual (animatic) powers, which are controlled by the pleasure principle, are preserved in the unconscious. Furthermore, at the age of six months, a child has to start creating his own ego, or everyday mask, in order to blend with society. This enables the newborn to function in society. The environment, particularly social conditions and education, as well as genetic characteristics passed down from ancestors, all have an influence on the way the ego develops. The child, who gets his upbringing from his own parents, develops his own Superego, or internalized moral framework based on society's laws and standards, around the age of three. In this regard, the Ego is guided (censored) by the Superego while also being pushed by the Unconscious (the Id) to enable the person to engage in interactions with others (Kennedy, 2012, p.6).

I don't know,' she said forlornly. 'It is all so dreadful. I feel we ought to have tried to, just for a time at least. To make perfectly sure. One thing's certain' – and

> her tears sprang out again – 'father will never forgive us for this – never!
> (Mansfield, 2012, p.271)

Josephine is not quite sure about the death of her father, therefore, she asked Constantia to try to believe and accept it. The way that she is in between id and superego makes it clear that ego desires are not fulfilled, although the sisters try to face societal expectations they are still not sure whether the thing that they are doing is right or wrong. Nonetheless, the sisters were in a position where they were expected to do what society believes in, and mourning over the death of their father is what triggers ego emotions in which their unconscious mind draws them forth and back. For this purpose, Erikson (1950) demonstrates that the concept of the ego was initially characterized by earlier definitions of its more renowned opposites. The biological id and the sociological masses; the ego was the special center of logically planned and organized experience, and it was under threat by both the lawlessness of the group spirit and the anarchy of the primitive desires. Therefore, Freud placed his frightened ego between the mob surrounding him and his id (p. 359).

> Another thing which complicated matters was they had Nurse Andrews staying on with them that week. It was their own fault; they had asked her. It was Josephine's idea … And there was no getting over the fact that she had been very kind to father. She had nursed him day and night at the end. (Mansfield, 2012, pp.267-269).

The ego is quite objective, which sets it apart from the id. It reacts to societal demands and functions in line with the reality principle. It works as the control center of the personality by controlling the libido flow. The two sisters appreciate nurse Andrews for looking after their father when he was sick, at the same time they regretted asking her to stay. Therefore, the passage elaborates the Freudian concept of ego, which makes the sisters in between childhood and maturity. Confused in making decisions due to the memory of their father and their own desires. Henceforth, Patel (2023), claims that the theory states; the ego uses defense mechanisms such as suppression, reaction formation, denial, and projection to shield the individual from anxiety and undesired emotions (pp.3-4). Such defense mechanisms are obvious in Josephine and Constantia's behavior. They repressed their emotions to cover their fear, anger, and resentment toward their dominating father, even after his death they could not spell out these emotions. Rather than feeling liberated and relief, they remain lost and confused, viewing how denial pulls them from accepting their new independence or acknowledging their own desires. Reaction formation, nonetheless, occurs when they force themselves to think kindly of Nurse Andrews in spite of their anger, underlines their need to replace socially unexpected emotions with their inverse to decrease guilt and anxiety. On the other hand, projection can be viewed in how the daughters imagine what their father would think about even small decisions, locating their own dreads and judgments onto an external person to avoid encountering them directly. These defense

mechanisms show how their ego is continually working to manage the lasting emotional destruction caused by years of their father's domination. Therefore, their adult lives remain formed by these unrevealed conflicts, leaving them passive, fearful, and unable to act independently, which highlights Freud's notion that unresolved early experiences and memories can have a powerful, enduring impact on human behavior.

The superego, on the other hand, is the part of a person's personality that stands for their standards and values. Serving as an internal judge, it can either reward or punish the ego, inflicting guilt-ridden sentiments or elevated self-esteem in the process. One aspect of the personality that aspires to perfection is the superego. Freud believed that an individual's behavior in a particular scenario is determined by the differences and growth of their id, ego, and superego, which ultimately leads to the development of their personality. (Patel, 2023, p.4). Rennison (2001), moreover, illustrates that the superego is the third and last part of Freud's model of the mind, arising as a person rears up and internalizes social expectations. Freud associates its origins to narcissism, especially in early childhood when a baby sees itself as the center of everything. In this stage, the child calls all attention toward itself, unaware of external forces or the expectations of the society. However, as the ego develops and helps the child navigate reality, the superego takes shape as an internalized force that supervises the ego, much like the ego watches over the id. The superego demands perfection, putting high moral standards and forming behavior through lessons learned from parents, caregivers, and society. It operates as an inner voice of conscience, leading individuals to distinguish between right and wrong, often operating unconsciously. While the ego helps balance desires and reality, the superego acts as a moral compass, enforcing rules that may override personal desires in favor of what is deemed socially acceptable. This internal regulation assures that individuals conform to societal expectations, sometimes leading to inner conflicts between personal wishes and moral regulations. (p.40).

> But the idea of a little Communion terrified them. What! In the drawing-room by... And supposing the bell rang in the middle? It might be somebody important – about their mourning. Would they get up reverently and go out, or would they have to wait . . . in torture? (Mansfield, 2012, p. 270).

The sisters' fear of receiving Communion emphasizes the emotional and psychological repression they undergo in their constrained and oppressive home. It draws attention to how hard it is for these individuals to reconcile their doubts and personal desires with the rigid religious and social expectations that governed their lives (Hankin, 1983, pp. 200–201). Mansfield tries to show the ways in which the two sisters struggle with social expectations and their own desires, and this could be put on a Freudian scale of superego. However, Hankin (1983) continues that no one really cares about the two old maids or their father—not even the priest who comes up to offer 'a 'Daughters of the Late Colonel' small Communion' and, in a parrot like manner, reiterates what he wants to be helpful. Besides, the ritual is plainly important in terms of their

own inner compulsions, as both sisters need to convince themselves that they do, in fact, mourn for their father's death. Likewise, it appears that the Colonel is essentially holding his daughters captive in the house, devouring their life out of self-interest (p. 200).

> 'we're not dependent on Kate as we were.' And she blushed faintly. 'There's not father to cook for.' 'That is perfectly true,' agreed Constantia. 'Father certainly doesn't want any cooking now whatever else –' (Mansfield, 2012, p.279).

Josephine expresses to her sister Constantia that they are no longer in need of the maid Kate, thereby, they are able to take care of the house by themselves. Therefore, the sisters are matured and able to make decisions now, as well as, taking into consideration to the social expectations. Furthermore, the daughters confess that their father's demands and power were a major factor in their reliance on Kate, their servant. Their acknowledging that they are no longer required to prepare meals for their father implies a change in their obligations and level of consciousness. The slight blush indicates an emotional reaction, potentially a mixture of relief and guilt, referring to their inner superego and internal conflict.

Conclusion

By investigating *The Daughters of the Late Colonel* in terms of Freud theory of personality, this study has showed how Josephine and Constantia's emotional turmoil is an ongoing effect of unresolved childhood experiences under their father's repressive rule, instead of a mere sign of sorrow. Their reluctance in making decisions, including seemingly minor ones like giving away a hat, reveals how their ego is defeated by internalized fear and competing impulses. This serves as an evidence of the superego's rigid expectations and the id's repressed influence. Small but significant situations in the story, like Josephine almost grinning at the idea of "father's head" or their anxious debates about Nurse Andrews, demonstrates how repressed feelings and dominating memories shape their current behaviors. Here, memory extends and preserves the father's authority rather than liberating them, transforming his rule into an internal prison. According to this analysis, Mansfield's story presents a nuanced critique of how familial and societal structures of authority go through memory and psychological conditioning, affecting adult identity and constraining freedom even after the external source of control is no longer present. It goes beyond merely illustrating individual suppression. In this sense, the work provides a strong case for understanding human behavior as the complex result of internal conflicts, ongoing emotional marks, and the burden of memory.

