



# Representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring in the French Media: The cases of Le Figaro and Libération

## Türkiye'nin Barış Pınarı Harekâtı'nın Fransız Medyasında Temsili: Le Figaro ve Libération Örneđi

**Ayda SABUNCUOĐLU İNANÇ<sup>1</sup>**  
**Marc-Henry PIERRE<sup>2</sup>**

ARAŐTIRMA MAKALESİ

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### Abstract

The critical political economy of the media analyzes the production of media content that sustains imbalanced power relations and biased representations of reality. Research that addresses Turkey's image in the European media remains theoretically limited. This article aimed to analyze the representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring in the French media. Using the critical theory of the political economy of communication and a qualitative method that includes content analysis and critical discourse analysis, this paper examined the latent power relations and value-based conflict that hide behind the manifest media representation of the Turkish military operation. A sample of two French newspapers, Le Figaro and Libération was used in this study. The findings showed that the French media make a negative representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring. This negative representation is expressed through biased and partial information regarding the military operation. Moreover, the findings revealed that the negative representation of the Turkish military operation by the French media makes up a discourse that nourishes and maintains imbalanced power relations and value-based conflict between Turkey and Europe. Without any pretense of being exhaustive, this research provides a substantial contribution to the existing literature regarding the relations between Turkey and Europe.

**Keywords:** Media representations, Turkey, France, Power relations.

### Özet

Medyanın eleřtirel ekonomi politiđi, dengesiz güç ilişkilerini sürdüren ve gerçeđliđin taraflı temsillerini sürdüren medya içeriđi üretiminin temelini oluşturur. Türkiye'nin Avrupa medyasında imajını ele alan çalışmalar sınırlı kalmaktadır. Bu makale Türkiye'nin Barış Pınarı Harekâtı'nın Fransız medyasında temsilini incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. İletişimin eleřtirel ekonomi politiđini ve içerik analiziyle eleřtirel söylem çözümlemesini içeren nitel karma yöntemin kullanıldıđı bu çalışma, Türk askeri operasyonunun açık medya temsilinin arkasına saklanan gizli güç ilişkilerini ve değere dayalı çatışmayı yeniden yapılandırmıştır. Bu çalışmada iki Fransız gazetesi olan Le Figaro ve Libération örneđi kullanılmıştır. Bulgular, Fransız medyasının Türkiye'nin Barış Pınarı Harekâtı'nı olumsuz temsil ettiđini göstermektedir. Bu olumsuz temsil, Türk askeri operasyonu hakkında taraflı ve kısmi bilgilerle ifade edilmektedir. Ayrıca bulgular, Türk askeri operasyonunun Fransız medyası tarafından olumsuz temsil edilmesinin, Türkiye ile Avrupa arasındaki dengesiz iktidar ilişkilerini ve değere temelli çatışmayı besleyen ve sürdüren bir söylem oluşturduđunu öne sürmektedir. Kapsamlı olma iddiası olmadan, bu araştırma Türkiye ile Avrupa arasındaki ilişkilere ilişkin mevcut literatüre önemli bir katkı sağlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Medya temsilleri, Türkiye, Fransa, İktidar ilişkileri.

1 Sakarya Üniversitesi, İletişim Fakültesi, Halkla İlişkiler ve Reklamcılık Bölümü,  
E-posta: aydainanc@sakarya.edu.tr, Orcid No: 0000-0003-4999-9663

2 Sakarya Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, İletişim Bilimleri ABD Doktora Öğrencisi,  
E-posta: marc-henry.pierre@ogr.sakarya.edu.tr, Orcid No: 0000-0002-8007-0599

## Introduction

In the international division of labor, the political economy of mass media refers to a struggle for the control of media content. Over the last century, mass media have played a major role in shaping public opinion to the benefit of the political establishment. In the dynamics of international relations, mass media in a given country contribute to shaping perception and social representations of other countries. In this respect, it is obvious that the public is closely linked to the value systems conveyed by the mainstream media. In the Western media, Turkey's image is constructed exclusively with respect to its possible accession to the European Union. In France, the question of the possible Turkey's European Union membership has created intense debates. France is among the countries that demonstrate the strongest opposition to Turkey's membership. However, diplomatic relations between Turkey and Europe date back to the mid-19 century. Indeed, Turkey has been a member of the UN since 1945, the Council of Europe since 1949, and NATO since 1952.

