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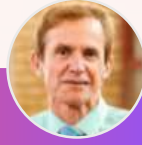
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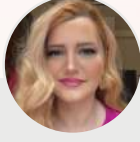


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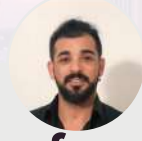
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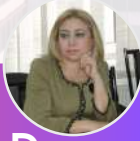
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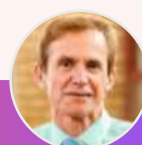
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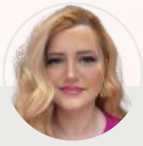
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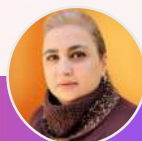
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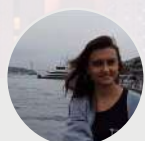
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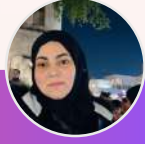
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15th INTERNATIONAL NEW YORK

ACADEMIC RESEARCH CONGRESS ON SOCIAL, HUMANITIES, ADMINISTRATIVE, AND EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES



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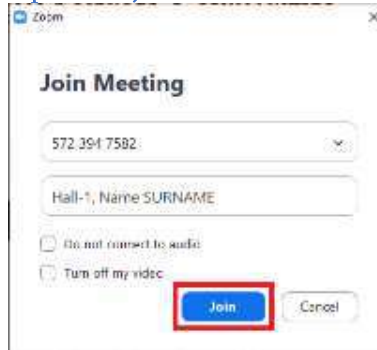
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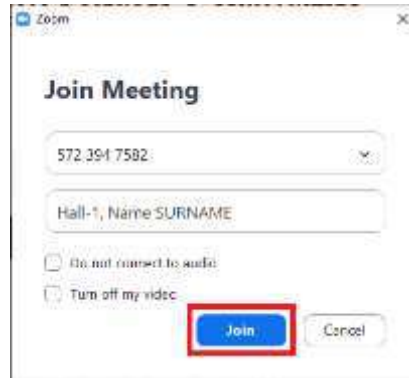