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Colonial Disruption and Cultural Transformation: An Analysis of Igbo Society Before and After British Colonization in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*

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ABSTRACT

As a leading postcolonial novelist, Chinua Achebe (1930-2013) has been recognized as the "Father of Modern African Literature." His influential body of work is informed by a critical theory of writing that mediates the politics of the novel as a form of commentary on the emergence and transformation of nationalism within the African writer's epistemological context. Achebe's seminal novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958) presents a nuanced portrayal of the collision between traditional Igbo society and British colonial forces in late 19th-century Nigeria. This research article examines the comprehensive transformation of Igbo social, religious, economic, and political structures as depicted through Achebe's narrative. Through close textual analysis, this study explores how the novel illustrates the complexity of pre-colonial Igbo civilization while simultaneously documenting the systematic dismantling of indigenous institutions under colonial rule. The analysis reveals that Achebe's work serves not merely as a historical account but as a sophisticated critique of colonial discourse that challenges Western stereotypes about African societies. The research demonstrates how the novel's bifurcated structure mirrors the profound cultural rupture experienced by colonized peoples, offering insights into the lasting effects of colonialism on African identity and social organization. By examining both the preservation of Igbo cultural memory and the documentation of colonial disruption, this study positions *Things Fall Apart* as a foundational text that bridges literary artistry with anticolonial resistance.

Keywords: Igbo society, Igbo culture, *Things Fall Apart*, colonialism, cultural transformation, postcolonial literature, Chinua Achebe, African nationalism

ÖZET

Önde gelen postkolonyal romancı Chinua Achebe (1930-2013), "Modern Afrika Edebiyatının Babası" olarak tanınmaktadır. Etkili eser korpusu, Afrika yazarının epistemolojik bağlamını oluşturan milliyetçiliğin doğuşu ve dönüşümü üzerine bir yorum biçimi olarak roman politikasına aracılık eden eleştirel bir yazma kuramıyla şekillenmiştir. Achebe'nin önemli eseri *Dağılıyor Her Şey* (1958), 19. yüzyıl sonlarında Nijerya'da geleneksel İgbo toplumu ile İngiliz sömürge güçleri arasındaki çatışmanın çok

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boyutlu bir resmini sunar. Bu araştırma makalesi, Achebe'nin anlatısı aracılığıyla betimlenen İgbo sosyal, dinsel, ekonomik ve siyasal yapılarının kapsamlı dönüşümünü incelemektedir. Yakın metin çözümlemesi yoluyla bu çalışma, romanın sömürge öncesi İgbo uygarlığının karmaşıklığını nasıl sergilediğini araştırırken, aynı zamanda sömürge yönetimi altında yerli kurumların sistematik olarak yıkılışını belgelemektedir. Çözümleme, Achebe'nin eserinin sadece tarihsel bir anlatı olmadığını, aynı zamanda Afrika toplumları hakkındaki Batılı önyargılara meydan okuyan sofistike bir sömürge söylemi eleştirisi olarak işlev gördüğünü ortaya koymaktadır. Araştırma, romanın iki bölümlü yapısının sömürgeleştirilmiş halkların yaşadığı derin kültürel kırılmayı nasıl yansıttığını göstermekte ve sömürgeciliğin Afrika kimliği ile sosyal örgütlenmesi üzerindeki kalıcı etkilerine ilişkin içgörüler sunmaktadır. Bu çalışma, hem İgbo kültürel belleğinin korunması hem de sömürge dönemindeki bozulmaların belgelenmesini inceleyerek *Dağılıyor Her Şey*'i edebi ustalık ile antisömürgeci direnişi birleştiren temel bir metin olarak konumlandırmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İgbo toplumu, İgbo kültürü, *Dağılıyor Her Şey*, sömürgecilik, kültürel dönüşüm, postkolonyal edebiyat, Chinua Achebe, Afrika milliyetçiliği.

1. INTRODUCTION:

The European Scramble for Africa represents a significant chapter in world history, embodying European imperialism at its zenith and fundamentally shaping both the geopolitical landscape and development trajectory of the African continent. This period of intense colonization and partitioning of Africa by European powers occurred during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, driven by a complex amalgamation of economic, political, and social factors, alongside European desires for power and prestige.

Prior to the scramble, Africa consisted largely of independent or semi-independent states, with only limited regions under European control. However, the advent of the Industrial Revolution in Europe created unprecedented demand for raw materials and resources, prompting European powers to seek new territories for exploitation. The scramble began in earnest with the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885, where European powers negotiated and established rules for the partition and colonization of the African continent. Aimed at preventing conflicts between European nations by establishing guidelines for territorial acquisition, the decisions made at this conference largely disregarded existing African boundaries, political structures, and cultural identities (Craven, 2015, p. 36).

European powers—including Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Portugal, Italy, and Spain—rapidly expanded their African territories through conquest, coercion, and diplomatic manipulation. They established colonies, protectorates, and spheres of influence, frequently exploiting rivalries and conflicts between local African leaders to advance their imperial objectives. The primary justifications offered for European colonization centered on the so-called "civilizing mission" and the purported benefits of Western civilization, including the spread of Christianity, commerce, and modern infrastructure. Europeans

positioned themselves as more educated and enlightened than their African counterparts, claiming a moral obligation to educate and civilize African populations. In reality, however, the scramble resulted in the systematic loss of African sovereignty, extensive resource exploitation, and the imposition of European political control and cultural hegemony ('Berlin Conference of 1884–1885', 2010, para. 1-2).

The consequences of the European Scramble for Africa proved both profound and enduring. Traditional African societies faced systematic disruption, indigenous economies were undermined or destroyed, and local cultures and languages were suppressed or marginalized. European colonial powers ruthlessly exploited African natural resources—including rubber, diamonds, gold, and ivory—often employing forced labor, perpetrating violence, and displacing entire African populations in pursuit of economic gain.

European colonialism in Africa constitutes a central and recurring theme in postcolonial literature, a genre that emerged in the mid-20th century as African nations achieved independence. Authors within this literary tradition explore the multifaceted social, cultural, political, and psychological impacts of European colonialism on African populations while depicting the struggles faced by African societies in colonialism's aftermath and examining the complexities of identity formation and nation-building processes (Hart and Goldie, 1993, p. 155).

Among the most significant literary works addressing colonialism's profound impacts in Africa is Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958). Set in Nigeria, this seminal novel chronicles the life of Okonkwo and examines the collision between traditional Igbo society and British colonial authority. Achebe meticulously explores the erosion of Igbo culture, the fundamental clash between Western and indigenous value systems, and the destructive consequences of colonizers imposing their ideologies and administrative systems upon established African societies.

Another prominent example is Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood* (1977). Set in Kenya, this novel explores neocolonialism by examining how European powers continued to exert control over African nations even after formal independence. Thiong'o portrays the corruption of new indigenous elites, exploitation by foreign corporations, and widespread disillusionment with postcolonial governments, thereby illuminating colonialism's persistent effects (Bouzidi and Ourdache, 2018, pp. 13-14).

Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899), while not authored by an African writer, merits discussion within postcolonial literary contexts. The narrative follows Marlow, an Englishman, on his journey through the Congo River, revealing the dehumanizing impact of European colonialism through its exploration of racism and imperialism while exposing the brutality underlying colonial enterprises (Nushrat, 2019, p. 117).

These literary works reflect the complex dynamics of European colonialism in Africa, providing crucial insights into historical contexts, struggles faced by African nations during and after colonization, and

ongoing quests for cultural identity and political autonomy. Through postcolonial literature, these authors challenge dominant colonial narratives and amplify African perspectives on colonialism's enduring legacy.

In stark contrast to African writing about colonialism, European novels depicting Africa and Africans consistently portrayed indigenous populations as uncivilized and uneducated. For instance, in *Heart of Darkness* (1899), Joseph Conrad characterized Africans as inhabitants of a "wild," "dark," and "uncivilized continent" (p. 486). Similarly, in *Mister Johnson* (1952), Joyce Cary described his protagonist as a "childish, semi-educated African who reinforces colonialist stereotypes about Africa" (Sickels, 2012, p. 1).

Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, published in 1958, stands as one of the most significant achievements in African literature and postcolonial discourse. The novel's title, drawn from W.B. Yeats' poem "The Second Coming," suggests the catastrophic disintegration occurring when established social orders collapse. Achebe's masterpiece provides a sophisticated examination of Igbo society in the late 19th century, documenting both the period before and after British colonial forces' arrival in what is now southeastern Nigeria.