Despite Turkey's insistence on joining the European Union, the European Union members oppose this endeavor unanimously. This opposition is manifested through the construction of a negative image of Turkey, viewed as a non-democratic, Muslim, and non-European country. The European press review of the recent Turkish military operation on the border into north-eastern Syria is proof of the geopolitical information war between central powers and periphery countries. In fact, on October 9, 2019, Turkey launched a military operation called Operation Peace Spring (Barış Pınarı Harekâtı) into northeastern Syria. The Turkish government claimed that the operation was aimed at expelling terrorist organizations from across the border and creating a security zone in north-eastern Syria, where around 3.5 million refugees would resettle. The military operation received mixed reactions from the international community. Canada and ten European countries put an embargo on imports of arms against Turkey. Similarly, The United States of America imposed sanctions against Turkey's ministers and senior officials. On October 25, 2019, the European Parliament adopts a resolution that completely denied the reasons for the Turkish military operation. Europe condemned unanimously the military operation, and Turkey moved further away from its possible European Union membership. The stance of European countries towards the Turkish military operation is constructed in the media discourse. This discourse is rooted in power relations and value-based conflict between Europe and Turkey.

In the Western media, information about Turkey has often been either neglected or represented dramatically. Operation Peace Spring drew the French media's attention to Turkey by its dramatic aspect. Thus, the nature of Turkey's visibility and invisibility in the French media stems from the geopolitics of information that hides the agenda of the western media. This article aims to analyze the representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring in the French media and to understand the logic behind this representation. The paper draws its academic relevance to the gap in the existing literature regarding Turkey's image in the French media. Understanding a social phenomenon requires an interpretive analysis. Based on the qualitative research method, this paper used an analytical instrument that includes content analysis and critical discourse analysis. Two French newspapers, *Le Figaro* and *Libération* purposefully selected, made up the sample of the study. Since the research questions address both the media content and the logic behind this content, the theoretical framework of the paper is situated in the critical political economy.

## The Critical Political Economy of Communication

According to Hardy (2014), the first scientific study relating to critical political economy dates to the late 1960s and early 1970s. The political economy of communications describes how politics and economy relate to communication. While the neoclassical approach to political economy views communication as a technical tool serving politics and economy, critical political economy views communication as a complex process (Başaran and Geray, 2005). This complex process requires a

comprehensive analysis that involves history, social integrity, moral philosophy, and praxis. Thus, more than a means to an end, the concept of communication makes up a crucial determinant of social interactions. Mosco (2009) provides a conception of communication that highlights social relationships. In the same vein, Hardy (2014) stresses that the critical political economy of communication addresses power relations that make up social hierarchies.

Therefore, critical political economy analyzes how capital and government influence communication practices by shaping perception and social representations of reality. Governments, capital, and corporations make up influential structural forces that are manifested in trade and the international division of labor. Herman and Chomsky (1988) highlight the weight of owners' group in the production of media content. It follows that the editorial line of the media is determined by these structural forces. The media editorial line is regarded as a propaganda model closely intertwined with the geopolitics of information.

As a summary of the political economy of media, McQuail (2005) identifies seven core assumptions. The first assumption highlights the importance of logic and economic control. The second assumption stresses that media structure tends towards concentration. In the third assumption, McQuail notes that the global integration of media tends to develop. The fourth assumption stresses that contents and audiences are commodified. The fifth assumption highlights the diversity decrease in the media. In the sixth assumption, McQuail stresses that opposition and alternative voices are neglected. Lastly, he emphasizes that private interests prevail over the public interest.

Despite the critical dimension of the political economy of the mass media, Wittel (2012) notes its methodological limits. According to Wittel, the Marxist approach to the political economy of media is limited as it exclusively focuses on the base and superstructure model. In this model, the base prevails over the superstructure. Wittel suggests a comprehensive approach that includes Marxist concepts of labor, value, property, and struggle. Although this approach addresses particularly the political economy of distributed media, Marxist concepts of property and struggle remain relevant to a dialectical analysis of mass media. In this regard, Miège (2004) suggests an interdisciplinary analysis of the political economy of communication that meets the requirements of new social relationships. This approach involves considering that phenomena of communication are both socio-discursive and socio-anthropological. Therefore, only interdisciplinary approaches can address them comprehensively. Also, this approach highlights the social structuring of communication practices (around class affiliations, but not only); the non-reduction of power relations (linked to communication) to manipulative actions or influence phenomena (Miège, 2004: 52).