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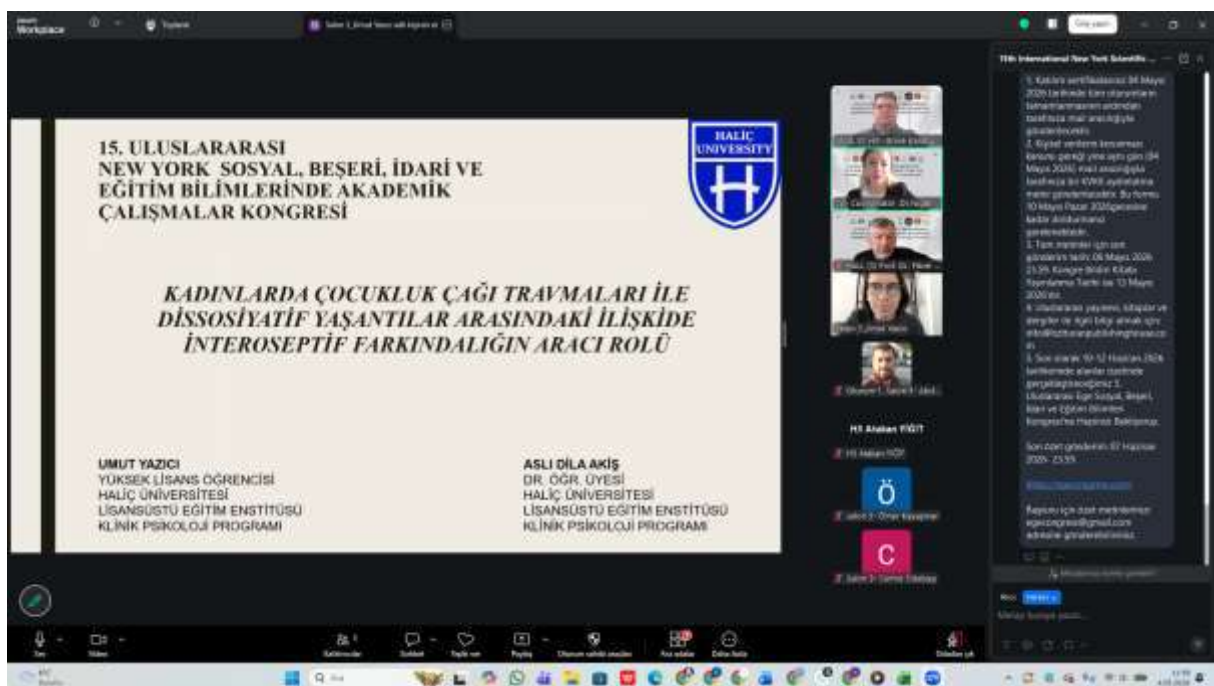
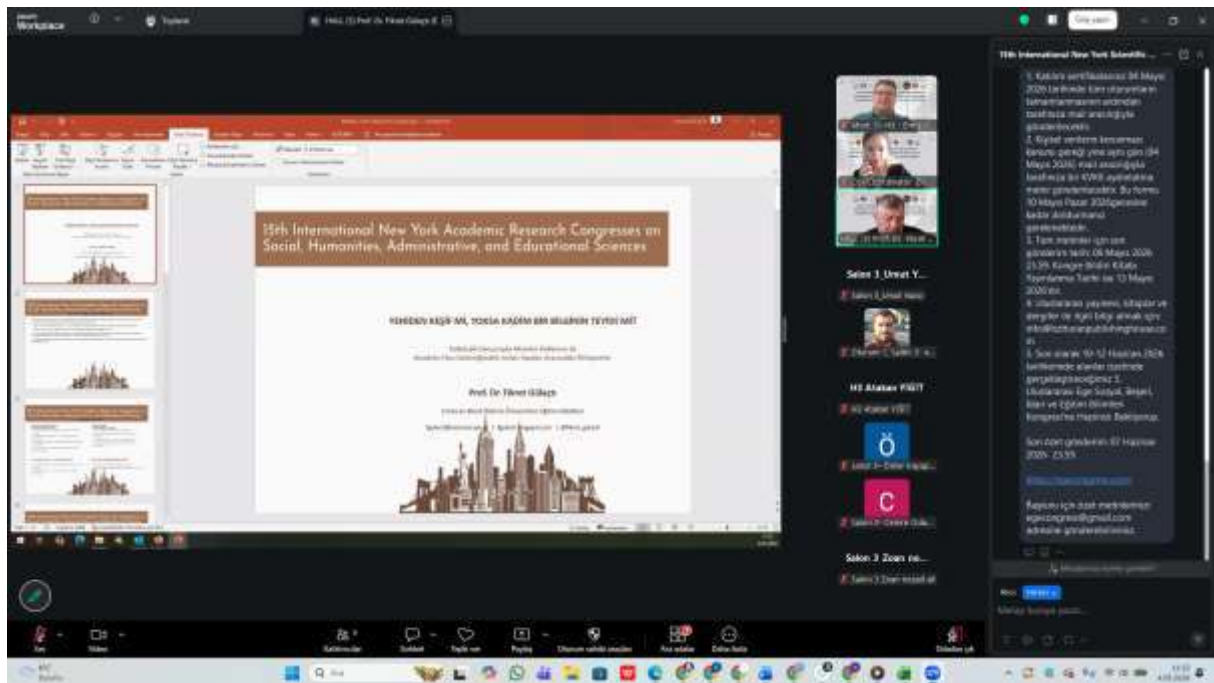
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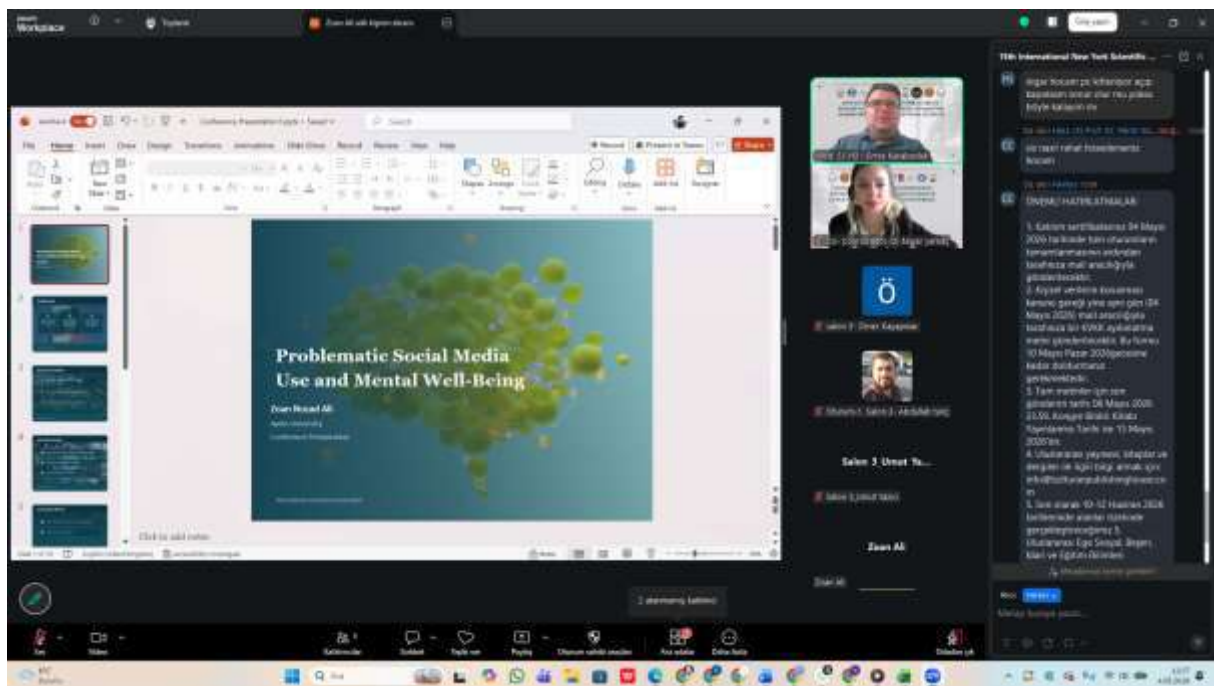
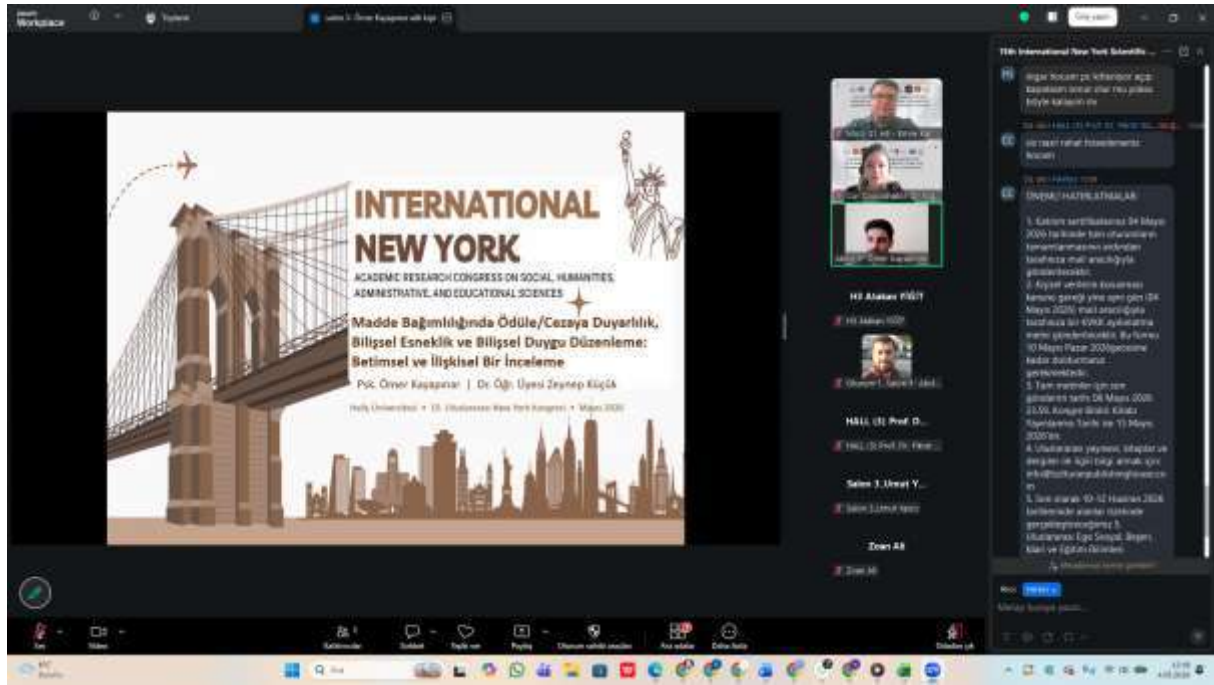
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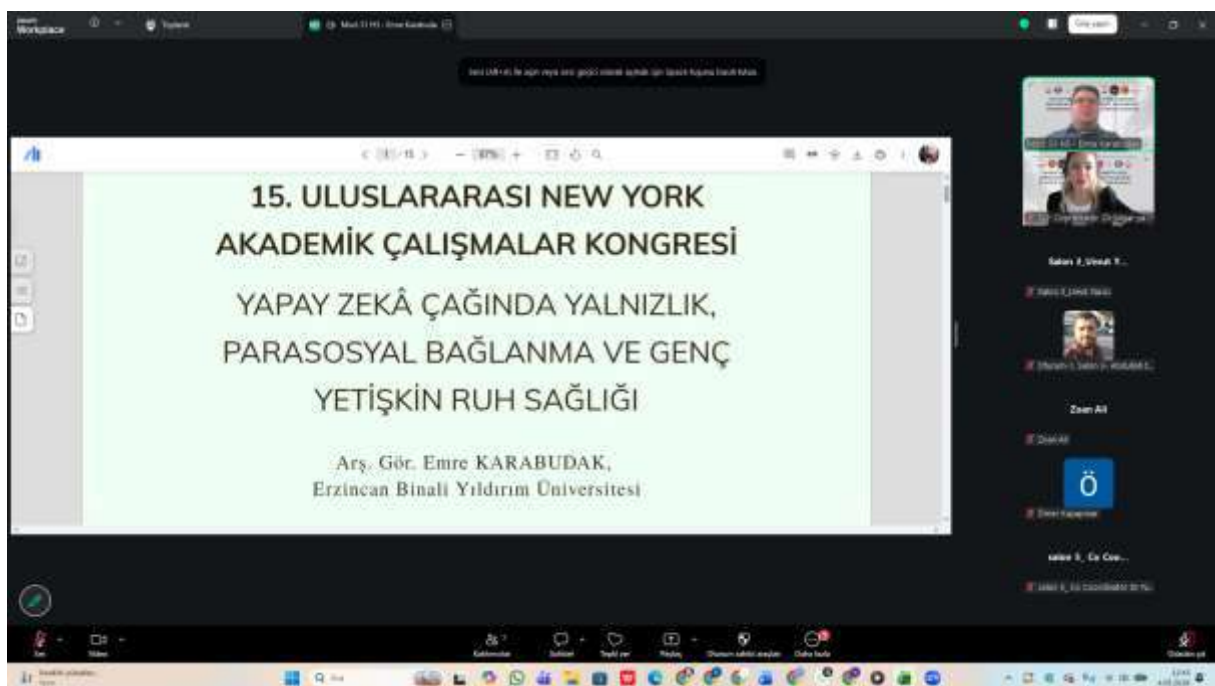
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A REDISCOVERY OR A CONFIRMATION OF ANCIENT WISDOM? THE OVERLAPS BETWEEN THE USE OF
METAPHOR IN PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING AND NARRATIVE STRUCTURES IN THE ANATOLIAN
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Prof. Dr. Fikret GÜLAÇTI

