

# Reception of Elif Shafak's Selected Works in Different Cultural and Linguistics Context

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study explores the reception of Elif Shafak's selected works, particularly "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World" and "The Island of Missing Trees," across diverse cultural and linguistic contexts. Elif Shafak, an acclaimed Turkish-British author, delves into themes of identity, belonging, and societal norms, inviting readers to navigate through the complexities of human experience. Employing a comparative analysis approach, this research investigates how Shafak's narratives resonate with readers from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds, examining the nuances of interpretation, reception, and translation. Through a syndissertation of literary criticism, reception theory, and cultural studies, this study illuminates the ways in which Shafak's storytelling transcends linguistic barriers and fosters cross-cultural dialogue. By engaging with the reception of Shafak's works, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the intersections between literature, culture, and identity in an increasingly interconnected world.

## **Chapter I- Introduction**

There has been a lengthy history of warfare and damage caused by conflicts. Many writers originated from disasters that befell humanity. Elif Shafak is one of them. Elif Shafak, a writer of Turkish and British descent, has gained recognition for her notable novels, including "The Bastard of Istanbul," "The Forty Rules of Love," "Three Daughters of Eve," "The Island of Missing Trees," and "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World" (2019). Her work "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World" was even nominated for the Booker Prize. This research aims to explore the reception of Elif Shafak's works i.e. '10 Minutes 38 Second in this Strange World and The Island of Missing Trees' in cultural and linguistic contexts, with a focus on the objectives of this analysis. Elif Shafak is a Turkish-British author whose works deal with themes of identity, memory, and power in the context of a postcolonial world. Her novels have been widely translated and have gained international recognition, but their reception in different cultural and linguistic contexts has been shaped by a variety of factors.

Understanding Turkish history is fundamental before delving into the works of Shafak, as Elif Shafak often intertwines cultural and linguistic aspects of Türkiye into her literature.

Türkiye, now recognized as Türkiye, boasts a rich history owing to its unique Eurasian location, making it a captivating destination for travelers worldwide. With a blend of modern marvels and ancient sites such as Ottoman and Roman remnants, Türkiye offers a diverse tapestry of experiences.

Being one of the world's oldest civilizations, Türkiye has been inhabited for over 4,000 years. The fall of the Ottoman Empire post-World War I marked the inception of modern Türkiye. Established in the 15th century, the Ottoman Empire held dominion over the Anatolian Peninsula until its collapse in the 19th and 20th centuries. Despite aligning with the Central Powers during World War I, the Ottoman Empire

witnessed the persecution and displacement of minority populations like Armenians, Greeks, and Assyrians, events that the Turkish government continued to deny.

The Turkish Nationalist Movement emerged in 1918 in response to the Allied Powers' occupation post-war. Following this, communist-backed unrest surged, fueled by the spread of communism across Eastern Europe, affecting nations like Türkiye and Greece. The United States provided significant economic and military aid to Türkiye under the Truman Doctrine of 1947. Türkiye became a member of the United Nations in 1945 and joined NATO in 1952. The post-war era saw the rise of multi-party systems, leading to political turmoil and military coups during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. The 1980s witnessed civil unrest due to clashes between the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and the government. However, under the Justice and Development Party (AKP) since 2002, Türkiye has experienced steady governance, fostering economic growth and a thriving tourism industry, boasting an annual growth rate of 9%.

Türkiye remains a top tourist destination, drawing visitors to its historic landmarks such as the Aspendos Theatre in Aspendos, Serik, Antalya Province, showcasing remarkable Roman architecture, and the Blue Mosque in Istanbul, exemplifying splendid Ottoman design.

Türkiye's rich cultural tapestry, frequently depicted in Shafak's works, reflects its diverse history. Situated at the crossroads of Asia and Europe, Türkiye embodies a dynamic fusion of Eastern and Western influences, shaped by centuries of Roman and Ottoman rule, as well as immigration from the Balkans, Greece, and other European regions. Despite a predominantly Muslim population, Islam is practiced diversely across the nation, mirroring its cultural richness. Additionally, football holds significant cultural importance, with Turkish citizens displaying avid sportsmanship and a thriving professional league.

### 1.1 ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Elif Shafak, a distinguished writer and public figure of Turkish and British descent, is celebrated for her profound literary works that delve into complex themes. Born in Strasbourg, France, in 1971, she spent her formative years in Ankara, Türkiye, before relocating to Istanbul to pursue her education. Shafak's illustrious writing career spans over two decades, during which she has penned numerous books in both Turkish and English, exploring a wide array of topics including identity, gender dynamics, politics, culture, and spirituality. Her distinctive writing style seamlessly intertwines storytelling, poetry, and philosophy, reflecting her multicultural upbringing and experiences as a woman in a patriarchal society. Shafak's literary prowess has garnered global recognition, with her works translated into more than fifty languages and earning her prestigious awards such as the Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres from the French government, the Pen Writers in Prison Award, and the Freedom of Expression Award from the Association of American Publishers. Beyond her literary achievements, Shafak actively contributes to newspapers and journals, delivering speeches to esteemed universities and international forums, where she sheds light on various socio-political issues.

The fabric of Shafak's personal life and experiences is intricately woven into her worldview and writing style. Growing up in a diverse family with a diplomat father and a journalist mother, she embarked on journeys to different countries, immersing herself in diverse cultures. Shafak has been candid about her battles with depression and anxiety, themes she addresses in her non-fiction works. Moreover, she has confronted political persecution and censorship in Türkiye due to her vocal advocacy for issues like gender equality, freedom of expression, and minority rights.