### **The Geopolitics of Information**

This paper assumes that the nature of Turkey's visibility and invisibility in European media stems from the geopolitics of information that hides power relations. According to Boulanger (2013), the geopolitics of media and information refers essentially to the context of power rivalries distributed into several categories of themes. One of these themes concerns the power struggles between different actors. As an instrument that serves the interest of capital, the media exercise a capacity to influence behavior and to maintain the imbalanced power relations. The geopolitics of media and information is characterized by an imbalance in information circulation, a biased representation of non-Western countries, and information that supports the political agenda of Western countries. Smith (1981) makes a critical analysis of western media imperialism that highlights the Eurocentrism of the production and dissemination of information. According to Smith, in an unequal world, free and balanced flow of information is a paradox. Indeed, international power relations strengthen the central powers to the detriment of periphery countries.

## Turkey's Image in the French Media

At this point in time, very few researchers have addressed Turkey's image in the French media. The existing yet limited literature focuses on European people's perception of Turkey's possible accession to the European Union. However, three studies have helped the researcher situate the present paper. Marchetti's (2015) article about the unequal transnationalization of Turkish information in the French media provides significant insights for the understanding of the phenomenon under study. Monceau (2009) provides a general picture of how French people perceive Turkey's European Union membership. His article contributes to framing the present analysis. Also, Billion's (2016) article on the normalization and tensions in the relationships between France and Turkey contributes to situating the present paper in the historical and political context of the topic under study.

Using a method that includes interviews, observations, and media content analysis between the 1980s and the 2000s, Marchetti (2015)'s research indicates a weak coverage of Turkey's news in the French media. This poor presence of Turkey in the French media also indicates the power relations manifested in the sphere of international news. Marchetti underlines the limited budget of the French media as another reason for their weak coverage of Turkey's news. Thus, Turkey's news draws French media's attention provided that the information involves the international community. The media circus created by Operation Peace Spring operation makes up an obvious example. Also, Marchetti's analysis emphasizes the homogeneity of the content of international news about Turkey. Marchetti notes that information regarding Turkey in the French media is operationalized through categories such as Islam, the Kurdish issue, Armenia, the Army, Islam, secularism, and questions of human and women's rights.

As regards the French perception of Turkey's possible European Union membership, Monceau (2009) found that France was one of the countries that firmly oppose this possibility. Monceau observed that most French citizens were against Turkey's accession to the European Union and that cultural non-compatibility with Turkey, human rights issues, and Turkey's non-Europeanness were among factors that shape the French perception of Turkey. The research concluded that over the period observation, the French opposition to Turkey's membership to the European Union remained stable.

In his article on the tense relations between France and Turkey, Billion (2016) underlines the lack of perspectives of Paris towards Ankara. Over the years, France and Turkey had harmonious relationships, which deteriorated in 2001 when the French Parliament recognized the Armenian genocide. Billion highlights the firm opposition of the French right politicians to Turkey's possible European Union membership. Billion emphasizes that Turkey, by its intrinsic importance and the reflections to which it forces the members of the European Union, constitutes an asset for Europe.

Despite their limited engagement with the critical analysis, these three studies make up a point of reference to the present paper. They provide some useful raw material for a more comprehensive analysis of Turkey's image in the European media. They also emphasize that discussions and debates in the media regarding the relations between France and Turkey contribute to shaping social representations and perceptions of Turkey. However, none of the studies mentioned address the logic of power relations and the weight of capital in shaping these social representations and perceptions. The present paper aims to fill this gap by including concepts such as property, value, struggle, and the geopolitics of information in a critical analysis of the phenomenon under study. In this paper, the media content is regarded as a discourse that lies in power relations.

## Methodology

The purpose of the study was to examine the representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring in the French media. To this end, the methodology of this paper includes qualitative content analysis and critical discourse analysis. The use of both content analysis and critical discourse analysis helps

the researcher seize the meaning of the content within its context of production. According to Bhat-tacherjee (2012), a good understanding of the context of the study helps the researcher carry out the investigation. This section on methodology highlights a description of the method used in the study.