Erzincan Binali Yıldırım University, Faculty of Education

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3200-1994>

ABSTRACT

This study aims to comparatively examine the increasing use of therapeutic metaphors in psychological counseling and psychotherapy in relation to the narrative structures embedded in the Anatolian wisdom tradition. In contemporary counseling approaches, metaphor is considered a powerful intervention tool that helps clients make sense of internal experiences, gain psychological distance, externalize problems, and develop new frameworks of meaning. Cognitive behavioral therapy, acceptance and commitment therapy, narrative therapy, solution-focused brief therapy, and existential-humanistic approaches all employ metaphor as a central mechanism of therapeutic change. However, the historical continuity between these contemporary metaphor-based practices and the long-standing narrative heritage of Anatolia has received limited scholarly attention.

The theoretical framework of the study is based on Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory, Jung's archetypal psychology, and White and Epston's Narrative Therapy model. Within this framework, the narratives of Dede Korkut, Keloğlan folktales, the poetry of Yunus Emre, and the guidance tradition of Akşemsettin were analyzed through a comparative qualitative approach. The study specifically focused on parallels between contemporary therapeutic functions of metaphor and similar psychological mechanisms found in traditional Anatolian narratives.

Findings indicate that the major functions of therapeutic metaphor—indirect communication, bypassing resistance, creating safe narrative distance, separating the person from the problem (externalization), reframing, generating hope, and accessing collective reservoirs of wisdom—are systematically present within the Anatolian wisdom tradition. The role of Dede Korkut as an external witness and wise guide, the transformation of disadvantage into strength in Keloğlan tales, the reinterpretation of suffering as a path to meaning in Yunus Emre's poetry, and the holistic mentorship model represented by Akşemsettin all demonstrate strong structural similarities with modern counseling practices.

In conclusion, the study argues that the use of metaphor in modern counseling is not entirely a new discovery; rather, many of its core functions have long existed in the cultural memory of Anatolia through narrative forms transmitted across generations. Therefore, incorporating local narrative resources into counselor education, developing culturally responsive counseling models, and conducting empirical studies on the psychological impact of such narratives are strongly recommended.

Keywords: metaphor, wisdom, culturally responsive psychological counseling

1. INTRODUCTION

A psychological counselor describes a tree that bends in a storm but does not lose its roots to a client overwhelmed by anxiety. Another counselor reframes the situation in which a client feels stuck with the metaphor of 'walking in the middle of a narrow tunnel.' Yet another positions an individual wrestling with the search for meaning as the author of their own story. These images emerge from contemporary psychology clinics; but at their core, the same images were voiced by minstrels in Anatolian village squares centuries ago, shared by sages at dervish lodge gatherings, and transmitted across generations through folk tales.

The use of metaphor in psychological counseling and psychotherapy has become a focal point of both theoretical and applied interest in recent years. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), narrative therapy, solution-focused brief therapy (SFBT), acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT), and existential-humanistic approaches all adopt metaphor as one of the central mechanisms of therapeutic change. However, the question of whether this 'new' interest carries a profound continuity with the Anatolian wisdom tradition—shaped over centuries—has not been sufficiently addressed in academic platforms.

This article aims to answer this question within a comparative framework. The core claim is as follows: The functional building blocks of therapeutic metaphor used in modern psychological counseling—indirect communication, safe narrative distance, externalization, reframing, and meaning construction—have been practiced in the Anatolian wisdom tradition for centuries; however, this practice was realized not through the conceptual language of psychology, but through narrative, poetry, and the discourse of wisdom.

It should be emphasized that this observation carries more than mere historical or cultural value. Current discussions in the field of culturally responsive counseling demonstrate that integrating the therapeutic process with the client's cultural roots increases both effectiveness and continuity (Sue & Sue, 2016). In this context, systematically evaluating the Anatolian narrative tradition—which is deeply meaningful to Turkish clients—as a therapeutic resource holds significant importance both theoretically and clinically.

The article proceeds as follows: First, the theoretical and empirical foundations of therapeutic metaphor are addressed; then the narrative-metaphor structures of selected Anatolian figures are analyzed; finally, the points of convergence and divergence between the two traditions are discussed.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: THERAPEUTIC METAPHOR IN PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING

2.1. Cognitive and Linguistic Foundations of Metaphor

Metaphor was regarded for centuries as merely a rhetorical ornament. Lakoff and Johnson (1980), who created a fundamental rupture in this understanding with their work *Metaphors We Live By*, demonstrated that metaphor is not a linguistic phenomenon but a form of thought and experience. According to Conceptual Metaphor Theory, human beings make sense of abstract concepts—emotions, relationships, time, meaning—through the domain of concrete experience. Expressions such as 'argument is war,' 'healing is a journey,' and 'depression is a swamp' are not superficial similes; they are mental schemas that organize reality.

This framework produces extremely important implications for psychological counseling. The metaphors a client uses offer a direct window into the way they structure their inner world. When the therapist is able to discover and transform this metaphor, they work not merely with cognitive content, but with the deep schemas that organize experience (Sims, 2003). Kopp (1995) emphasizes that metaphors spontaneously generated by clients represent their inner world more accurately and safely than any interpretation produced by the therapist.

2.2. Functions of Metaphor in Psychological Counseling

Therapeutic metaphor serves multiple functions in the psychological counseling process. Burns (2005) lists these functions as follows: (a) bypassing resistance and defense mechanisms through indirect communication; (b) facilitating the client's access from within to their own resources for solutions; (c) conferring symbolic form upon experiences that are too complex or heavy to be put into words; (d) enabling events and relationships to be seen from a different perspective of meaning through reframing.

Within the framework of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Hayes et al. (1999) have empirically documented the role of metaphor in increasing psychological flexibility and resolving cognitive fusion. In the cognitive behavioral therapy tradition, Beck's (1979) practice of working with automatic thoughts is in close interaction with metaphorical reframing. In the existential-humanistic counseling tradition, meanwhile, metaphor is positioned as the primary tool of meaning-making (Frankl, 1963; Yalom, 1980).

In Ericksonian hypnotherapy, the capacity of metaphor to communicate directly with the unconscious mind is placed at the center. Haley (1973) analyzed Milton Erickson's indirect suggestion and storytelling techniques and demonstrated how metaphorical communication initiates deep psychic changes. This tradition arguably represents the contemporary therapy approach that stands closest to the functional mechanisms of the Anatolian storytelling tradition.