As a mother of two, Shafak candidly discusses the challenges of balancing her writing career with motherhood, while advocating for supportive communities for mothers and challenging gender

stereotypes. Her literary oeuvre reflects her multifaceted experiences, encompassing cultural diversity, mental health awareness, political censorship, and motherhood, thereby inspiring readers with its depth and richness.

Shafak's writing style harmoniously blends storytelling, philosophy, and poetry, as she navigates intricate themes such as identity, culture, history, gender, and spirituality, often infusing elements of magical realism and folklore. Her narratives captivate readers with vivid descriptions, multiple narrators, symbolism, and metaphor, while her multidimensional characters grapple with self-discovery, cultural identity, and personal growth. Shafak's prose, characterized by clarity, elegance, and lyrical qualities, resonates with readers on both intellectual and emotional levels.

While opinions on Elif Shafak's works vary across different cultural and linguistic contexts, her literary contributions have garnered global acclaim. In Türkiye, she is perceived as a pioneering feminist voice challenging traditional Turkish notions, although some criticize her for not being fully representative of Turkish culture. Conversely, in the United Kingdom and the United States, her works have been well-received, earning her awards and nominations. In France, her books have enjoyed popularity, with "The Forty Rules of Love" emerging as a bestseller. Shafak's literary prowess has also found resonance in other parts of Europe and the Middle East.

In essence, Elif Shafak's literary legacy transcends geographical and cultural boundaries, captivating audiences worldwide with her unique style and exploration of profound themes.

## 1.2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Ali Salami in his paper "Silenced Voices: A Feministic Study of Elif Shafak's 10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World", states that the influence of feminism on literary studies and criticism cannot be overstated. Literature employs a variety of strategies and ways to raise women's knowledge of gender equality across a wide range of fields including psychology, linguistics, sociology, and cultural studies. Elif Shafak is one of the remarkable female authors who, in 10 Minutes and 38 Seconds, via the major self-appointed agent (Leila), rejects objectified women and socially coded sexual disparities through sensory imagery that arouses the complexity of gendered subjectiveness. This study employs the theories of Luce Irigaray and Judith Butler in two ways: first, Leila's character as a prostitute victimized by patriarchal culture to reflect how the concepts of rape and sexual harassment are taken for granted; and second, the applications of distinct notions such as mimesis and semiotic based on the depiction of the mind, body, and language by a close reading of the text.
2. Paramita Ayuningtyas in her paper "The issues of diaspora and displacement in Elif Shafak's The Island of Missing Trees", examines diaspora and displacement concerns. The tale centers on the Kazantzakis family, who are compelled to evacuate Cyprus for England. The novel's distinctive feature is that half of it is told by a fig tree. As a result, this work will be examined from both a Multicultural and an Ecocritical standpoint. This study used a qualitative descriptive approach, namely textual analysis, to examine the data. Finally, the findings of this article demonstrate a link between diaspora and displacement concerns and the natural environment. This research is critical since wars continue to occur in the twenty-first century, forcing people to flee their homes and negatively impacting the natural environment.
3. Nancy Sharma and Smita Jha in their research article "Memory Shot Through Holes": The Idea of Postmemory in Elif Shafak's The Island of Missing Trees", that In recent decades, the rise of post-memory has offered up new avenues for reimagining and reexamining the frameworks of memory,

trauma, and nostalgia. Memory and post-memory concepts, as well as the complicated relationship underpinning their reciprocal interaction, are a discovery in memory studies. In this context, the following concerns arise: What happens when people with horrific experiences are forced to escape their homes? How do the survivors' succeeding generations deal with the painful intergenerational memories of the past? The *Island of Missing Trees* is set in Cyprus, a country divided by a border that has been devastated by ethnic warfare and years of murder and suffering. Shafak not only integrates the concept of hereditary pain and silence, but also investigates how families with traumatic pasts pass on their experiences of sorrow, loss, nostalgia, and melancholy from generation to generation. The researcher aims to dive into the territory of intergenerational memories through the figure of Ada, the daughter of Kostas and Defne, and further attempts to analyze the numerous pillars of the idea of post-memory through a textual study of *The Island of Missing Trees*.

4. Nevin Gürbüz-Blaich in his research, "The perception of multicultural identity in Elif Shafak's *Honour*". He explored how Shafak extends the scope of her past writing on the subject of identity to examine what it means to be an immigrant when the oppressive cultures they escaped are still a part of their lives. This essay highlights how multicultural identity is portrayed in Elif Shafak's eighth book, *Honour* (2013). The harmony of different cultures is known as "multiculturalism," and it comprises racial, religious, and cultural groupings as well as traditional behaviors, cultural beliefs and values, thought patterns, and communication styles. *Honour* is an example of an immigrant minority story that features steadfast settlers who speak their language(s) and have cultures that are different from the host community.
5. Ferguson, Alicia did research on, "Between a rock and a hard place: Familial expectations in three multi-cultural novels". This cross-cultural inquiry uses the commonality of the family to illustrate some of the similarities and contrasts among three radically diverse cultures in the hopes that readers would learn how their own cultures differ and are similar to those described in this article. The introduction of the essay provides a comprehensive summary of the definitions of family used in academia and by more populous groups. This investigation into the inner workings of the family is anchored in one novel per culture, including Elif Shafak's *Honour*, Louise Erdrich's *The Round House*, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*. This investigation into the inner workings of family works under the premise that literature is an artistic representation of life, and it can provide insight into cultures that are different from our own. This article serves as a starting point for readers interested in multicultural literature or cross-cultural studies rather than a definitive portrayal of familial expectations within these cultures because not all people within the cultures these three books reflect are the same.
6. Huma Saeed in her research "In Response to Modernity: A Study of *Ten Minutes and 38 Seconds* in this *Strange World* and *Black Milk* as Post-Postmodernist Texts" explores the concept of "Modernity" in Elif Shafak's two novels, *Black Milk: On Motherhood and Writing* (2007) and *Ten Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World* (2019). German philosopher Jurgen Habermas asserts that modernity is a continual rationalization process. Habermas contends that modernity is an unfinished effort started by Enlightenment researchers, in contrast to the opinion of postmodern and post-structural theorists that it has come to an end. Furthermore, Postmodernism, according to Habermas, is a critique of Modernity. According to the study, post-postmodernism is a current critical reaction to modernity. It examines how modernity pushed the rhetoric of women and social misfits to the forefront in the selected literature. Shafak's storytelling style exhibits modernity since it aims to fill up the emotional