### **Aim and Significance of Research**

This article aims to analyze the representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring in the French media and to understand the logic behind this representation. The paper draws its academic significance on its contribution to extending the existing literature on the problem. Thus, the findings of this research make up a steppingstone to further research. Also, the implications of the research findings for society may lead to a better understanding of the relations between France and Turkey.

### **Method**

In this paper, a qualitative method that includes qualitative content analysis and critical discourse analysis was used. The qualitative content analysis provided answers to the first research question, and the critical discourse analysis addressed the second research question. According to Creswell (2012), the qualitative research method investigates a problem and develops a detailed understanding of a central phenomenon. Also, qualitative research analyzes the data by using text analysis and provides a broader interpretation of the findings. Thus, to analyze Turkey's Operation Peace Spring within the interpretive paradigm, this paper uses a qualitative method that includes content analysis and discourse analysis. According to Berelson (1952), content analysis is a research technique that describes the manifest content of the communication. This paper regards content analysis as relevant yet limited as it fails to notice the hidden forces behind the content. Thus, the present study relies on Van Dijk's (1993) discourse analysis, which regards the media content as a discourse. According to Van Dijk, discourse analysis relates discourse to power in which knowledge attitudes, ideologies, and other social representations are constructed. Therefore, this paper regards the media content as a discourse.

### **Scope of Research and Sampling**

According to Giroux and Tremblay (2009), the researcher defines the scope of research following the research question. This paper used a purposeful sample of 10 French newspaper articles that address Turkey's Operation Peace Spring. Five articles were selected from the right-wing newspaper, Le Figaro and five from the left-wing newspaper Libération. Considered as the third largest and the oldest daily newspaper in France, Le Figaro was founded in 1826. The newspaper has a circulation of 525 000 newspapers in 2019 and is recognized for its conservative editorial line. As for Libération, this daily newspaper was founded by Jean-Paul Sartre in 1973 in the wake of the social protests of May 1968. With a circulation of 72 307 newspapers in 2019, the newspaper is known for its leftist stand. Creswell (2012) notes that in purposeful sampling, defining the research scope is the prerogative of the researcher. The sample of this paper allowed the researcher to analyze the media discourse from two different editorial lines.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions stem from the gap in the existing literature. Since the existing literature analyzed Turkey's image in The French media in a limited way, the present paper aimed to extend the analysis by raising two heuristic questions: How do the French media represent Turkey's Operation Peace Spring? What is the logic behind this representation?

### **Limitations**

This present analysis is limited to French newspapers Le Figaro and Libération and covers the period from October 9 to October 23, 2019.

## Research Findings

The purpose of the study was to analyze the representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring in the French media. Using the theory of the critical political economy of communication and a qualitative methodology that includes content analysis and critical discourse analysis, this study examined 10 articles selected in the French newspapers *Le Figaro* and *Libération*. More specifically, this paper sought to address two major research questions: 1) How do the French media represent Turkey's Operation Peace Spring? 2) What is the logic behind this representation? The research findings are organized into two segments. The first segment presents the research findings and the related qualitative content analysis. The content analysis of the research findings answers the first research question. The second segment makes up a critical discourse analysis of the representation of the Turkish military operation in the French media. The researcher performed a close reading of the newspaper articles and identified the most relevant themes that relate to the research questions. The themes were associated with the positive, neutral, and positive words and phrases used by *Le Figaro* and *Libération* to depict the Turkish military operation. With respect to Turkey's Operation Peace Spring, the following themes were identified in *Le Figaro* and *Libération*:

1. An operation against the Kurds
2. A heterogeneous patchwork of military factions
3. A future source of regional instability
4. Turkey's desire to assert its power in its regional space
5. An operation condemned by the European Union

In general, the findings showed that both *Le Figaro* and *Libération* make a negative representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring. The five themes selected by the researcher are identifiable in all 10 selected articles. The media present the military operation as a crime whose Turks are the perpetrators and the Kurds, the victim. It should be noted that the name of the military operation, Operation Peace Spring, is enclosed in quotation marks in all the selected articles. Similarly, the word "terrorist" used by the Turkish government to refer to the target of the military operation is also enclosed in quotation marks by the newspapers. Table 1 and Table 2 provide a visual depiction of the overall findings with the main themes identified in the newspaper articles. Also, words and phrases related to each theme were categorized into negative, neutral, and positive words. To analyze the findings, the researcher performed a qualitative content analysis in the first place. As a complement of the qualitative content analysis, a critical discourse analysis of the content was subsequently conducted. The content analysis answered the first research question and the critical discourse analysis addressed the second research question.