2.3. Narrative Therapy and the Transformative Power of Story

Narrative therapy, developed by Michael White and David Epston (1990), proceeds from the fundamental assumption that human beings construct their self and experience through stories. Within this framework, individuals are not merely persons experiencing problems; they are the authors of their own life stories. The therapeutic process is the process of placing alternative, strength-laden narratives alongside the dominant problem-saturated story.

Externalization, one of narrative therapy's fundamental techniques, positions the problem as an entity separate from the person's identity. The message 'You are not the problem itself; the problem is the relationship between you and the problem' prevents the client from identifying with the problem identity and facilitates psychological liberation. White's (2007) 'outsider witness' practice accelerates healing through a community or figure that listens to the client's story with dignity and gives meaning to that experience.

These techniques exhibit striking overlaps with structures in the Anatolian narrative tradition and therefore constitute a critical reference point in the comparative framework of this article.

2.4. Jung's Archetypal Theory: Universal Templates

Carl Gustav Jung (1968) proposed that the collective unconscious layer of the human psyche contains archetypes—universal images and motifs distilled from the common experience of humanity. The hero, the old wise man, the shadow, transformation, the journey—these archetypes are templates that pass from culture to culture in fairy tales, myths, religious narratives, and dreams. According to Jung, the therapeutic process facilitates integration (individuation) in the individual's psyche through these archetypes.

Joseph Campbell (1949) expanded this framework with the concept of the monomyth. The universality of the departure-trial-return schema found in heroic narratives across different cultures of the world directly overlaps with the structure of the therapeutic process: the client 'sets out' to confront a problem, passes through a process of transformation, and returns with a new understanding of selfhood. The Anatolian narrative tradition has used this schema consciously or unconsciously in a systematic manner.

3. NARRATIVE AND METAPHOR IN THE ANATOLIAN WISDOM TRADITION: FOUR KEY FIGURES

3.1. Dede Korkut: The Therapeutic Discourse of the Wise Bard

The Dede Korkut narratives are one of the most fundamental building blocks of oral culture that spread from the Central Asian Turkish tradition to Anatolia. This corpus, consisting of twelve epic narratives, reflects the collective memory, value system, and existential questions of the Oghuz people. However, assuming that these texts possess a purely epic character conceals the psychological depth they contain.

The figure of Dede Korkut assumes both the role of bard and wise counselor simultaneously in the narratives. The formulaic phrase 'My grandfather Korkut came, told the boy's tale, told the clan's tale' signals that he comes into play as a meaning-maker and witness at every critical existential turning point. This structure overlaps in a striking manner with the outsider witness practice in modern narrative therapy (White, 2007): a figure that holds the client's experience with dignity, gives it voice, and makes this experience visible within the community.

The symbolic images in the narratives also carry therapeutic function. The motifs of the mountain, the water source, the horse, exile, and return create a distance that is functionally analogous to the psychic distance created by the contemporary therapist's externalization technique. Considered in the context of the Tepegöz figure, a threatening and overwhelming force—internal or external—is named, shaped, and thereby tamed through story. This structure can be read as the narrative precursor of the cognitive defusion technique in ACT: establishing a distanced relationship with a thought or fear by 'objectifying' it.

Dede Korkut's approach to the fundamental existential questions of humankind—death, loss, honor, guilt, and identity—through an oral healing ritual also runs parallel to shamanic healing practices (Eliade, 1964). Viewed from an anthropological perspective, the story-telling of the shaman and the narrative work of the contemporary therapist are forms of symbolic intervention that differ in method but are similar in function.

3.2. Keloğlan: Reframing and the Transformation of Power

Keloğlan is one of the most original figures in Anatolian Turkish folk tales. This hero, who is disadvantaged in appearance and occupies the lowest rung of the social hierarchy, ultimately achieves success through his intelligence, authenticity, and virtue. While this structure may appear simple on a discursive level, it contains extremely rich content in psychological analysis.

Viewed from Jung's collective unconscious perspective, Keloğlan is a manifestation of humanity's shared 'potential self' archetype. The tension between persona (social mask) and authentic self is made visible through the contrast between Keloğlan's unattractive exterior and his wise interior. This reading directly touches upon the work conducted by contemporary counseling psychologists on self-discrepancy (Higgins, 1987).

The most distinctive therapeutic function of Keloğlan tales is reframing. In every tale, a characteristic or situation that appears clearly disadvantageous—baldness, poverty, social exclusion—transforms into a resource, a strength, as the story progresses. This structure can be read as the narrative precursor of 'exception finding' and 'resource amplification' techniques within the solution-focused brief therapy (de Shazer, 1985) framework. This approach—which liberates the client from a fixed problem identity and foregrounds their potential—has been practiced in Keloğlan tales for centuries.

Keloğlan's journey, moreover, is an almost direct application of Campbell's monomyth schema—departure, trial, return. This structure, which accompanies the client's metaphorical journey in every tale, forms the narrative skeleton of the therapeutic process.

3.3. Yunus Emre: Metaphorical Language and Psychological Transformation

Yunus Emre (1241–1321) is one of the pinnacles of Anatolian Turkish Sufi poetry. The symbolic language he employs in his poems—water, fire, the heart, suffering, love, journey, death, and resurrection—is not merely the expression of mystical exaltation; it is the vehicle of a systematic pedagogy oriented toward transforming the human inner world.

When Yunus's metaphor of 'suffering' (*dert*) is examined from a contemporary psychology perspective, it produces an extremely sophisticated meaning. In the Sufi tradition, suffering is not illness; it is the gateway to deepening, maturation, and the acquisition of meaning (Çınar & Kaya, 2023). This understanding overlaps to a surprising degree with the principle of existential psychotherapy of reframing symptoms as meaning-bearing messages (Frankl, 1963; Yalom, 1980). The transformative potential of suffering—that is, post-traumatic growth (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004)—is a concept recently named in contemporary positive psychology; but it has lived in Yunus's poetry for centuries.