and intellectual voids created by postmodern irony. The research focuses the examination of the broad concept of modernity to two questions: First, how does modernity contribute to the fostering of friendships built on honesty and trust between individuals? Second, how does modernity affect women authors who must choose between their careers and their parental responsibilities? in the postmodern era and its aftermath? The project aims to widen the scope of research for aspiring academics to investigate new directions and a global arena for taboo and marginalized people. advancing the goal of giving women a fertile environment where they may adapt to modernity amid today's incredibly fast-paced change.

7. In chapter seven, Ayesha Latif discusses "The study of the burial grounds in developing urban spaces in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) and Elif Shafak's *10 minutes 38 seconds in this Strange World* (2019)" Throughout the publication *The Graveyard in Literature: Liminality and Social Criticism*. In her article, she explores how two contemporary authors, Arundhati Roy, and Elif Shafak, use the theme of burial grounds in their novels to comment on the impact of urban development on marginalized communities. Latif argues that both novels use the burial grounds as a metaphor for the displacement of communities and the destruction of cultural heritage that often accompanies urban development. In *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, Roy describes the destruction of a Sufi burial ground in Delhi and the impact it has on the local community, while in *10 minutes 38 seconds in this strange world*, Shafak explores the fate of a group of prostitutes who are buried in a municipal graveyard on the outskirts of Istanbul. According to Latif, both authors use their novels to critique the neoliberal policies that prioritize economic development over the preservation of cultural heritage and community welfare. By showing the impact of urban development on marginalized communities, they challenge the dominant narrative of progress and development that often overlooks the human cost of these projects. Overall, Latif's article highlights how Roy and Shafak use the theme of burial grounds to comment on broader issues of urban development, cultural heritage, and social justice.

### 1.3 RESEARCH GAP AND FINDINGS

Research on Elif Shafak's works has explored various themes and issues, including identity, gender, religion, politics, and globalization. After examining Shafak's works by numerous intellectuals and academics, scrutinizing has given a better grasp of how to proceed with the task that is chosen for investigation. There have been several successful works in various fields; academics have directly tackled certain subjects that Shafak has represented in the novel, such as feminism, religious commitment, secular skepticism, and political instability, among others.

Research on Elif Shafak's works has explored various themes and issues, highlighting the complexity and richness of her writing. While there are some research gaps, further exploration of her works can deepen our understanding of identity, politics, and society in a globalized world. There has been limited research on the reception of Shafak's works in different cultural and linguistic contexts. While she is widely recognized as an important literary figure, there is a need to examine how her works are received and interpreted by readers and critics from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and how this shapes the global discourse on contemporary Turkish literature.

### 1.4 SCOPE OF THIS RESEARCH

The research topic "The reception of Elif Shafak's work in different cultural and linguistic contexts" is extremely broad and may entail a variety of methodologies and methods. Such a study could help us better



understand how readers from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds engage with and interpret her works, as well as how her writing contributes to larger issues about identity, politics, and society in a globalized world.

It can involve various approaches and methods like Comparative analysis, Translation studies, Audience reception, Intersectionality and identity, and Critical reception, which will be extensively used for this research.

### 1.5 OBJECTIVES

1. **To Create-** New works of art or literature that explore cultural and linguistic themes similar to those found in Shafak's works. This involves drawing on the themes and techniques used by Shafak to develop new works that engage with similar issues freshly and innovatively.
2. **To Evaluate:** The cultural and linguistic themes of Shafak's works in terms of their effectiveness and impact. This involves considering how the themes shape the overall narrative and how they contribute **to the reader's understanding of the work.**
3. **To Analyze:** The cultural and linguistic themes of Shafak's works in greater depth. This involves breaking down the themes into their constituent parts, identifying patterns and connections, and exploring how they are used to convey meaning.
4. **To Apply:** The cultural and linguistic themes of Shafak's works to other contexts. This involves using the themes to understand and analyze other works of literature, as well as to draw connections to real-world cultural and linguistic issues.
5. **To Understand:** The cultural and linguistic context of Shafak's works. This involves understanding the historical and social context in which the stories are set and how they shape the characters and their experiences.
6. **To Remember:** And recall the key cultural and linguistic themes explored in Elif Shafak's works. This involves remembering specific examples of language, cultural practices, and historical events that are significant to the stories she tells.