How do the French media represent Turkey's Operation Peace Spring? To answer this question, the researcher performed a qualitative content analysis of the main themes observed in the selected newspapers, as shown in Table 1 and Table 2. The main themes observed in the selected newspaper articles were coded and categorized into positive words or phrases, neutral words or phrases, and negative words or phrases.

## Content Analysis of the Representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring in *Le Figaro*

Themes	Positive phrases/ words	Neutral phrases/ words	Negative phrases/ words
A Turkish armed operation against the Kurds			Tragedy; Bombing raid; Brutal fighting; Offensive; Fighter

A heterogeneous patchwork of about thirty military factions	Anti-Daesh Anti-YPG	Patchwork Back-up troops	Soldier of fortune; Barbarians; Anti-Assad; atrocities
A military operation condemned by the European Union		Peace spring Power relations	Sanctions; Embargo so-called safety zone
A future source of regional instability		Peace spring Power relations	Improbable peace; Blatant instability Conflict; Resurgence of attack; Diplomatic risk; Spring of conflict
Turkey's desire to assert its power within its regional space	Political victory Support from opposition leaders	Military bravery	Nationalist wave Manipulation Migration Blackmailing

**Table 1:** Themes Observed in Le Figaro's Representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring

(Table 1) illustrates the key themes addressed by the right-wing newspaper Le Figaro regarding Turkey's Operation Peace Spring. As identified by the researcher, the key themes revealed a negative representation of the military operation. The theme "A Turkish armed operation against the Kurds" makes up a fallacy of composition. By this fallacy of composition, the author of the article conflates the Kurds with the YPG fighters. Also, in the theme "A heterogeneous patchwork of about thirty military factions", the Syrian back-up troops that fought for Turkey are regarded as barbarians, soldiers of fortune, and anti-Assad. Turkey's Operation Peace Spring is also represented by Le Figaro as "a spring of conflict and future regional instability". The expression "spring of conflict and instability" is used as an irony alluding to "Operation Peace Spring".

### Content analysis of the Representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring in Libération

Themes	Positive phrases/ words	Neutral phrases/ words	Negative phrases/ words
Turkey's ambition to crush its "terrorist" enemies	Liberation of Akçakale and Tall Abyad Jubilation; Victory parade	Artillery	Air strike; Ground-based assault; A rain of projectiles; Fear; Panic; Military outburst
Kurds abandoned by Washington			American withdrawal; Despair; Anger; Exodus; Chaos; Inconsolable children
A well-planned offensive			Attack; Risk; Power-play; Technical superiority; Migration; Blackmailing; Offensive; Trump's Green light; Europe's helplessness

An operation including very diverse forces		Coalition	Force; Fight; Propaganda; Atrocity; So-called safety zone
An operation almost unanimously condemned by the international community		Coalition	Humanitarian disaster; Nightmare; Fear; Europe's helplessness

**Table 2:** Themes Observed in Libération's Representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring

(Table 2) illustrates the key themes addressed by left-wing newspaper Libération regarding Turkey's Operation Peace Spring. Turkey's Operation Peace Spring is represented by Libération as "Turkey's ambitions to crush its enemies", a "well-planned military offensive", and a "heterogeneous military coalition". Like Le Figaro, Libération represents the Kurds as the victim and the Turkish military as the perpetrator. One of the articles stresses that "The Kurds are abandoned by Washington". This strategy of polarization makes up an implicit way to condemn the Operation Peace Spring. The military operation is also presented as unanimously condemned by the international community. The latter denounces "a humanitarian disaster" and requires the cessation of the military operation. Overall, Turkey's Operation Peace Spring is represented by the newspaper Libération as a source of fear, panic, despair, anger, exodus, and chaos to which Europe is helpless.