The heart (*gönül*) assumes a central function in Yunus's poetry. The verse 'If you have broken a heart even once, this prayer you perform is nothing' articulates the principle of unconditional positive regard (Rogers, 1951) at the core of contemporary therapeutic relationship understanding as a moral imperative. The heart metaphor can also be read as an integrative psychic space where consciousness and the unconscious, reason and emotion converge—a conceptualization structurally similar to Jung's ego-Self axis.

Yunus, who masterfully renders the Sufi concept of '*hal*' (spiritual state)—which overlaps with Maslow's peak experiences—into poetry, also addresses the cognitive, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of psychological healing in an integrative manner. This integrative understanding resonates deeply with the contemporary biopsychosocial-spiritual counseling model (Engel, 1977; Pargament, 2011).

The metaphor of '*sohbet*' (spiritual conversation) also carries a distinct therapeutic depth in Yunus's poetry. As a Sufi concept, *sohbet* is not merely talking; it is a state of spiritual contact and togetherness. This understanding is in structural accordance with current research that places the therapeutic alliance at the center of its decisive role in healing (Norcross, 2011; Lambert & Barley, 2001).

3.4. Akşemsettin: Integrated Guidance and the Practice of Irshad

Akşemsettin (1389–1459) was a scholar, Sufi, and physician of great historical importance who lived in the early Ottoman period and served as the spiritual guide of Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror. In his work *Mâddetü'l-Hayât*, Akşemsettin offered an extraordinarily advanced definition of microbial disease for

his era, while also presenting the portrait of a physician-guide who strongly emphasized the unity of body and soul in his understanding of treatment.

Akşemsettin's guidance approach bears notable similarities to contemporary counseling supervision models. In the student-master (murid-murshid) relationship, knowledge is transmitted not only through discourse but through experience, observation, and modeling. This tripartite learning structure— theoretical knowledge, observational learning, and experiential integration—structurally overlaps with the didactic, observation, and supervision stages of contemporary counselor education.

The triad articulated by Hacı Bektaş Veli—'ilme'l-yakîn, ayne'l-yakîn, hakka'l-yakîn' (learning through knowledge, through observation, and through internalization)—summarizes this epistemology in a systematic manner. This triad exhibits a functional parallel with Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle—concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, active experimentation.

Akşemsettin's integrated guidance practice is an Anatolian version—functioning centuries earlier—of psychological counseling models that address the client across cognitive, emotional, bodily, and spiritual dimensions, particularly integrative approaches.

4. STRUCTURAL AND FUNCTIONAL OVERLAPS: ANCIENT WISDOM AND CONTEMPORARY PRACTICE

4.1. Indirect Communication and Bypassing Defenses

Managing resistance is one of the fundamental professional competencies in psychological counseling. Metaphorical or story-based communication helps to deactivate the defense mechanisms that direct speech might trigger (Burns, 2005). In the Ericksonian tradition, this has been conceptualized as 'indirect suggestion': making contact with the unconscious by bypassing the door of the conscious mind (Haley, 1973).

The Anatolian wisdom tradition has adopted indirect communication as a structural preference. The hero in a Keloğlan tale is never 'you'; yet the listener finds the opportunity to identify with their own experience through this distance. In Yunus's poetry, things too deep to be said are spoken through the metaphors of water, fire, and the heart. In the epics of Dede Korkut, critical existential matters—fear of death, the pain of separation, the loss of honor—are not placed directly upon the listener; they are transmitted through the hero's journey.

4.2. Externalization: Separating the Problem from Identity

Externalization, one of the fundamental techniques of narrative therapy, addresses the problem not with the essence of the person but with the relationship the person maintains with the problem. The framework 'The problem is not your personality; it is the power relationship between you and the problem' enables the client to shed the problem identity and become an agent (White & Epston, 1990).

This function operates systematically in Anatolian narratives. Tepegöz in Dede Korkut; giants and monsters in Keloğlan; the 'self' (nefis) figure in Yunus—"There is a self within me deeper than myself"—all are externalized representations of a dark, oppressive, or destructive force within the human being. This representation makes it psychologically possible to struggle against, negotiate with, and transform that force.

4.3. Reframing: From Symptom to Meaning

Cognitive behavioral therapy and solution-focused brief therapy accept the capacity to interpret events and experiences from a different perspective—reframing—as one of the fundamental mechanisms of therapeutic change (Beck, 1979; de Shazer, 1985). In existential psychotherapy, this mechanism is taken to a further dimension, becoming the core of the meaning-making process (Frankl, 1963).

In the Anatolian wisdom tradition, reframing operates at both structural and linguistic levels. The transformation of disadvantage into strength in Keloğlan is a structural reframing. The notion in Yunus that suffering is the gateway to maturation is a linguistic-conceptual reloading of meaning. Hacı Bektaş's likening of ignorance to 'darkness' and presenting wisdom as the only light is a metaphorical application of cognitive restructuring. Common to each example is the following: pain, problem, or limitation is positioned not as a fixed reality but as part of a process of transformation.

4.4. Therapeutic Relationship and the Ethics of Spiritual Conversation

Research consistently demonstrates that the therapeutic alliance is one of the most powerful factors determining outcomes in psychological counseling (Norcross, 2011; Lambert & Barley, 2001). Rogers's (1951) triad of unconditional positive regard, empathy, and genuineness constitutes the theoretical foundation of this alliance.