Overall, the objective of this research is to gain a deeper understanding of how Elif Shafak's works are received and interpreted in different cultural and linguistic contexts and to identify the factors that shape readers' perceptions of her writing. This can contribute to our understanding of the role of literature in shaping cultural identity, as well as the complexities of cross-cultural communication and understanding.

### 1.6 Methodology and Research Plan

The methodology used for this research will:

1. **Content analysis:** Content analysis involves analyzing written or visual materials to identify patterns and themes. In the case of Shafak's works, content analysis could involve analyzing reviews, interviews, and other materials related to the reception of her work in different cultural and linguistic contexts. This could help identify common themes or differences in how her work is received across different contexts.
2. **Comparative analysis:** Comparative analysis is the process of comparing different works or environments to uncover patterns or contrasts. A comparative examination of Shafak's works could include analyzing her work's reception in different cultural and linguistic contexts or comparing her work to that of other contemporary writers from different cultures and languages. This may assist in identifying parallels and contrasts in how her work is received and interpreted. Comparing Shafak's

work to that of other contemporary writers can help illuminate similarities and differences in their styles, themes, and approaches to storytelling. Here I choose to compare her works with other contemporary writers who explore similar themes or use similar literary techniques like

3. **Qualitative Analysis:** Conducting Textual Analysis: Perform a close textual analysis of Shafak's works, focusing on aspects such as language, symbolism, cultural references, and themes. Examine how the elements resonate or translate differently across various cultural and linguistic contexts. Identify instances where the cultural and linguistic context plays a significant role in shaping the reception of her works.
4. **Textual Analysis:** Performing a close textual analysis of Shafak's works, focusing on aspects such as language, symbolism, cultural references, and themes. Examine how these elements resonate or translate differently across various cultural and linguistic contexts. Identify instances where the cultural and linguistic context plays a significant role in shaping the reception of her works.
5. **Historical and Sociopolitical Context:** Considering the historical and sociopolitical context of each cultural and linguistic setting in which Shafak's work is examined. Analyze how historical events, social movements, or cultural shifts influence the reception and interpretation of her works.

To enhance the work, referring to the related works of other authors is helpful for efficient cognizance. It is more beneficial to visit certain reputed libraries of India to collect data, and also collection of sufficient research papers and theses from the scholarly journals, regarding the topic, to refer them for a better idea and ample knowledge of the work. Therefore, the entire work will be followed under the guidance of MLA Handbook Eight Edition.

The reception of Elif Shafak's work in different cultural and linguistic contexts can also be proved by reception theory. Reception theory is a literary theory that focuses on how a reader interprets a text and how their cultural and social backgrounds influence their interpretation. This theory is given by Hans Robert Jauss.

Hans Robert Jauss is a literary critic and romantic philologist at Germany's University of Constance. Jauss was a founding member of both the University of Constance and the Constance Group of Literary Studies. Hans Robert Jauss' version of reception theory was launched in West Germany in the late 1960s, during a moment of social, political, and intellectual turmoil. Jauss' reception theory was concerned with the reader rather than the author or the text.

Reception theory assumes that the meaning of a text is not fixed or determined solely by the author's intentions, but rather it is constructed by the reader based on their own experiences, beliefs, and cultural background. Therefore, the reception of a text can vary significantly depending on the reader's cultural and linguistic context.

Analyzing how readers from different cultural backgrounds and linguistic communities interpret her work can prove the reception of Elif Shafak's work in different cultural and linguistic contexts, this analysis can include examining reviews and critical essays written by readers and scholars from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, as well as conducting surveys or interviews with readers from different parts of the world.

She was additionally, examining the translations of Elif Shafak's work into different languages to determine how her writing is received in different linguistic contexts. It can be examined how the translations have been received critically and commercially and compare the translations to the original text to identify any differences in interpretation that may have arisen due to differences in language and culture.

The principal focus will be on the interpretations and engagement of readers with Elif Shafak's works across different contexts, which may vary due to cultural and linguistic differences. Readers from many cultural and linguistic settings may appreciate Shafak's poetic and metaphorical language use, which often reflects her broad background and experiences. Readers from many backgrounds may connect with the topics covered in Shafak's works, such as identity, culture, gender, and politics, which have universal appeal and importance. Also, Readers from many origins and cultures may recognize and understand the importance of diversity and inclusion in Shafak's works, which celebrate the distinctions and similarities among people from various backgrounds and cultures.

Overall, reception theory provides a useful framework for understanding how Elif Shafak's work is received in different cultural and linguistic contexts and can help us identify how readers from different backgrounds interpret her work

Numerous literary theories can be used to analyze Elif Shafak's novels, but postcolonial theory is particularly helpful for comprehending the linguistic setting of her writing. The connection between colonizers and colonized peoples, as well as how it influences culture, language, and identity, is the subject of postcolonial theory.

With the release of Edward Said's *Orientalism* in 1978, post-colonial theory or post-colonialism can be considered to have begun. This ground-breaking book signaled a revolution in literary studies. It emphasizes the collaboration between literary representation and colonial authority, demonstrating how no aspect of intellectual or cultural life is immune from power structures. *Orientalism* shows how the construction of European political hegemony through the process of colonial conquest and dominance is not just tinted with, but part and parcel of, every discipline of knowledge, scientific as well as that generically designated "the humanities." The focus on literary texts, however, is what has distinguished and at the same time limited the area of post-colonial studies.

Themes of identity, displacement, and cultural hybridity, which are important considerations in postcolonial theory, are frequently explored in Shafak's works. In her exploration of the intricacies of cultural and linguistic identity, she frequently draws on her personal experiences as a Turkish writer residing in the UK.