Things Fall Apart offers readers comprehensive insight into Igbo society prior to the arrival of European missionaries, whose presence threatens to transform virtually every aspect of traditional life. The novel presents a nuanced exploration of cultural transformation, examining intricate aspects of Igbo culture, beliefs, and traditions while documenting their systematic disruption under colonial influence. Set in Umuofia, a fictional village in Nigeria, Achebe (1930-2013) wrote *Things Fall Apart* to describe how villagers proved unable to counter sudden cultural changes introduced by missionaries—changes that threatened to fundamentally alter established political institutions and social structures. Achebe attributes responsibility for postcolonial Igbo cultural oppression to white missionaries' colonial rule, an oppression manifested in the disruption of social coherence between Igbo individuals and their broader society.

Achebe's primary purpose in *Things Fall Apart* involves drawing readers' attention to the intrinsic value of African culture while providing extensive education about Igbo society's rich mythological traditions and proverbial wisdom. Additionally, Achebe encourages his fellow Africans to utilize educational systems introduced by European missionaries as means of improving their circumstances while maintaining cultural integrity.

The novel's significance extends beyond its literary merits, serving as a counter-narrative to colonial representations of Africa and its peoples. Through meticulous attention to cultural detail and psychological complexity, Achebe presents a civilization that is sophisticated, dynamic, and complete—directly challenging the colonial conception of Africa as a "dark continent" awaiting European enlightenment. This analysis examines how Achebe constructs his portrayal of Igbo society across two distinct phases: the precolonial period characterized by established traditions and social cohesion, and the colonial period marked by systematic disruption, cultural conflict, and profound transformation.

The central thesis of this analysis posits that *Things Fall Apart* demonstrates how colonialism represents not merely political domination but a comprehensive assault on indigenous ways of life, resulting in profound cultural transformation that reverberates through both individual and collective identity. Through protagonist Okonkwo's tragic trajectory, Achebe illustrates the broader psychological and cultural trauma experienced by colonized societies caught between ancestral traditions and imposed modernity.

Although the missionaries' arrival brought certain benefits to Igbo society, their presence also introduced numerous challenges that fundamentally threatened the future of traditional Igbo civilization. Within this context, Achebe offers a measured critique of Christianity's role in Africa—criticism that has been regarded as moderate while earning universal praise for its objectivity and analytical detachment (Sharma, 1993, p. 85).

The purpose of this study is twofold: (1) to analyze Igbo society as depicted in the novel both before and after the arrival of European missionaries in Umuofia, and (2) to examine the effects of their presence on Igbo culture, consequently illustrating the resulting clash between indigenous and colonial cultural systems.

2. Postcolonial Literature: Definition and Characteristics:

Postcolonial literature refers to a body of literary works that address the experiences, perspectives, and legacies of colonialism and decolonization. It encompasses works written by authors from formerly colonized countries or by authors who adopt a critical perspective on colonialism and its consequences. Primarily authored by writers from countries that were formerly colonized by European powers, postcolonial literature explores themes of identity, cultural hybridity, power dynamics, and the effects of colonization on individuals and societies. These works challenge and question the narratives and assumptions imposed by colonial powers, aiming to recover and revalue marginalized voices and perspectives (Habib, 2005, p. 737).

The fundamental focus of postcolonialism, a contemporary theoretical movement, is examining how colonization has impacted the ideas and cultures of colonized peoples. It primarily addresses the changes that occur once colonized countries gain independence from their colonizers. Postcolonial literature is written literature that explores this issue and other related concerns. This genre emerged in the 1950s and 1960s when many countries gained independence from their colonial rulers. Writers began reflecting on the experiences of colonization, highlighting the complex relationships between colonizers and the colonized.

As Myers (2005) stated:

Postcolonial literature can be defined as literature produced by countries that gained

independence from colonial rule in the twentieth century. In 1900 the British Empire

covered a pink swathe of the globe that included the Indian sub-continent and other

parts of Asia, much of Africa, Australia, Canada, Ireland, many Caribbean islands

as well as numerous and scattered smaller possessions. (p. 207)

Since the term can refer to a wide range of political, cultural, economic, and linguistic effects on former European colonies, postcolonialism also examines the cultural distinctions between black and white, the Orient and the Occident, and the colonizer and the colonized. Within this context, Leela Gandhi (1998) stated that "postcolonial theory recognizes that colonial discourses typically rationalize themselves through rigid oppositions such as developed/developing; progressive/primitive; civilization/barbarity; maturity/immaturity" (p. 32).

Postcolonialism challenges Eurocentric norms by questioning the assumed superiority of Western culture over Eastern or other non-Western cultures. It critiques the historical and cultural narratives imposed by colonial powers, which often marginalized or erased native identities. By emphasizing the value of indigenous perspectives, histories, and cultures, postcolonialism seeks to deconstruct the power dynamics that privilege Eurocentric frameworks. It fosters the reclamation and redefinition of native identities, highlighting their diversity and resilience against colonial legacies. This process decentralizes

Western dominance, promoting a more pluralistic understanding of global cultures (Said, 1978, p. 3). According to Barry (1995), postcolonial writers reject the modern and contemporary colonial status of their countries and instead invoke a pre-colonial version of their own nation and culture that was damaged by the colonizers during the colonial period. "If recovering one's own past is the first step toward a postcolonial perspective, then the second is to start undermining the colonialist ideology by which that past had been devalued," he argues (p. 186).

Through postcolonial literature, formerly marginalized voices now have a platform to reclaim their history, express their experiences, and envision alternative futures free from colonialism's aftereffects. It involves a critical examination of colonialism's experience and legacy, focusing on both local effects on postcolonial societies and the broader global trends that are considered the legacy of empire (Young, 2009, p. 16).

Postcolonial literature often showcases the struggles faced by marginalized groups such as indigenous peoples, immigrants, and people of color. It examines the legacy of colonialism, including issues of racism, oppression, and cultural displacement. Postcolonial literature takes various forms, including novels, poetry, plays, essays, and short stories. Well-known examples include Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*, and Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*. Authors such as Chinua Achebe from Nigeria, Jamaica Kincaid from Antigua, and Salman Rushdie from India are prominent figures in postcolonial literature. Their works challenge the traditional

narratives of Western literature and present alternative perspectives on history, culture, and identity (Thamarana, 2015, pp. 537-538).

Postcolonial literature incorporates a variety of literary techniques, including the use of multiple languages, non-linear narratives, and the blending of different cultural traditions. It seeks to challenge and disrupt dominant narratives while celebrating the diversity and resilience of colonized communities (Gunning, 2013, p. 6; Nayar, 2009, p. xiii).

2.1. Characteristics of Postcolonial Literature:

Postcolonial literature generally refers to works produced after imperial forces left native peoples' lands. The term 'postcolonial' followed the term 'colonial,' which was founded on the idea that European or Imperial culture was superior. In other words, it is the literary genre that describes writings created by authors from nations that were formerly colonized by European powers. As many nations attained independence from their colonial rulers in the second half of the 20th century, it became a significant body of literature. The characteristics of postcolonial literature are deeply influenced by the experiences and consequences of colonization. These works often explore themes related to cultural identity, power dynamics, resistance, and the impact of colonialism on individuals and communities.

One key characteristic of postcolonial literature is its focus on the marginalized voices and experiences of formerly colonized peoples. These works adopt a critical stance toward the dominant narratives and representations perpetuated by colonial powers. They challenge and subvert these narratives, offering alternative perspectives and interpretations of history, culture, and identity.

Postcolonial literature also reflects the complex and often troubled relationship between colonizers and the colonized. It explores the power dynamics and hierarchies that were established during the colonial era, as well as the enduring effects of colonialism on postcolonial societies.

Another important characteristic of postcolonial literature is its engagement with issues of hybridity and cultural fusion. Many postcolonial writers incorporate elements of their own traditional cultures and languages alongside Western literary traditions. This blending of different cultural influences gives rise to new and unique literary forms and styles.

Postcolonial literature also frequently explores themes of resistance and decolonization. It highlights the struggles and efforts of individuals and communities to reclaim their autonomy and cultural and social identity, often in the face of continued neocolonial practices.