In the Anatolian wisdom tradition, this ethical dimension has been internalized not as a technical skill but as a moral imperative. Yunus's ethics of the heart, the ideal of the guide who 'knows the seeker' in Hacı Bektaş, and the witnessing position of Dede Korkut as one who speaks in the presence of all the people of the clan—all articulate, through a different discourse, the respect for the human being and integrated acceptance at the core of the contemporary therapeutic relationship.

4.5. Access to the Pool of Collective Wisdom: Cultural Healing

The culturally responsive therapy movement demands that the therapeutic process be sensitive to the client's cultural identity, values, and narrative tradition (Sue & Sue, 2016). Incorporating cultural narratives into the therapy process has become a concrete intervention tool within this framework.

However, Western-origin therapy models often require subsequently attached cultural 'add-ons' for cultural integration. The Anatolian wisdom tradition, by contrast, has internalized its therapeutic function at a structural and ontological level. The Keloğlan narrative or the verses of Yunus already constitute an internalized frame of reference for Turkish clients. This substantially reduces the

psychological resistance of therapeutic intervention and facilitates meaning transfer in a deeply rooted manner.

Peseschkian (1982) observed that Oriental stories create a much faster and more lasting effect than Western techniques in working with personality and family dynamics in psychotherapy. This finding suggests that the therapeutic 'bandwidth' of narratives rooted in cultural origin may be broader than that of Western-origin metaphors.

5. DISCUSSION: A REDISCOVERY OR A NEW NAMING?

The comparative framework presented in this article answers our fundamental question as follows: The structural, functional, and psychological principles of therapeutic metaphor use in contemporary psychological counseling practice are systematically and implicitly present in the Anatolian wisdom tradition. However, characterizing this state as a 'rediscovery' is not entirely accurate either; for this knowledge was never lost. It has continued to live, across generations, in the narrative and discursive practices of mothers, grandmothers, bards, sheikhs, and teachers.

More aptly put: modern psychology is renaming ancient wisdom through a different epistemological language. Concepts such as 'therapeutic metaphor,' 'externalization,' 'reframing,' 'therapeutic alliance,' and 'safe narrative distance' are essentially versions—rendered into the language of contemporary psychology—of Dede Korkut's recounting of tales, Keloğlan's transformation of power, Yunus's poetic healing of the heart, and Hacı Bektaş's philosophy of integrated education.

It is necessary to acknowledge that this observation carries a risk of reductionism. Modern psychology offers unique and indispensable contributions that Anatolian wisdom does not provide, particularly in terms of experimental methods, measurement validity, intervention protocols, and the systematic monitoring of the therapy process. Claiming to equate the two traditions would be both epistemically erroneous and practically misleading. The position this article advocates is more modest and integrative: the mutual enrichment of the two traditions.

The practical meaning of this enrichment is as follows: Psychological counselors working in the Turkish context can evaluate the Anatolian wisdom tradition both as a narrative reservoir they are already using at an unconscious level and as a deliberate therapeutic tool. A metaphor or story reference that touches the client's cultural roots can create a far deeper resonance than a 'neutral' Western metaphor. This reality produces important outcomes both for increasing clinical effectiveness and for cultural identity reinforcement.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This article has demonstrated that the functional infrastructure of the therapeutic metaphor techniques used in psychological counseling exhibits a profound overlap with the fundamental narrative structures of the Anatolian wisdom tradition. The wise-bard discourse and outsider witness function of Dede

Korkut, the power transformation and reframing dynamics of Keloğlan tales, the metaphorical healing language and ethics of the heart of Yunus Emre, and the integrated guidance practice of Akşemsettin have all sustained and transmitted—centuries ago—therapeutic functions such as indirect communication, externalization, reframing, therapeutic relationship, and access to the cultural pool of wisdom.

The applied reflections of these findings can be summarized as follows: First, content related to the therapeutic dimension of the Anatolian narrative tradition should be systematically incorporated into undergraduate and graduate psychological counseling education programs. Second, empirical research should be conducted on utilizing sources such as Dede Korkut, Keloğlan, and Yunus Emre in developing culturally responsive counseling models in the Turkish context. Third, qualitative and mixed-method studies should be conducted examining the extent to which these narratives serve a therapeutic function in specific psychological problems—anxiety, loss of meaning, identity confusion, and grief. Finally, interdisciplinary research partnerships between psychological counseling and guidance departments and Turkish language and literature departments should be encouraged.

The meeting point of modern psychological knowledge and Anatolian wisdom offers a ground that is both scientifically productive and culturally honoring. To walk on this ground is not merely an academic choice; it is also a responsibility toward the field of cultural psychology.

ETHICAL STATEMENT

This study is a review and theoretical analysis in nature and is not an experimental study involving human participants. There is no conflict of interest.

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SEVGİLİ/EŞE YABANCILAŞMA SENDROMU (SYS): ETİMOLOJİ, OLUŞUM SÜRECİ, SEMPTOMATOLOJİ VE GÜNCEL PSİKOTERAPİ YAKLAŞIMLARIYLA KAPSAMLI BİR KAVRAMSAL ÇERÇEVE

Prof. Dr. Fikret GÜLAÇTI

Erzincan Binali Yıldırım Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3200-1994>

Özet

Bu çalışma, romantik ilişki ya da evlilik içinde bulunan bir bireyin partneri nesnel olarak belirgin biçimde değişmemiş olmasına rağmen, ona ilişkin duygu, düşünce, anlamlandırma ve değer yargılarında sistematik bir olumsuz dönüşüm yaşadığı özgün klinik tabloyu “Sevgili/Eşe Yabancılaşma Sendromu (SYS)” kavramı altında ele almaktadır. Çalışmanın temel amacı, mevcut literatürde dağınık biçimde bulunan ilişki doyumsuzluğu, duygusal kopukluk, bağlanma sorunları, hedonik adaptasyon ve bilişsel yeniden değerlendirme süreçlerini bütüncül bir çerçevede birleştirerek yeni bir kavramsallaştırma sunmaktır. Bu doğrultuda makale, SYS’nin felsefi, sosyolojik ve psikolojik kökenlerini tartışmakta; özellikle yabancılaşma kavramının Hegel, Marx ve Seeman çizgisindeki tarihsel gelişimini ilişkisel psikoloji bağlamında yeniden yorumlamaktadır.