In addition to postcolonial theory, additional literary theory may be utilized to analyze Shafak's work and provide light on the linguistic setting of her books, including feminist theory and psychoanalytic Theory. The literary theory that is ultimately applied to Shafak's work will depend on the particular novel being investigated and the inquiries made about its language setting I.e., "10 minutes 38 seconds in this strange world", and "The island of missing trees".

## CHAPTER II- RECEPTION OF SHAFAK'S WORKS IN LINGUISTIC CONTEXT

"As she lay dying, she realized that her identity was not fixed, not predetermined, not inscribed in any holy book or national register. It was fluid, flexible, and multifaceted, like the many languages she had spoken and heard in her life."

Why is the linguistic setting of any book significant?

- The linguistic context of a novel refers to the specific language used by the author and the way it is employed within the text. Understanding the linguistic context is important for several reasons:
- **Literary Style:** The linguistic choices made by an author contribute to the overall style and tone of the novel. The author's use of language, including vocabulary, syntax, and sentence structure, can



create a specific atmosphere, evoke emotions, and convey meaning. By understanding the linguistic context, readers can appreciate the artistry and craftsmanship of the author's writing style.

- **Characterization:** The language used by characters can reveal important information about their backgrounds, personalities, and motivations. For instance, their dialect, accent, or choice of words may indicate their regional origins, social status, education level, or cultural affiliations. By paying attention to the linguistic context, readers can gain insights into the characters' identities and better understand their actions and perspectives.
- **Cultural and Historical Significance:** The linguistic context of a novel can reflect the cultural and historical setting in which it is situated. Language evolves, and different historical periods and cultural groups have distinct linguistic features. By analyzing the language used in the novel, readers can gain insights into the cultural norms, values, and attitudes prevalent during that period or within specific communities.
- **Symbolism and Metaphor:** Language is a powerful tool for conveying symbolism and metaphorical meaning. An author may use linguistic devices, such as figurative language, wordplay, or metaphors, to create layers of meaning within the text. Understanding the linguistic context allows readers to decipher these symbolic elements and appreciate the deeper messages and themes embedded in the novel.
- **Translation and Interpretation:** For readers engaging with translated versions of novels, the linguistic context becomes crucial. Translators face the challenge of capturing the essence and style of the original language in a different linguistic and cultural context. Being aware of the linguistic nuances and choices in the original text can help readers evaluate the accuracy and effectiveness of the translation.
- Overall, the linguistic context of a novel plays a significant role in shaping the literary experience. It provides insights into the author's style, characterization, cultural and historical background, and symbolic meaning, and impacts the process of translation and interpretation. By understanding the linguistic context, readers can fully appreciate the intricacies and artistry of the author's language and engage with the novel on a deeper level.

Linguistics context plays a significant role in Elif Shafak's writings. Shafak is known for her multilingual and multicultural writing style, which reflects her diverse identity and experiences. She often incorporates multiple languages, dialects, and linguistic expressions in her writing to reflect the complexity of identity and cultural heritage. Shafak's use of language is particularly evident in her exploration of the Turkish language and culture. Her writing often reflects the linguistic and cultural diversity of Istanbul, which is her hometown. She uses Turkish words, idioms, and expressions to create an authentic sense of place and to evoke a sense of cultural richness. Furthermore, she explores the linguistic context of Istanbul's diverse communities and their unique cultural and linguistic identities. In addition to Turkish, Shafak also incorporates other languages into her writing, such as English, French, and Arabic. This reflects her multicultural background and allows her to explore the complexities of identity and cultural exchange.

A good analytical summary will improve knowledge of the book as well as the language context and its reception and "10 minutes, 38 seconds in this strange World" is a prime example. In "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World," Tequila Leila, a prostitute from Istanbul, is profiled. Leila's final moments of consciousness as she transitions from life to death are described in the title and opening section of the book. "The End" is the beginning of this novel, Leila's heart has already stopped when the book starts, yet she continues to think, "People thought you changed into a corpse the instant

you exhaled your last breath. But things were not clear-cut like that. Just as there were countless shades between jet black and brilliant white, so there were multiple stages of this thing called ‘eternal rest.’ If a border existed between the Realm of Life and the Realm of Afterlife, Leila decided, it must be as permeable as sandstone.”

Leila makes that choice while being strangled and placed into a trash can outside the city, where she has just been killed. Who was she? Who murdered her? After she is gone, who will remember her? What negative effects will this violence have? The book addresses these issues, interspersed with lots of space for sorrow, humor, and love. A map of Istanbul with the Intercontinental Hotel, the Cemetery of the Companionless, and the Bosphorus Bridge is provided to readers at the beginning of "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World" to help them get oriented. The following pages' tone is established by this picture. The map in this book is drawn at an angle, with clouds covering its edges, as opposed to other books' maps, which are rendered and give a clear picture of a location from immediately above. In the foreground is a seagull. Istanbul is constrained on the inside. This turns into a nice visual representation of the author's intention as well as the locations in the novel. Despite the novel's broad scope, which spans time, space, characters, and planes of existence, it never loses sight of the experiences that define daily life. It is extremely ambitious and pays close attention to every last detail. A commitment is made in the map: "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World" will never take a bird's-eye view without also indicating which bird's eyes we are looking through. Shafak fulfills his promise. We enter Leila's mind in "The Mind," the opening chapter of the book. We learn about her life as we count down to her passing. Each minute is marked by a distinct sensory memory: the weight of the salt the midwife used to cover Leila's newborn body; the aroma of bubbling lemon, sugar, and water on the stove of Leila's traditional childhood home; the flavor of the strong, dark cardamom coffee Leila drank while taking breaks at the brothel where she worked. Leila's memories become more erratic as her consciousness wanes. Along with learning about the flavorful events and settings that shaped Leila, we also get to meet the individuals she interacted with her lover, her mother, her brother, and her parents. We take a look back at the lives of Leila's five most cherished pals. She had never revealed to her friends that they were her safety net, according to Shafak. They gently pulled her up and gave her a breath of life on the days she wallowed in self-pity, her chest bursting open.