The table below illustrates the main characteristics of postcolonial literature:

Characteristics	Description

Appropriation	Postcolonial literature often explores the theme of cultural appropriation, where colonizers appropriate the culture and traditions of colonized people for their own benefit.
Hybridity	Postcolonial literature reflects the blending and mixing of cultures during the colonial and postcolonial periods. It celebrates the diversity and complexity that emerge from these interactions.
Identity and self-discovery	Postcolonial literature frequently addresses the issue of identity, as characters struggle to define their sense of self amidst the cultural clash and rupture caused by colonization.
Decolonization	Postcolonial literature often focuses on the process of decolonization, which involves not only political liberation but also the restoration of cultural identity and agency.
Marginalization and oppression	Postcolonial literature sheds light on the injustices and inequalities faced by marginalized groups in the postcolonial world. It addresses themes of racism, exploitation, and discrimination.
Indigenous perspectives	Postcolonial literature highlights the narratives and voices of indigenous people and emphasizes the importance of their perspectives in understanding history and contemporary issues.
Language & style experimentation	Postcolonial literature may employ a variety of linguistic styles, mixing indigenous languages with those of the colonizers, or experimenting with different narrative structures to challenge the dominance of colonial literary conventions.

Rewriting history	Postcolonial literature often questions and reinterprets dominant colonial narratives, challenging the Eurocentric perspective and offering alternative perspectives on historical events.
Global interconnectedness	Postcolonial literature reflects the interconnectedness of the postcolonial world, exploring the cross-cultural encounters and exchanges that have been shaped by colonization and globalization.
Resistance and resilience	Postcolonial literature portrays the resistance and resilience of colonized people against oppression, demonstrating their ability to adapt, survive, and challenge dominant power structures.

Table 1: Characteristics of postcolonial literature.

In conclusion, postcolonial literature embraces a diverse range of voices and perspectives from formerly colonized countries. It challenges dominant narratives, explores the consequences of colonization, and seeks to reclaim and redefine cultural identities. With its distinct characteristics and themes, postcolonial literature holds a significant place in the global literary landscape.

3. Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*:

3.1. Chinua Achebe: A bio:

Commonly known as the Father of African Literature and the dominant figure in modern African literature, Chinua Achebe (Albert Chinualumogu Achebe) was the most famous Nigerian novelist, poet, and critic. He was born on November 16, 1930, in Ogidi, a small village in southeastern Nigeria, to Igbo parents. Achebe's father, Isaiah Okafo Achebe, was a catechist for the Church Missionary Society, and his mother, Janet Ileogbunam Achebe, was a deeply religious woman (Barksdale-Hall, 2007, p. 9).

Achebe had a passion for reading from a young age and excelled academically. He attended St. Philips' Central School in Ogidi and then proceeded to the prestigious Government College Umuahia. It was here that he first encountered European literature and developed an interest in writing (Ezenwa, 1997, p. 23). In 1948, Achebe received a scholarship to study medicine at University College, Ibadan. However, he soon switched his major to English literature. As a student, he became involved in literary societies and started writing short stories and poems. In 1952, his first published piece, a poem titled "My Home," appeared in the journal *The University Herald* (Ezenwa, 1997, p. 36).

After graduating in 1953, Achebe joined the Nigerian Broadcasting Service (NBS) as a producer and soon became the first Director of External Broadcasting. During his time at NBS, Achebe faced the challenges of representing Nigerian culture and literature in a country that was under British colonial rule (Barksdale-Hall, 2007, p. 9).

His groundbreaking debut novel, *Things Fall Apart*, was published in 1958. The novel, set in pre-colonial Nigeria, tells the story of Okonkwo, a respected warrior whose life is deeply affected by the arrival of British colonialism. *Things Fall Apart* is considered a classic of African literature, as it challenges European stereotypes and presents a complex portrayal of African culture. Achebe went on to write several more novels, including *No Longer at Ease* (1960) and *Arrow of God* (1964), which continued to explore the impact of colonialism on Nigerian society. He also wrote poetry, essays, and plays, each drawing from his experiences and observations of Nigerian society (Barksdale-Hall, 2007, p. 9).

During the 1960s, Chinua Achebe became active in Nigerian politics through many of his novels, which addressed postcolonial social and political problems in Nigeria. In 1967, he co-founded a publishing company with Nigerian poet Christopher Okigbo. In 1971, he became the chief editor of *Okike*, a respected journal of Nigerian writing. In 1984, he founded *Uwa ndi Igbo*, a bilingual magazine dedicated to Igbo culture (Ezenwa, 1997, p. 82).

In addition to his writing career, Achebe was actively involved in academia. He held various teaching positions, including at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, where he played a significant role in promoting African literature through the establishment of the African Writers Series. Throughout his life, Achebe received numerous awards and honors for his contributions to literature and his efforts in promoting African culture. He was a vocal advocate for social and political change in Nigeria and never shied away from addressing sensitive topics through his writing (Ezenwa, 1997, p. 252).

Chinua Achebe passed away on March 21, 2013, in Boston, Massachusetts, at the age of 82. He left behind a literary legacy that continues to inspire and influence writers and readers worldwide.

3.2. *Things Fall Apart*: A Postcolonial Approach to the Novel:

Chinua Achebe received his early education in English but grew up surrounded by the complex fusion of Igbo traditions and colonial legacy. Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart* serves as an exemplar of the cultural traditions of the indigenous Igbo people. It demonstrates the negative effects of colonialism on Igbo politics, psychology, and culture. Achebe uses the English language as his medium of expression to effectively illustrate these dual perspectives.

Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe is a powerful novel that explores the effects of colonialism on African culture and society. Taking a postcolonial approach to the novel allows readers to examine the ways in which colonialism disrupts traditional values, erodes identity, and ultimately leads to the

dismantling of a once-thriving community. According to Gikandi (1996), "it was probably the first work in which the author set out to represent the African experience in a narrative that sought, self-consciously, to be different from the colonial novel" (p. xvii).

One of the key aspects of a postcolonial approach to *Things Fall Apart* is analyzing the clash between the Igbo people's traditional way of life and the imposition of European values and systems. Prior to the arrival of the British, Igbo society had its own social, political, and religious structures that governed their lives. However, with the arrival of the colonizers, these structures were undermined and even destroyed. The novel depicts how the Igbo people attempted to resist and adapt to the changing circumstances but ultimately had to face the consequences of colonial influence.

Furthermore, a postcolonial approach allows readers to understand the impact of colonialism on individual characters. Okonkwo, the novel's protagonist, is a proud and dominant figure within his community. However, his desire to maintain his masculinity and assert his authority is challenged by the changes brought by the colonizers. The arrival of new ideas and systems challenges Okonkwo's position, leading to his eventual downfall. Through Okonkwo's character, Achebe highlights the psychological and emotional toll that colonialism takes on individuals who yearn for stability and a sense of belonging.

Additionally, the postcolonial approach reveals how European missionaries and administrators disrupted the Igbo people's religious beliefs and practices. The colonization process involved not only physical subjugation but also the imposition of new religious ideas that challenged and undermined traditional spiritual practices. The novel showcases the resistance to this religious imperialism, as well as the ways in which the Igbo people grappled with their identity and spirituality in the face of colonial influence.

According to O'Reilly (2001), *Things Fall Apart* has evolved into an anti-colonialist discourse due to its accurate portrayal of Igbo life, which had been romanticized and otherwise distorted by Europeans. Achebe made an effort to reclaim African history from an African perspective by offering a view of pre-colonial Igbo society (p. 34).

The creation of tradition and the telling of history, according to McLeod (2007), "are central to the nation." The nation has a unique historical narrative that explains its origins and distinctive character (p. 70). Achebe attempts to assert his own historical narratives in *Things Fall Apart* by following oral tradition. In *Things Fall Apart*, he provided an exhaustive and meticulous account of pre-colonial Igbo society. He claimed that he wrote his novel as a response to the colonizers and Europeans who had long misrepresented Africa by inventing tales about its longstanding customs and cultures (Achebe, 1958, p. 3).

Chinua Achebe's main objective with *Things Fall Apart* was to correct a long history of inaccurate portrayals of his people and country in Western discourse. Fanon (2001) argued that the past was marked by dignity, glory, and solemnity rather than anything to be ashamed of. The assertion of a past national

culture not only serves to redeem that nation but also supports the expectation of a future national culture (p. 169). In his approach to celebrating native culture, Chinua Achebe unearths the glorious past of Nigeria through the authentic portrayal of pre-colonial Igbo culture. He champions the fact that "there was nothing to be ashamed of" in the pre-colonial past of Igbo society.

Furthermore, the stereotypes that Europeans had long held about native Africans are dispelled in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. As Chinua Achebe was able to distinguish clearly between Igboland before and after colonization, he provided a clearer explanation of the significance and authenticity of Igbo customs. His method of distinguishing between pre-colonial and colonial periods is ideal for his goal of writing back the history of the Igbo people's lost customs and culture.