The negative representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring in the French media supports the literature and the theory of the critical political economy of the media used in this paper. Indeed, Marchetti (2015) identified a poor presence of French journalists in Turkey and a tendency of French media to cover dramatic news from Turkey. Also, Monceau (2009) found that French people have increasing negative perceptions of Turkey's possible European Union membership. However, these analyses, rooted in content analysis, failed to unveil the power relations that media content implies. As Wittel (2012) stresses, the analysis of media content is insufficient if it does not question the logic that hides behind the content. To this end, the following section addresses the representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring in the French media as a discourse.

What is the logic behind the French media's representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring? To answer this question, the researcher performed a critical discourse analysis of the representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring in the French media. This paper assumes that the meaning of words extends beyond their manifest content. Thus, words used in the media discourse shape social representations of reality and maintain power relations.

### **A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring in the French Media**

The first part of this analysis addressed the representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring by the French newspapers Le Figaro and Libération. Overall, the findings showed that the military operation is represented negatively by the French media. In this paper, the media representation is understood as a discourse. Thus, this section makes up a critical discourse analysis of the logic behind the negative perception of Turkish military operation.

The negative representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring in the French media denotes power relations and value-based conflict. According to Van Dijk (1988), media discourse analysis extends beyond content analysis. A critical discourse analysis includes complex argumentative and rhetorical dimensions. The representation of the Turkish military operation made by the selected newspapers denotes power relations and an ideological struggle. In an article published on October 10, 2019, in the Left-wing newspaper Libération, a clear reference to power relations can be read:



“Deaf to international pressure, Turkey continues its offensive against the Kurds”. In power relations, international pressure is an obstacle to self-determination. Also, the negative representation of the Turkish military operation illustrates the tense relationships between Europe and The United States. On October 14, 2019, *Libération* highlighted: “The Kurds are forsaken by Washington”. On the same date, *Le Figaro* stressed: “The European Union condemns the Turkish military operation”.

Contrary to Monceau (2009) who found that the French right-wing was more reluctant to Turkey’s possible European Union membership, the present study observed a reverse trend. Compared to *Le Figaro*, *Libération* perceives the Turkish military operation more negatively. However, although they differ in their choices of words, both newspapers nourish the power relations and value-based conflict between France and Turkey through their negative representation of the military operation. In the thought of Van Dijk (1993), this media representation of the other denotes a consensus between the French left-wing and right-wing as regards the maintenance of imbalanced power relations.

As Wittel (2012) suggests, the dialectical analysis of media content should include Marxist concepts such as value and struggle. Thus, the presentation of the Kurds as the victim does not denote the media’s sympathy towards the Kurds. Since the Kurds do not make up a potential rival to Europe in power relations, they, therefore, cannot be the target of their media criticism. Instead, this media representation intends to intensify the polarization of Turkish society which can only turn in favor of Turkey’s enemies. This intention is illustrated in *Le Figaro* published on October 14, 2019: “In the long term, the deployment of Turkey’s troops on the country’s borders will fuel conflict on its land”. Moreover, the power relations and value-based conflicts depicted in the newspaper articles denote the fear of Turkey as a potential regional power. The military operation is defined in *Le Figaro* as “Turkey’s ambitions to assert its power within its regional space”. In *Libération*, the operation is viewed as “Turkey’s ambitions to crush its terrorist enemies”. It should be noted that, in all the newspaper articles selected for this research, the word terrorist and the phrase safe zone are enclosed in quotation marks. The newspapers express doubts as to whether YPG is a terrorist organization and deny that the Turkish military operation was aimed to bring peace to northern Syria. This editorial stance indicates the biased representation of Turkey’s military operation in the French media.

## Conclusion

This paper analyzed the representation of Turkey’s Operation Peace Spring in the French media. The media representation of a phenomenon is rooted in a discourse that hides power relations. The representation of Turkey’s Operation Peace Spring in the French media denotes power relations and value-based conflict between Turkey and Europe. These representations also indicate the role of the geopolitics of information in the production of media content. In power relations, media content is subjected to capital. As an instrument that serves the interest of capital, the media exercise a capacity to influence behavior and to maintain imbalanced power relations. The geopolitics of media and information makes up an imbalance in information circulation, a biased representation of non-Western countries, and information that supports the political agenda of Western countries.