SYS, yalnızca partnerden sıkılma ya da ilişki çatışması olarak değil; bireyin birlikte kurduğu ortak anlam dünyasına, geçmiş yatırımına ve ilişki içindeki benlik konumuna yabancılaşması olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Çalışmada sendromun üç temel bileşeni öne çıkarılmaktadır: bilişsel yeniden çerçeveleme (partneri olumsuz yorumlama eğilimi), duygusal çekilme (yakınlık ve ilgi kaybı) ve anlamsal çöküş (ilişkinin neden sürdürüldüğünü sorgulama). Buna ek olarak SYS’nin gelişimsel süreci beş evrede açıklanmaktadır: sessiz birikim, yorumlama kayması, duygusal geri çekilme, anlam çöküşü ve karar/dengenin yeniden kurulması.

Makale, romantik ilişkiler ile evlilik bağlamlarını birbirinden ayırarak özgül tetikleyicileri de tartışmaktadır. Romantik ilişkilerde kimlik dönüşümü, idealleştirmeden gerçekliğe geçiş ve beklenti asimetrisi ön plandayken; evliliklerde rol katılaşması, ebeveynlik yükleri, cinselliğin dönüşümü, ekonomik bağımlılık ve toplumsal baskılar daha belirleyici görülmektedir. Böylelikle SYS’nin yalnızca bireysel değil, aynı zamanda yapısal ve kültürel boyutlar taşıdığı vurgulanmaktadır.

Kuramsal açıklama kısmında bağlanma kuramı, kendilik psikolojisi, bilişsel tutarlılık modelleri, hedonik adaptasyon yaklaşımı ve öyküsel psikoloji perspektiflerinden yararlanılmıştır. Müdahale bölümünde ise çok aşamalı bir psikoterapi modeli önerilmektedir. Bu model; ilk aşamada değerlendirme

ve psikoeğitimi, ikinci aşamada Kabul ve Kararlılık Terapisi ile psikolojik esnekliği, üçüncü aşamada Bilişsel Davranışçı Terapi ile çarpıtılmış düşüncelerin yeniden yapılandırılmasını, son aşamada ise Öyküsel Terapi ile ilişkinin anlatsal yeniden inşasını içermektedir. Sonuç olarak çalışma, SYS'nin klinik uygulama ve ilişki psikolojisi literatürü açısından yeni bir tartışma alanı sunduğunu ileri sürmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: yabancılaşma, romantik ilişkiler, evlilik, bağlanma, çift terapisi

PARTNER/SPOUSAL ALIENATION SYNDROME (PAS): A COMPREHENSIVE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK INCLUDING ETYMOLOGY, DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS, SYMPTOMATOLOGY, AND CURRENT PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC APPROACHES

Abstract

This study introduces the concept of Partner/Spousal Alienation Syndrome (PAS/SYS) to describe a distinctive clinical phenomenon in which an individual undergoes a systematic negative transformation in feelings, thoughts, meanings, and value judgments toward a romantic partner or spouse, despite the partner not having objectively changed in any substantial way. The main aim of the paper is to provide an integrative conceptual framework that brings together fragmented constructs in the literature such as relationship dissatisfaction, emotional detachment, attachment-related difficulties, hedonic adaptation, and cognitive reappraisal. In doing so, the study reinterprets the philosophical, sociological, and psychological roots of alienation—particularly through the traditions of Hegel, Marx, and Seeman—within the context of intimate relationships.

PAS is conceptualized not merely as boredom or relational conflict, but as alienation from the shared world of meaning co-constructed within the relationship, from prior emotional investments, and from one's own relational self-position. The syndrome is described through three core components: cognitive reframing (a tendency to reinterpret the partner negatively), emotional withdrawal (loss of intimacy, warmth, and interest), and collapse of meaning (questioning why the relationship should continue). In addition, the developmental trajectory of the syndrome is presented in five phases: silent accumulation, interpretive shift, affective withdrawal, collapse of meaning, and restoration of equilibrium or decision-making.

The article differentiates between romantic relationships and marriage by identifying context-specific triggers. In dating relationships, identity transformation, the transition from idealization to reality, and asymmetry of expectations are highlighted as major antecedents. In marriage, role rigidity, parenting burdens, sexual transformation, economic interdependence, and social or religious pressures are emphasized as more central factors. Accordingly, the study argues that PAS is not solely an intrapsychic phenomenon but also one shaped by structural and cultural forces.

Theoretical explanations are drawn from attachment theory, self-psychology, cognitive consistency models, hedonic adaptation frameworks, and narrative psychology. Based on these perspectives, the paper proposes a multi-stage psychotherapy model. The first phase focuses on assessment and psychoeducation; the second employs Acceptance and Commitment Therapy to foster psychological flexibility and value-based action; the third uses Cognitive Behavioral Therapy to restructure distorted interpretations and automatic thoughts; and the final phase applies Narrative Therapy to reconstruct the relational story and identity.

In conclusion, the study suggests that PAS offers a novel conceptual lens for understanding hidden relational deterioration and may contribute meaningfully to future clinical practice, couple therapy, and relationship psychology research.

Keywords: alienation, romantic relationships, marriage, attachment, couple therapy, psychotherapy