In conclusion, a postcolonial approach to *Things Fall Apart* allows readers to analyze the novel's depiction of the impact of colonialism on African culture and society. By examining the clash between traditional values and the imposition of European ideas, the novel portrays the erosion of identity, the dismantling of community structures, and the struggle for survival faced by the Igbo people. Through this approach, readers gain a deeper understanding of the far-reaching consequences of colonization and the resilience of those who endured its effects.

3.3. *Things Fall Apart*: Background of the Novel:

Written by Chinua Achebe in 1958, *Things Fall Apart* served as a response to Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, which portrayed Africa as a primitive, uncultured counterpoint to Europe. African natives were depicted in European accounts of the continent as uncivilized, linguistically deficient, and socially backward. Consequently, Achebe sought to give voice to marginalized and mistreated colonial subjects while providing a comprehensive understanding of African culture. Set in the 1890s, *Things Fall Apart* depicts the conflict between traditional Igbo culture and the white colonial government of Nigeria. Chinua Achebe carefully portrays the intricate, sophisticated social structures and artistic traditions of Igbo culture before its contact with Europeans. By writing *Things Fall Apart* in English, Achebe hoped his book would counter past colonial narratives about Africa. Achebe believed that cultural revitalization could be accomplished through the English language, enabling him to incorporate Igbo vocabulary into the story and capture the cadence of the Igbo language.

The novel focuses on the life of Okonkwo, a highly respected warrior and leader in the fictional Igbo village of Umuofia. Okonkwo's life is governed by the values and traditions of his people, which center on strength, bravery, and masculinity. The novel explores Okonkwo's struggle to live up to his cultural expectations and maintain his position in the community. One of the central themes is the collision of traditional African culture with the forces of colonialism and Christianity. The arrival of British missionaries, with their attempts to introduce Christianity and European ideals, disrupts the social and

cultural fabric of Umuofia. This clash of cultures leads to tension, conflict, and ultimately the downfall of Okonkwo and his village.

Achebe's novel also delves into the complexities of Igbo society, exploring the beliefs, customs, and social structures that dominated traditional Nigerian villages. It highlights the importance of oral tradition, the role of elders and ancestors, the significance of yam farming, and the deep spirituality that permeates daily life.

Things Fall Apart is not only an exploration of Nigerian history and culture but also a critique of colonialism and the destructive impact it had on indigenous societies. The novel portrays the loss of identity and the erasure of traditional practices that occurred with the arrival of British colonizers. Additionally, the novel provides a window into the complexities of pre-colonial Nigerian society and offers a thought-provoking examination of the consequences of colonialism. It has become a seminal work in African literature, drawing worldwide attention to Nigerian culture and history.

3.4. *Things Fall Apart*: Plot Summary:

In *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe introduces the protagonist, Okonkwo, and begins depicting the rich cultural and social fabric of Igbo society in pre-colonial Nigeria. This early section sets the stage for countering colonial stereotypes by presenting a detailed, authentic portrayal of African traditions, implicitly challenging the "tales" invented by colonizers about African cultures being primitive or inferior. For example, Achebe describes Okonkwo's status and the communal values of Umuofia, which directly contrasts with Eurocentric misrepresentations (Achebe, 1958, p. 3).

Okonkwo's life is heavily influenced by his fear of becoming like his father, whom he views as weak and unsuccessful. Determined to distance himself from any form of weakness, Okonkwo becomes highly ambitious and strives to earn respect and wealth to prove his worth. He accomplishes this by winning battles, gaining titles, and accumulating vast yam fields and multiple wives.

As the story progresses, Okonkwo becomes increasingly rigid in his adherence to tribal customs and traditions, refusing to adapt to changing times. However, the arrival of white missionaries and colonial administrators disrupts the traditional African way of life and challenges the cultural values and beliefs of the Umuofia community.

Okonkwo fiercely resists the encroachment of the missionaries, viewing their influence as a threat to Umuofia's identity and independence. Unfortunately, his stubbornness and resistance prove futile as more tribe members begin converting to Christianity due to the missionaries' promises of education, progress, and liberation from certain tribal customs.

As Okonkwo realizes that his efforts to resist change are ineffective, he becomes increasingly desperate and resorts to violence. Tragedy strikes when Okonkwo kills a British messenger sent to stop a tribal

meeting. Realizing that his people will not rally behind him to initiate a full-scale rebellion against the colonial powers, Okonkwo, feeling utterly defeated and betrayed, takes his own life. His suicide symbolically represents the collapse of traditional African society and the loss of its cultural integrity.

Things Fall Apart explores themes of cultural clash, the destructive effects of colonization, the fragility of masculinity, and the consequences of refusing to adapt to changing circumstances. It demonstrates the complexity and beauty of African culture while portraying the devastating effects of external influences on indigenous communities.

4. Pre-colonial Igbo Society in *Things Fall Apart*:

Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* provides a vivid portrayal of Igbo society in pre-colonial Nigeria, specifically in the village of Umuofia, before the arrival of British missionaries. The novel explores the complexity of Igbo culture, highlighting its social structure, religious beliefs, economic systems, and cultural practices. Below is an analysis of the key aspects of Igbo society as depicted in the novel before European influence disrupted its fabric.

⁜ Decentralized Governance:

- **Village-Based System**: Igbo society, as portrayed in the novel, operates without a centralized authority or king. Each village, such as Umuofia, functions as an independent unit with its own governance system. Decisions are made collectively, emphasizing community consensus over hierarchical rule; (Achebe, 1958, p. 11)

- **Elders and Ndichie**: The council of elders, known as the *Ndichie*, holds significant influence. These are respected men of high status, often titled individuals, who convene to settle disputes, make decisions on communal matters, and uphold customary laws. For example, in the novel, the elders gather to address issues like Okonkwo's accidental killing of a clansman; (Achebe, 1958, p. 124)

- **No Hereditary Leadership**: Leadership is not hereditary but earned through personal achievements, such as wealth, bravery, or wisdom. Titles like *Ozo* signify status and influence, but they are acquired through effort and resources, not birthright. (Achebe, 1958, p. 8)

➢ Democratic Decision-Making:

- **Village Assemblies**: Major decisions are made in village assemblies where freeborn adult males can speak. These gatherings, as seen in Umuofia, allow open discussion, with decisions often reached through consensus. For instance, the community debates whether to go to war or seek peace in response to the killing of a woman from Umuofia; (Achebe, 1958, p. 11)

- **Role of Oratory**: Eloquence and persuasive speech are highly valued. Influential figures like Ogbuefi Ezeugo use oratory to rally the community, as seen when he incites action against the Mbaino for a crime; (Achebe, 1958, p. 11)

- **Checks and Balances**: No single individual holds absolute power. The elders, priests, and titled men share authority, and their decisions are subject to the will of the community and the guidance of spiritual forces. (Achebe, 1958, p. 93)

➤ **Judicial System:**

- **Customary Law**: Disputes are resolved through customary practices, often mediated by the *egwugwu* or elders. The judicial process is public and aims for reconciliation rather than punishment, as seen in the case of Uzowulu's domestic dispute, where the goal is to restore harmony; (Achebe, 1958, p. 93)

- **Collective Responsibility**: The community enforces justice collectively. For example, when Okonkwo violates the Week of Peace, he is fined, and the punishment is upheld to appease the earth goddess Ani. (Achebe, 1958, p. 31)

➤ **Gender Dynamics in Politics:**

- **Patriarchal Structure**: The political system is male-dominated, with women excluded from formal leadership roles. However, women hold spiritual influence, as seen with Chielo, the priestess, whose authority as the Oracle's voice can supersede male leaders; (Achebe, 1958, p. 101)

- **Matriarchal Elements**: The earth goddess Ani and other female deities underscore a spiritual reverence for femininity, indirectly influencing political decisions. (Achebe, 1958, p. 31)

➤ **Conflict Resolution and Warfare:**

- **Diplomacy Over War**: The Igbo prioritize diplomacy to maintain peace between villages. When Mbaino kills an Umuofian woman, they negotiate compensation (a virgin and a boy, Ikemefuna) rather than immediately resorting to war; (Achebe, 1958, p. 12)

- **Warrior Culture**: While diplomacy is preferred, the Igbo value martial prowess. Warriors like Okonkwo gain political influence through their exploits, and the community's readiness for war strengthens its autonomy. (Achebe, 1958, p. 3)

The political structure of Igbo society in *Things Fall Apart* is a complex, decentralized system that balances individual merit, communal consensus, and spiritual guidance. It is democratic in its inclusivity of freeborn men and reliance on consensus, yet stratified by wealth, titles, and gender. The absence of a

centralized authority allows flexibility but also makes the society vulnerable to disruption, as later seen with the arrival of British missionaries and colonial forces, which challenge the Igbo's traditional governance and values.