Without being a breakthrough in the field of communication, this paper emphasizes the limits of the literature that addressed Turkey’s image in the western media. In general, the western media misrepresent the strained relationships between Turkey and western powers. The media representation of a phenomenon lies beyond the manifest content made of words, phrases, and sentences. Thus, the information conveyed by the media is perceived as a discourse which maintains power relations. The present analysis demonstrated the relevance of critical discourse analysis to decipher these power relations between Turkey and its European counterparts. Considering that these strained relationships are rooted in media discourse, this discourse becomes a field of exploration for social scientists. Many social scientists perform content analysis within a structural grid. The structural analysis of content is of great importance yet limited as it overlooks the paralinguistic dimensions of words. By

relying on the critical discourse analysis, which is intertwined with the critical political economy of the media, this paper unveiled the meaning hidden behind the manifest representation of the Turkish military operation in the French media.

In conclusion, this critical analysis of the representation of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring may draw attention to the persistence of biased information in the globalized world. This paper offers an alternative understanding of the relationship between Turkey and Europe. Although the European countries may differ on many matters, they express great solidarity when facing a non-European country. The idealization of Europe is often expressed through an anti-Americanism. Previous studies indicate that the non-Europeanness of Turkey is one of the reasons for the negative European perceptions of this country. Thus, the social implications of this paper stem from highlighting the persistence of biased information that maintains unequal power relations.

Despite the dependability of this research, it remains limited in scope and in time. Investigating power relations through discourse requires a greater scope and a lot of time. Due to time constraints, the researcher selected a small sample from a significant universe. However, the research findings may act as a springboard for future research. Since this paper focused only on Newspapers, future research should include radio, television, and social media. In the dynamics of power relations, social media makes up a fruitful field for investigation. Besides, research using various methodologies and theoretical frameworks should be conducted to obtain more layered and comparative findings regarding Turkey's image in the French media. Turkey's Operation Peace Spring denotes only one aspect of the complex power relations between Turkey and Europe.