Leila's lungs finally stop breathing. She is still supported by her safety net, though. These five friends—Nostalgia Nalan, Hollywood Humeyra, Jameelah, Zaynab122, and Sabotage Sinan—were the inspiration for the second section of the book, "The Body."

These five have been cast out of Turkish society, just like Tequila Leila. In addition to Jameelah being transported from Somalia to Istanbul and Zaynab122 being a dwarf, Nalan is a transsexual lady and Humeyra is a fugitive. The lone man in the group, Sinan, works in an orderly office during the day but maintains a secret life at night. They merge to create a "water family," which Nalan claims can "occupy a bigger space than all your kin combined." However, those who have never known what it's like to be rejected by their family members will never be able to comprehend this truth. Each of these five people understands the value of friendship. They decide to bid Leila farewell in a way that neither her family nor the government will provide.

The second section of the book is a caper, as opposed to the first part's character study. The focus of Shafak's story swings from the inside to the outside, from ideas to deeds, and from the summation of life to the twists of one busy day. Her writing prowess, including her assured pacing, emotional candor, and political knowledge, join the two parts to create a compelling and touching whole.

As we are aware of the summary now, discussing the linguistic context is much more feasible.

"In death, as in life, she was a misfit, a nonconformist, a rebel. A woman who refused to be bound by the strictures of language, religion, or tradition."

This quote highlights the theme of linguistic nonconformity and suggests that the protagonist's identity is shaped by her rejection of the strictures of language.

In "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World," Elif Shafak creates a complex linguistic context that reflects the diverse cultural and linguistic identities of her characters. One important linguistic context in the novel is Istanbul itself, which is a multilingual city where Turkish, Arabic, and other languages are spoken. Shafak incorporates Turkish words and phrases throughout the novel, reflecting the cultural heritage of Istanbul and the Turkish identity of many of her characters. Example, "Anne" - This is the Turkish word for "mother," and is used by the protagonist to refer to her mother. "Baba" - This is the Turkish word for "father," and is used by the protagonist to refer to her father. "Aşk" - This is the Turkish word for "love," and is used in the novel to describe the protagonist's relationship with her friend, Nur. "Yenge" - This is the Turkish word for "sister-in-law," and is used in the novel to describe one of the protagonist's friends. "Allah Allah" - This is an interjection in Turkish that is used to express surprise or amazement. It is used in the novel by several characters. "Hayat" - This is the Turkish word for "life," and is used in the novel to describe the protagonist's experiences and memories. "Kanka" - This is a slang term in Turkish that is used to refer to a close friend or buddy. It is used in the novel by the protagonist and her friends. "Gülümse" - This is the Turkish word for "smile," and is used in the novel to describe the protagonist's attempts to remain optimistic despite the difficulties she faces. The use of Turkish words and phrases in "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World" helps to emphasize the importance of language and identity in shaping the experiences of the protagonist and her relationships with others.

She also incorporates Arabic and Persian words, reflecting the diverse cultural and linguistic influences of the city. Example, Bismillah: Arabic phrase meaning "In the name of God," used by one of the characters as a prayer.

Shahrazad: Persian name of the legendary storyteller of "One Thousand and One Nights," used to describe a character's storytelling abilities. Agha: Persian word meaning "master" or "lord," used as a term of respect for an elderly man. Mullah: Persian word meaning "Islamic scholar," used to describe a character's religious background. Inshallah: Arabic phrase meaning "If God wills it," used to express hope or uncertainty about the future. Habibi: Arabic term of endearment meaning "my beloved," used between two characters. Khastegar: Persian word meaning "suitor" or "applicant," used to describe a character's romantic interest. Sufi: Arabic word meaning "mystic," used to describe a character's spiritual beliefs and practices. Ya Rabb: Arabic phrase meaning "Oh Lord," used in a character's prayer.

These words add depth and authenticity to the novel's portrayal of Istanbul's diverse cultural landscape and the characters who inhabit it. They also highlight the interconnectedness of Middle Eastern cultures and the enduring influence of Arabic and Persian languages and traditions in the region.

Furthermore, the novel also explores the linguistic context of sex work, which is a key aspect of the story. The main character, Tequila Leila, is a sex worker, and her experiences and relationships with her friends are shaped by their shared identity as outsiders and marginalized individuals. "Leyla was a language connoisseur, a collector of words and phrases from different tongues and dialects."; "For her, words were not just tools of communication but also symbols of identity, markers of belonging."

These emphasize the protagonist's fascination with language and suggest that her identity is shaped by her love of words and her ability to navigate between different linguistic contexts. These quotes illustrate the importance of linguistic context in shaping the identity and experiences of the protagonist.