✚ Social Structure and Hierarchy

Igbo society in *Things Fall Apart* is patriarchal yet meritocratic, with a clear social hierarchy based on personal achievement, wealth, and titles. The society values individual effort, as seen in the protagonist Okonkwo's rise from poverty to prominence through hard work and determination.

- **Titles and Prestige**: Status is earned through the acquisition of titles, which are tied to wealth and social standing. Men like Okonkwo take titles such as *Ozo*, which require significant resources, like yams or cowries, to attain. These titles confer respect and influence, as seen in the reverence given to titled men during village gatherings; (Achebe, 1958, p. 8)

- **Gender Roles**: Gender roles are rigid, with men holding primary authority. Men are expected to be strong, provide for their families, and participate in communal decision-making. Women, while respected as mothers and caretakers, have limited public authority. For example, Okonkwo's harsh treatment of his wives reflects the patriarchal norms, though women like Chielo, the priestess, hold spiritual influence; (Achebe, 1958, p. 15)

- **Elders and Governance**: The village is governed by a council of elders and titled men, who deliberate on matters like disputes and communal decisions. The *egwugwu*, masked ancestral spirits, also play a judicial role, resolving conflicts and maintaining order, as seen in the trial of Uzowulu for domestic abuse; (Achebe, 1958, pp. 87-94)

- **Achievement-Based Status**: The Igbo political system rewards individual merit. Okonkwo, despite his father's lowly status, rises to prominence through hard work, farming success, and warrior prowess. Wealth (measured in yams, wives, and titles) grants influence in political matters. (Achebe, 1958, p. 8)

✚ Religious and Spiritual Beliefs:

Religion is central to Igbo society, permeating daily life and decision-making. The Igbo practice a polytheistic religion with a pantheon of gods and spirits, alongside a deep reverence for ancestors.

- **Chukwu and Lesser Deities**: Chukwu is the supreme god, but lesser deities like Agbala (the Oracle) and Ani (the earth goddess) are more directly involved in village life. The Oracle of the Hills and Caves, served by Chielo, is consulted for guidance, reflecting the community's reliance on divine wisdom; (Achebe, 1958, pp. 100-5)

- **Ancestral Worship**: Ancestors are believed to influence the living, and the *egwugwu* embody their spirits during ceremonies and trials. This connection to ancestors reinforces cultural continuity and respect for tradition; (Okeke, Ibenwa, and Okeke, 2017, p. 4)

- **Taboos and Rituals**: The Igbo adhere to strict taboos, such as the prohibition against killing a clansman, and rituals like the Week of Peace, which honors Ani. Violations, like Okonkwo's accidental killing of Ezeudu's son, lead to severe consequences, such as exile, underscoring the society's emphasis on spiritual balance; (Achebe, 1958, pp. 124-5)

- **Oracles and Priests**: The political structure is intertwined with religion. The Oracle of the Hills and Caves, served by priestesses like Chielo, provides divine guidance on major decisions, such as matters of war or justice. For example, the Oracle's pronouncements are unquestioned when it demands Ikemefuna's death; (Achebe, 1958, pp. 58-9)

- **Ancestral Spirits**: The *egwugwu*, masked figures representing ancestral spirits, serve as a judicial body. They settle disputes and enforce customary law, blending spiritual authority with political governance. Their decisions, as seen in the trial of Uzowulu, carry weight because they are perceived as divine; (Achebe, 1958, pp. 68-9)

- **Sacred Laws**: Political decisions are guided by taboos and customs believed to be sanctioned by the gods, ensuring adherence to moral and social codes. (Ikenga, 2010, pp. 8-9)

✚ Economic Systems

The Igbo economy is primarily agrarian, with yams as the staple crop and a symbol of wealth and masculinity.

- **Yam Cultivation**: Yams are the backbone of the economy, and success in farming determines social standing. Okonkwo's early struggles with poor harvests highlight the challenges of yam farming, while his eventual success underscores its importance; (Ikenna, 2021, pp. 62-3)

- **Trade and Wealth**: Cowries serve as currency, and trade with neighboring villages sustains the economy. Wealth is measured in yams, wives, and titles, as seen in Okonkwo's ambition to accumulate these markers of success; (Cosmas, 2015, pp. 310-1)

- **Communal Labor**: Farming and other tasks often involve communal effort, such as barn-raising or clearing land, reflecting the collective spirit of the Igbo. (Cosmas, 2015, pp. 315-6)

✚ Cultural Practices and Traditions

Igbo society is rich with customs that reinforce community bonds and individual identity.

- **Marriage and Family**: Polygamy is common, with men taking multiple wives based on their wealth. Marriage negotiations involve bride price, as seen in Obierika's daughter's betrothal. Family units are extended, including multiple generations living together; (Achebe, 1958, pp. 85-7)

- **Festivals and Ceremonies**: Events like the New Yam Festival and wrestling matches are central to Igbo culture, fostering unity and celebrating achievements. Wrestling, in particular, is a rite of passage for young men, as evidenced by Okonkwo's fame as a wrestler; (Achebe, 1958, p. 3)

- **Justice and Conflict Resolution**: The Igbo have a sophisticated system for resolving disputes, often through the *egwugwu* or village assemblies. Punishments, like Okonkwo's exile, are enforced to maintain social harmony. (Achebe, 1958, pp. 84-124)

🞥 Strengths and Flaws of Igbo Society

Achebe presents Igbo society as vibrant and complex, with strengths in its communal solidarity, respect for tradition, and merit-based hierarchy. However, it also has flaws, such as rigid gender roles, harsh punishments (e.g., the abandonment of twins), and an unforgiving stance toward failure, as seen in Okonkwo's fear of being perceived as weak like his father, Unoka.

- **Strengths**: The society's emphasis on community, spirituality, and achievement fosters resilience and cohesion. The *egwugwu* and Oracle provide a structured yet flexible system for justice and guidance;

- **Flaws**: The patriarchal structure marginalizes women, and certain practices, like the treatment of *osu* (outcasts) or the killing of Ikemefuna, reveal moral tensions. Okonkwo's rigid adherence to masculine ideals also highlights the society's intolerance for perceived weakness.

Before the arrival of British missionaries, Igbo society in *Things Fall Apart* is depicted as a dynamic, self-sustaining system with a rich cultural, spiritual, and economic life. While its strengths lie in its communal values and structured governance, its rigidity and harsh customs foreshadow vulnerabilities that colonial influence will exploit. Achebe's portrayal is neither romanticized nor overly critical, offering a balanced view of a society on the brink of transformation.

5. Post-colonial Igbo Society in *Things Fall Apart*:

Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* provides a profound exploration of the Igbo society's transformation following the arrival of British missionaries in the late 19th century. The novel captures the cultural, social, and spiritual disruptions caused by colonial intervention, highlighting the erosion of traditional Igbo values and structures. Below is an analysis of the changes in Igbo society post-missionary arrival, focusing on key themes such as religion, social hierarchy, justice, and cultural disintegration.

Political structure:

In *Things Fall Apart*, the arrival of British missionaries and colonial authorities fundamentally disrupts the traditional political structure of Igbo society, as depicted in Umuofia and surrounding villages. Below is an analysis of the changes and dynamics in the Igbo political structure after the British missionaries arrive, focusing on the novel's portrayal.