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### Genişletilmiş Özet

Kitle iletişim araçlarının ekonomi politiği temel olarak dengesiz iktidar ilişkilerini sürdüren medya içeriğine odaklanır. Bu nedenle, medya içeriğine politik-ekonomik yaklaşım, manipülasyonla sosyal ilişkileri azaltan temel ve üstyapı modeline dayanmaktadır. Aksine, medyanın klasik ekonomi politiği medya içeriğini işlevselci bir perspektif içinde görür. Böylece, medya içeriği istikrarlı sosyal ilişkilerin sürdürülmesine katılır ve iletişim, politikaya ve ekonomiye hizmet eden basit bir araç olarak kabul edilmektedir. Ayrıca, bu yaklaşım medya içeriğini eleştirel olarak analiz etmediği için, Batılı olmayan ülkelerle ilgili taraflı haberinin arkasına saklanan güç ilişkilerini ortaya koyamamaktadır. Türkiye'nin Avrupa medyasında imajını ele alan çalışmalar sınırlı kalmaktadır. Türkiye'nin batı medyasında imajını ele alan az sayıda araştırma, medya temsillerinin arkasına saklanan güç ilişkilerini açıklayamamıştır. Bu makale Türkiye'nin Barış Pınarı Harekâtı'nın Fransız medyasında temsilini incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. İletişimin eleştirel ekonomi politiğini ve içerik analiziyle eleştirel söylem çözümlemesini içeren nitel karma yöntemin kullanıldığı bu çalışma, Türk askeri operasyonunun açık medya temsillerinin arkasına saklanan gizli güç ilişkilerini ve değere dayalı çatışmayı yeniden yapılandırmıştır. Bu çalışmada iki Fransız gazetesi olan Le Figaro ve Libération örneği kullanılmıştır. Araştırma bulguları, Fransız medyasının Türkiye'nin Barış Pınarı Harekâtı'nı olumsuz temsil ettiğini göstermektedir. Araştırmacı, Le Figaro'nun Türk askeri operasyonunu nasıl temsil ettiğine dair beş tema belirlemiştir: 1) Kürtlere karşı Türk bir silahlı operasyonu, 2) Yaklaşık otuz askeri hizipten oluşan heterojen bir koalisyon, 3) Avrupa Birliği tarafından kınanmış askeri bir operasyon, 4) Gelecekteki bir bölgesel çatışma ve istikrarsızlık kaynağı, 5) Türkiye'nin gücünü bölgesel alanına dayatma arzusu. Libération gazetesinde de beş ana tema belirlenmiştir: 1) Türkiye'nin düşmanlarını yok etme tutkusu, 2) Washington tarafından terk edilmiş Kürtler, 3) İyi planlanmış bir saldırı, 4) Çok çeşitli kuvvetler içeren bir operasyon, 5) Uluslararası toplum tarafından oybirliğiyle kınanmış bir operasyon. Bulgulara göre, Le Figaro sağcı muhafazakar bir gazete olmasına rağmen ve Libération sol kanatlı bir gazete olmasına rağmen, her iki gazete de Türk askeri harekâtını olumsuz olarak temsil etmektedir. Türk askeri operasyonunun bu olumsuz temsillerinin nedeni, basit bir içerik analizinin ötesindedir. Bu makale medya içeriğinin arkasında bir baskı mantığı olduğunu varsaymıştır. Böylece gazetelerin Türk askeri operasyonunu temsil etmesinin eleştirel bir söylem analizi yapılmıştır. Seçilen gazete makalelerinin eleştirel söylem analizi, Türk askeri operasyonunun Fransız medyası tarafından olumsuz temsil edilmesinin Türkiye ile Avrupa arasındaki dengesiz iktidar ilişkilerini besleyen bir söylem oluşturduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Bu iktidar ilişkileri, Türk askeri operasyonunun Fransız medyasında önyargılı bir temsiliyle ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bu taraflı temsil, Türkiye'nin Avrupa'daki olumsuz algılarının güçlendirilmesine yol açmaktadır. Eleştirel söylem analizi, uluslararası ilişkilerdeki bilgi jeopolitiğinin önemini de ortaya koymuştur. Seçilen gazeteler, Avrupa'nın oybirliğiyle Türk askeri operasyonunu kınadığını ve Türkiye'nin kendi bölgesindeki gücünü empoze etmek istediğini iddia etmişler. Medya ve haberin jeopolitiği bilgi dolaşımında bir dengesizlik, Batılı olmayan ülkelerin taraflı bir temsili ve Batılı ülkelerin siyasi gündemini destekleyen bilgilerdir. İletişim alanında bir atılım olmadan, bu çalışma Türkiye'nin batı

medyasında imajını ele alan literatürün sınırlarını vurgulamaktadır. Mevcut analiz, Batılı güçlerin Batılı olmayan ülkelerin olumsuz medya temsili yoluyla egemenliklerini nasıl sürdürdüklerini anlamak için eleştirel söylem analizinin uygunluđunu göstermiştir. Türk askeri operasyonunun temsili bir medya söylemiyle yapıldığından, bu söylem sosyal bilimciler için bir keşif alanı oluşturmaktadır. Türkiye'nin Barış Pınarı Harekâtı'nın temsili hakkındaki bu eleştirel analiz, küreselleşmiş dünyada taraflı bilgilerin devam etmesine dikkat çekebilir. Bu araştırmanın güvenilirliğine rağmen, kapsam ve zamanda sınırlı kalmaktadır. İktidar ilişkilerini söylem yoluyla arařtırmak daha geniş bir kapsam ve çok zaman gerektirir. Ancak, araştırma bulguları gelecekteki arařtırmalar için bir sıçrama tahtası görevi görebilir. Bu makale sadece gazetelere odaklandığından, gelecekteki arařtırmalar radyo, televizyon ve sosyal medyayı içermelidir. İktidar ilişkilerinin dinamiklerinde, sosyal medya verimli bir araştırma alanı oluşturur. Ayrıca, Türkiye'nin Fransız mediasında imajıyla ilgili daha katmanlı ve karşılaştırmalı bulgular elde etmek için çeşitli metodolojiler ve teorik çerçeveler kullanılarak arařtırmalar yapılmalıdır. Türkiye'nin Barış Pınarı Harekâtı'nın olumsuz temsili, Türkiye ve Avrupa arasındaki karmaşık iktidar ilişkilerinin sadece bir yönünü göstermektedir.