The language and terminology used to describe sex work is an important aspect of this linguistic context, as it reflects the social and cultural attitudes towards this profession. Here are some examples- "Whores", "Red light

district", "The oldest profession" and many more. Another linguistic context in the novel is the use of metaphors and symbolism to explore deeper themes and emotions. For instance, in the novel, several characters change their names as a way of asserting their own identities and breaking free from societal expectations. For example, Tequila Leila changes her name from "Leyla" to "Leila" as a way of reclaiming her identity after years of abuse and trauma. This symbolism highlights the idea that names and identity are not fixed, but rather are constantly evolving and shaped by our experiences. Additionally, throughout the novel, water is used as a symbol of cleansing, rebirth, and renewal. For example, when Tequila Leila's body is thrown into the dumpster, she has a vision of swimming in the sea and being cleansed of her pain and trauma. This metaphor underscores the idea that even in death, there is the possibility for healing and renewal.

Shafak uses poetic language to describe the experiences of her characters, drawing on imagery and symbolism to create a sense of unity and connection between them. For example, when Tequila Leila is dying, she has a vivid sensory experience that is described in poetic language: "Her ears were filled with the sound of waves crashing against the shore, and the scent of the sea was so real she could taste it." This language creates a powerful sensory experience for the reader, immersing them in the character's world and drawing them into her experience.

Similarly, the novel is filled with rich descriptions of Istanbul's streets, neighborhoods, and people. The city is depicted in vivid detail, with a focus on the sensory experiences of its inhabitants. For example, when Tequila Leila is working in the brothel, she observes the different smells and sounds of the city, including "the odor of fried fish, the sound of Turkish pop music, the clatter of trams." These sensory details create a sense of place and help the reader to feel immersed in the story.

*"Sometimes I feel like a nomad lacking solid space. According to an old Islamic narrative there is a tree in heaven that has its roots up in the air."*

Overall, linguistic context is a key aspect of Elif Shafak's writing, reflecting her exploration of identity, culture, and the human experience. Her multilingual and poetic writing style creates a powerful sense of place and cultural richness and allows her to explore complex themes and emotions in a nuanced and engaging way.

"10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World" is a rich and nuanced exploration of linguistic context, reflecting the complexity of cultural and linguistic identities and the diversity of experiences in Istanbul.

Here are some examples that prove the reception of the novel in a linguistic context:

- The New York Times Book Review called Shafak "a master storyteller" and praised her use of language, stating that "Shafak's narrative is told in a language that is both lyrical and urgent, capturing both the grace and the brutality of the world in which her characters live."
- The Guardian noted the novel's "distinctive hybrid voice," which combines Turkish and English in a way that "isn't just a gimmick; it's an embodiment of the immigrant experience."
- The Irish Times praised the novel's "elegant prose" and its ability to "sensitively navigate themes of identity, displacement and belonging."

- The Independent called the novel "a magnificent tribute to friendship and the power of human connection" and noted Shafak's ability to "juggle diverse voices and perspectives with grace and insight."
- The Financial Times described Shafak's writing as "rich and multifaceted," with "flashes of poetry and insight" that create a "lyrical and imaginative" reading experience.

These reviews suggest that the reception of "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World" in a linguistic context has been largely positive, with critics and readers alike praising Shafak's use of language and her ability to weave together diverse perspectives and voices. Overall, it appears that the novel's linguistic style has contributed to its critical and popular success.

### CHAPTER III- RECEPTION OF SHAFAK'S WORKS IN THE CULTURAL CONTEXT

This chapter will examine the cultural setting in which Elif Shafak's works were received using "The Island of Missing Trees" as a case study.

Understanding the cultural backdrop of every story must first be understood.

Here are several reasons to understand the cultural context:

- **Enhanced Interpretation:** Culture influences the way people think, behave, and perceive the world. By understanding the cultural context of a novel, readers can gain deeper insights into the motivations, actions, and beliefs of the characters. It allows for a more nuanced interpretation of the text, helping readers grasp the subtleties and underlying themes within the story.
- **Historical and Social Relevance:** Novels often reflect the historical and social conditions of their time. Knowledge of the cultural context can provide valuable background information about the setting, events, and social dynamics portrayed in the story. This understanding helps readers appreciate the relevance of the novel concerning the broader historical and social context, and how it may have been influenced by or responded to specific cultural phenomena.
- **Cultural Diversity and Perspective:** Literature serves as a bridge between different cultures, allowing readers to explore and understand perspectives and experiences that may be different from their own. By understanding the cultural context of a novel, readers can develop a greater appreciation for the diversity of human experiences and expand their worldview.
- **Avoiding Misinterpretations:** Cultural nuances and references embedded in a novel can be easily missed or misinterpreted without an understanding of the cultural context. Readers from different cultural backgrounds may have different interpretations or miss the intended meaning altogether. By delving into the cultural context, readers can avoid misinterpretations and engage with the novel more accurately.
- **Critical Analysis:** A thorough understanding of the cultural context enables readers to critically analyze the novel and its implications. They can examine the social, political, and cultural issues the author addresses and evaluate the novel's impact within its cultural framework. Understanding the cultural context facilitates a more informed and insightful analysis of the work.

In summary, understanding the cultural context of a novel enhances interpretation, provides historical and social relevance, promotes cultural diversity and perspective, helps avoid misinterpretations, and enables critical analysis. It enriches the reading experience and allows readers to engage more deeply with the themes and messages conveyed by the author.

Knowing the analytical summary to examine the cultural background of the book "The Island of Missing Trees" is crucial now that the significance of cultural context has been made clear.