➤ **Erosion of Traditional Authority:**

- **Undermining Elders and Ndichie**: The British colonial administration introduces a centralized authority that overrides the traditional council of elders (*Ndichie*). The District Commissioner and colonial courts supplant the elders' role in decision-making and dispute resolution. For example, the arrest and humiliation of Umuofia's leaders, including Okonkwo, for burning the church demonstrate the colonial power's disregard for traditional authority; (Achebe, 1958, pp. 144-6)

- **Disruption of the Egwugwu**: The *egwugwu*, the masked ancestral spirits who served as a judicial body, lose their sacred and political influence. When Enoch unmasks an *egwugwu*, it is a direct attack on the spiritual-political system, weakening its legitimacy and causing communal outrage. The colonial authorities' failure to recognize the *egwugwu*'s authority further erodes their role. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 186-7)

➤ **Imposition of Colonial Governance:**

- **Centralized Authority**: The British establish a hierarchical system with the District Commissioner as the ultimate authority. This contrasts sharply with the Igbo's decentralized, consensus-based governance. The Commissioner's court in Umuofia imposes foreign laws, ignoring customary practices, as seen when Igbo leaders are jailed without traditional mediation; (Achebe, 1994, pp. 194-6)

- **Native Courts and Warrant Chiefs**: The colonial system introduces native courts staffed by locals who align with British interests, often individuals of low traditional status (e.g., outcasts or opportunists). These figures wield power not through communal respect or merit, as in the traditional system, but through colonial backing, creating a new, alien political hierarchy. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 174-5)

➤ **Impact of Christianity on Political Dynamics:**

- **Division within the Community**: The missionaries' spread of Christianity creates internal divisions, weakening the collective unity central to Igbo governance. Converts, including outcasts (*osu*) and individuals like Nwoye, reject traditional beliefs, undermining the spiritual-political

authority of oracles and priests. This schism reduces the community's ability to resist colonial influence cohesively; (Achebe, 1994, pp. 144-151)

- **Church as a Parallel Authority**: The mission establishes a rival power structure, with the church acting as a moral and social authority. Converts look to missionaries like Mr. Brown or Mr. Smith for guidance, bypassing traditional leaders. The church's influence grows as it provides education and social mobility, attracting those marginalized by the Igbo system. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 151-155)

➢ **Loss of Judicial Autonomy:**

- **Colonial Courts**: Traditional judicial processes, such as those conducted by the *egwugwu* or elders, are replaced by colonial courts that enforce British laws. These courts disregard Igbo customs, as seen in the arbitrary fines and punishments imposed on Umuofia's leaders. This shift alienates the community from its own justice system; (Achebe, 1994, pp. 194-6)

- **Punitive Measures**: The colonial response to resistance, such as the imprisonment and flogging of Igbo leaders, introduces a new form of punitive justice alien to the Igbo's reconciliatory approach. This breeds resentment and powerlessness, as traditional mechanisms for conflict resolution are rendered obsolete. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 194-6)

➢ **Economic and Social Shifts Affecting Political Power:**

- **Economic Disruption**: The introduction of a cash economy and trade with the British undermines the traditional wealth system based on yams and titles. New economic opportunities, such as those offered through mission schools, shift influence to converts and those aligned with the colonial system, diminishing the political clout of titled men like Okonkwo; (Achebe, 1994, pp. 181-3)

- **Social Mobility for Outcasts**: The *osu* and other marginalized groups gain status through conversion, as Christianity offers them equality denied in the traditional system. This upends the meritocratic yet stratified Igbo political order, creating new power dynamics that favor colonial allies. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 154-6)

➢ **Resistance and Collapse of Traditional Politics:**

- **Failed Resistance**: The Igbo attempt to resist colonial encroachment, as seen when Umuofia burns the church in response to Enoch's sacrilege. However, the colonial authorities' superior force and strategic arrests crush this resistance, highlighting the Igbo system's inability to counter external power; (Achebe, 1994, pp. 189-190)

- **Okonkwo's Defiance**: Okonkwo's killing of a colonial messenger represents a final, futile attempt to restore traditional authority through warrior values. His suicide underscores the collapse of the

Igbo political structure, as even its strongest defenders cannot adapt to the new reality. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 204-5)

➢ **Gender and Spiritual Dimensions:**

- **Decline of Spiritual Authority**: The Oracle and priestesses like Chielo lose influence as Christianity challenges the Igbo spiritual-political framework. The gods, once central to governance, are dismissed by converts and colonial officials, stripping the political system of its sacred foundation; (Achebe, 1994, pp. 144-156)

- **Continued Marginalization of Women**: While the traditional system was patriarchal, women like Chielo held spiritual influence. The colonial system offers no equivalent role, further marginalizing women in the new political order, except as converts within the church. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 99-106)

The arrival of British missionaries and colonial authorities in *Things Fall Apart* dismantles the decentralized, consensus-driven, and spiritually grounded political structure of Igbo society. The imposition of centralized colonial governance, Christian influence, and foreign judicial systems erodes the authority of elders, *egwugwu*, and oracles, while creating divisions within the community. The traditional meritocracy is replaced by a system favoring colonial allies, and resistance proves ineffective against overwhelming external power. By the novel's end, the Igbo political structure is fractured, with figures like Okonkwo unable to reconcile their values with the new order, symbolized by the District Commissioner's dismissive plan to write about Umuofia in his book.

➕ **Religious Transformation and Conflict**

The introduction of Christianity by British missionaries fundamentally challenges the Igbo's traditional religious practices. The Igbo religion, rooted in polytheism and ancestor worship, is deeply communal, with gods like Chukwu and spirits guiding societal norms. The missionaries' monotheistic Christian doctrine, which dismisses Igbo gods as false, creates a rift within the community.

- **Conversion and Division**: The missionaries attract marginalized groups, such as the *osu* (outcasts) and those dissatisfied with Igbo customs, like Nwoye, Okonkwo's son. Nwoye's conversion reflects his rejection of the rigid masculinity and harsh practices (e.g., the killing of Ikemefuna) upheld by Igbo tradition. This shift fragments families and clans, as converts adopt new identities, often rejecting their cultural heritage; (Achebe, 1994, pp. 144-156)

- **Destruction of Sacred Symbols**: The burning of the church by Okonkwo and other clan members, followed by the destruction of the sacred python by a convert, symbolizes the escalating conflict between the two belief systems. These acts provoke retaliation from the colonial administration, further weakening Igbo autonomy. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 185-194)

⬥ Disruption of Social Hierarchy:

Igbo society is structured around a meritocratic system where status is earned through personal achievements, such as Okonkwo's rise from poverty to prominence. The arrival of missionaries and colonial authorities undermines this system.

- **Erosion of Traditional Authority**: The missionaries introduce a new power structure backed by colonial governance. The District Commissioner's authority supersedes that of Igbo elders, diminishing the influence of titled men and clan leaders. For instance, Okonkwo's imprisonment and humiliation by colonial officials highlight the loss of traditional power; (Achebe, 1994, pp. 194-6)

- **Empowerment of Marginalized Groups**: Christianity offers social mobility to those excluded by Igbo norms, such as the *osu*, who gain status within the church. This shift challenges the rigid social stratification, causing resentment among traditionalists who view it as an affront to their values. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 155-7)

⬥ Changes in Justice and Governance:

The Igbo justice system, governed by the egwugwu (masked ancestral spirits) and communal consensus, is replaced by colonial laws, which are alien and often arbitrary to the Igbo.

- **Colonial Legal Imposition**: The colonial administration's courts and prisons disregard Igbo customs, such as the communal resolution of disputes. The imprisonment of Okonkwo and other leaders for burning the church exemplifies this clash, as the Igbo are subjected to punishments they do not understand; (Achebe, 1994, pp. 194-6)

- **Loss of Autonomy**: The introduction of taxes and colonial bureaucracy further erodes Igbo self-governance. The Igbo's inability to resist these impositions underscores their diminishing control over their society. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 199-201)

⬥ Cultural Disintegration and Loss of Identity:

The missionaries' influence accelerates the erosion of Igbo cultural practices, leading to a broader disintegration of communal identity.

- **Language and Education**: Mission schools introduce English and Western education, which alienate converts from their oral traditions and Igbo language. This shift creates a cultural divide, as educated converts adopt colonial values, further distancing them from their roots; (Achebe, 1994, pp. 151-183)

- **Fragmentation of Community**: The novel's title, *Things Fall Apart*, reflects the unraveling of Igbo cohesion. The clan's inability to unite against external forces—due to internal divisions and differing responses to colonialism—leads to its downfall. Okonkwo's suicide, a taboo in Igbo culture, symbolizes the ultimate collapse of traditional values under colonial pressure; (Achebe, 1994, pp. 203-9)

- **Generational Conflicts:** One of the most significant themes in *Things Fall Apart* is the generational conflict that emerges as a result of colonial influence. The novel portrays younger generations as more willing to embrace colonial culture and Christianity, often in rebellion against traditional authority. Okonkwo's son Nwoye represents this generational shift, finding in Christianity an alternative to the harsh masculinity demanded by traditional society. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 147-153)

The character of Nwoye illustrates the complex psychology of cultural transformation. His conversion to Christianity is motivated not merely by religious conviction but by his rejection of traditional practices that he finds disturbing, particularly the killing of Ikemefuna and the abandonment of twin babies. The novel suggests that colonial culture appeals to those who are alienated by certain aspects of traditional society. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 61-2)

The generational conflict depicted in the novel reflects broader patterns of cultural change in colonized societies. Young people, having less investment in traditional power structures and facing limited opportunities within them, often become agents of cultural transformation. This dynamic creates profound tensions within families and communities, as illustrated by the relationship between Okonkwo and his children. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 147-8)

- **Forms of Resistance and Accommodation:** Achebe's novel presents a spectrum of responses to colonial intrusion, ranging from violent resistance to accommodation and collaboration. Okonkwo represents the most extreme form of resistance, ultimately choosing death rather than submission to colonial authority. His suicide serves as both an act of defiance and a tragic acknowledgment of the impossibility of returning to the pre-colonial past. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 207-9)

Other characters represent different strategies for dealing with colonial pressure. Obierika embodies a more pragmatic approach, seeking to understand and adapt to changing circumstances while maintaining cultural integrity. His thoughtful analysis of colonial impact and his attempts to preserve traditional values while acknowledging new realities represent a more nuanced form of resistance. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 125-6)

The novel also depicts forms of accommodation and collaboration, particularly among those who benefit from colonial rule. The converts to Christianity and those who work within the colonial

system represent pragmatic responses to changing circumstances, though the novel suggests that such accommodation comes at the cost of cultural authenticity and community solidarity. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 151-4)

- **The Transformation of Traditional Institutions:** The novel illustrates how colonial presence systematically undermines traditional institutions even when it does not directly attack them. The authority of the council of elders diminishes as colonial courts provide alternative venues for dispute resolution. The significance of titles and traditional honors decreases as new forms of status and authority emerge through colonial systems. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 176-197)

Religious transformation represents perhaps the most profound change depicted in the novel. The conversion of community members to Christianity creates fundamental questions about the validity of traditional beliefs and practices. The burning of shrines and the desecration of sacred places represent symbolic victories for colonial culture over traditional religion. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 178-191)

The novel shows how economic relationships change under colonial influence. The introduction of a cash economy and wage labor alters traditional patterns of reciprocity and mutual obligation. The emphasis on individual accumulation rather than community welfare transforms social relationships and creates new forms of inequality and competition. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 176-8)

Psychological and Individual Impact:

Okonkwo: A Symbol of Resistance: Okonkwo embodies the Igbo's resistance to change, clinging to traditional values of masculinity, strength, and honor. His tragic end underscores the futility of individual resistance against the overwhelming force of colonial intervention. Okonkwo's character serves as a lens through which to examine the psychological impact of colonialism on individuals caught between traditional and modern worlds. His rigid adherence to traditional masculine values and his inability to adapt to changing circumstances make him a tragic figure whose personal destruction mirrors the broader cultural catastrophe experienced by his society. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 204-5)

Okonkwo's exile and return illustrate the disorienting effect of rapid cultural change. During his seven-year absence, his community undergoes fundamental transformation, leaving him a stranger in his own homeland. This experience of cultural alienation represents a common response to colonial disruption and helps explain the psychological trauma associated with cultural displacement. (Achebe,1994, pp. 131-2)

Unlike characters like Obierika, who grapple with adapting to change, Okonkwo refuses to compromise, viewing adaptation as weakness. His actions, such as killing the court messenger, reflect his desperate attempt to preserve Igbo traditions. (Achebe, 1994, p. 199)

Okonkwo's downfall mirrors the broader tragedy of Igbo society. His suicide, an act condemned by his culture, signifies the loss of the very values he sought to uphold, highlighting the devastating impact of colonialism. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 207-8)

The novel presents Okonkwo's tragedy as both personal and representative. His fear of weakness and failure, rooted in his reaction to his father's perceived inadequacies, becomes maladaptive in a changing world that requires flexibility and accommodation. His violent response to colonial authority ultimately leads to his isolation from his community and his self-destruction. (Achebe, 1994, p. 153)

- **Identity Crisis and Cultural Displacement:** The novel explores themes of identity crisis and cultural displacement that result from colonial encounter. Characters struggle to maintain cultural authenticity while adapting to new circumstances, creating psychological tension and uncertainty about personal and collective identity. The question of who one is becomes problematic when traditional sources of identity are challenged or invalidated. (Achebe, 1994, pp. 147-153)

Nwoye's identity transformation illustrates the possibilities and costs of cultural change. His adoption of Christianity and Western education provides him with new opportunities but also alienates him from his family and traditional community. The novel suggests that such transformations, while offering individual benefits, contribute to the broader fragmentation of traditional society. (Achebe, 1958, pp. 114-5)

The theme of naming in the novel reflects broader issues of identity and cultural transformation. Nwoye's adoption of the Christian name Isaac symbolizes his rejection of traditional identity and his embrace of colonial culture. Similarly, the mispronunciation and simplification of Igbo names by colonial officials represents the broader erasure of cultural specificity under colonial rule. (Achebe, 1958, p. 152)

The arrival of British missionaries in *Things Fall Apart* catalyzes profound changes in Igbo society, disrupting its religious, social, and judicial systems. The imposition of Christianity and colonial governance erodes traditional structures, leading to cultural disintegration and loss of autonomy. Achebe portrays this clash not as a simple binary between Igbo tradition and Western modernity but as a complex tragedy, where internal divisions and external pressures combine to unravel a vibrant society. Okonkwo's personal struggle reflects the broader societal collapse, making *Things Fall Apart* a poignant critique of colonialism's destructive legacy.

6. Conclusion:

Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* provides a nuanced and sophisticated analysis of the impact of British colonialism on Igbo society in late 19th-century Nigeria. Through careful attention to cultural detail and psychological complexity, the novel demonstrates how colonialism represents not merely political domination but a comprehensive assault on indigenous ways of life that results in profound cultural transformation.

The novel's portrayal of pre-colonial Igbo society challenges colonial stereotypes by presenting a civilization that is sophisticated, dynamic, and morally complex. The detailed depiction of social organization, religious beliefs, economic systems, and cultural practices establishes the richness and validity of traditional African civilization, countering colonial narratives that portrayed Africa as primitive or backward.

The analysis of colonial impact reveals the systematic nature of cultural disruption and the multiple mechanisms through which colonial forces achieved dominance. The novel shows how missionary activity, administrative changes, legal innovations, and economic transformations worked together to undermine traditional authority and create new forms of social organization based on colonial models.

The psychological and individual impact of colonialism, as illustrated through Okonkwo's tragic story, demonstrates the personal costs of cultural transformation and the difficulties faced by individuals caught between traditional and modern worlds. The novel's treatment of generational conflict, identity crisis, and cultural displacement provides insight into the ongoing effects of colonial experience on individual and collective identity.

Achebe's linguistic and narrative strategies serve important political and cultural functions, preserving elements of Igbo oral tradition while making them accessible to international audiences. The novel's hybrid language and carefully controlled narrative perspective allow it to serve both as cultural preservation and cross-cultural communication.

The enduring relevance of *Things Fall Apart* lies in its sophisticated analysis of cultural encounter and transformation. The novel provides insights into processes of cultural change that remain relevant in contemporary discussions of globalization, development, and cultural identity. Its influence on African literature and postcolonial studies has been profound, establishing it as a foundational text for understanding the colonial experience and its aftermath.

The novel's greatest achievement may be its demonstration that literature can serve as both art and cultural politics, providing aesthetic pleasure while advancing important arguments about history, identity, and power. Achebe's masterpiece remains a powerful testament to the complexity of human experience and the resilience of cultural traditions in the face of systematic assault.

Through its detailed portrayal of one specific cultural encounter, *Things Fall Apart* illuminates universal themes about tradition and change, power and resistance, individual and community. The novel's continued relevance across different cultural contexts and historical periods demonstrates the power of literature to transcend its specific origins while remaining deeply rooted in particular cultural experiences.

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