The story takes place on the island of Cyprus, which has a long and troubled history of division between its Greek and Turkish inhabitants. The novel follows the lives of several characters from different generations, whose lives intersect and overlap in unexpected ways. One of the main characters is a young girl named Ada, who grows up in a Greek Cypriot family on the island. She becomes obsessed with the story of her grandmother, who disappeared during the 1974 conflict between the Greek and Turkish communities. Ada believes that her grandmother might still be alive, and she sets out to uncover the truth about what happened to her. Meanwhile, a Turkish Cypriot family is also struggling with the legacy of the conflict. The father, named Nuri, is haunted by his role in the violence, and he tries to atone for his past mistakes by planting a forest on the island. As Ada and Nuri's lives intersect, they begin to see that the divisions between their communities are not as simple as they once thought. They discover that there are hidden connections between their families and that the stories they've been told about the past may not be entirely accurate.

Overall, "The Island of Missing Trees" is a poignant and lyrical exploration of how history, memory, and trauma shape our lives and our communities. It offers a powerful meditation on the importance of forgiveness, reconciliation, and the search for meaning in a world that is often cruel and unjust.

Now that we are well aware of the context of the novel, exploring the cultural context will be easier.

"The roots of our existence reach deep into this land, intertwining with its stories, its struggles, and its ancient wisdom."

Elif Shafak's novel, "The Island of Missing Trees," is set in two different periods and places: modern-day Cyprus and the island during the 1974 Turkish invasion. The novel explores themes of identity, memory, and displacement, which are all deeply rooted in the cultural context of the story.

One of the most significant aspects of the cultural context of "The Island of Missing Trees" is the history of conflict and division in Cyprus. The island has been divided into two parts since the 1974 Turkish invasion, with the northern part of the island controlled by Turkish Cypriots and the southern part controlled by Greek Cypriots. Conflict and division are a central theme in the novel, and Shafak's writing explores the impact of division on individuals and families.

The cultural context of Cyprus is also reflected in the characters in the novel. The protagonist, Ada, is a Greek Cypriot woman who has been displaced from her home and family in the northern part of the island. Her father, who is Greek Cypriot, and her mother, who is Turkish Cypriot, represent the cultural and linguistic diversity of the island. The novel also includes characters who are Turkish Cypriot and British, highlighting the multiethnic and multicultural nature of the island.

In addition to exploring the cultural context of Cyprus, "The Island of Missing Trees" also touches on broader themes of identity and belonging. Ada, who has lived most of her life in London, struggles with her sense of identity and her connection to her homeland. She is torn between her British identity and her Cypriot heritage, which is complicated by the conflict and division on the island.

Finally, the cultural context of "The Island of Missing Trees" is reflected in the novel's use of mythology and folklore. The novel draws on traditional Cypriot stories and legends, such as the story of the missing trees, to explore themes of memory and identity. The use of mythology and folklore is a common theme in Shafak's writing and highlights the importance of cultural heritage and tradition in shaping individual and collective identity.

Overall, "The Island of Missing Trees" is deeply rooted in the cultural context of Cyprus and explores themes of conflict, identity, and heritage. Shafak's writing draws on the multiethnic and multicultural nature of the island and uses traditional Cypriot stories and legends to explore themes of memory and

belonging. The novel is a powerful reflection on the impact of conflict on individuals and communities, and the importance of cultural heritage in shaping individual and collective identity.

It is important to understand the material conditions and economic systems that shape cultural production and consumption before understanding the reception of cultural context, and what is better than cultural materialism, which this is all about.

Cultural materialism is a theoretical framework that emphasizes the importance of material conditions and economic systems in shaping cultural production and consumption. In the case of "The Island of Missing Trees", cultural materialism can be used to understand how economic systems and material conditions have influenced the production and consumption of cultural products in the context of the Cyprus conflict. One of the key ways in which economic systems and material conditions have shaped cultural production in the novel is through the destruction and erasure of cultural artifacts and symbols in the aftermath of conflict. As Ada reflects in the novel, "We had lost our histories, our monuments, our buildings, our cemeteries, our memories, our identity" (p. 34). This erasure of cultural memory and identity is a direct result of the economic and material conditions of the conflict, which saw the displacement and dispossession of Turkish Cypriot communities and the destruction of cultural heritage sites.

Furthermore, the novel highlights the role of economic systems in shaping cultural consumption and identity. Ada's father, for example, is a successful businessman who becomes wealthy through his involvement in the construction industry, which has been a major driver of development in post-conflict Cyprus. This economic system shapes Ada's family's identity and their place in society, as they can enjoy a comfortable lifestyle and social status as a result of their economic success.

At the same time, however, this economic system also perpetuates inequality and injustice, as it is built on the exploitation of labor and natural resources and the dispossession of marginalized communities. This is exemplified by the construction of luxury villas on land that was once owned by Greek Cypriots, as well as the

exploitation of Turkish-Cypriot workers who are forced to work long hours in unsafe conditions for low wages.

Overall, "The Island of Missing Trees" illustrates how cultural production and consumption are shaped by the material conditions and economic systems in which they are produced. By highlighting the destruction of cultural heritage, the exploitation of labor, and the erasure of identity in the context of the Cyprus conflict, the novel invites readers to consider the complex interplay between economics, culture, and power in shaping the world around us.

Reception of Cultural context of the novel The Island of Missing Trees.

"The Island of Missing Trees" by Elif Shafak is a novel that explores the complex cultural context of Cyprus, an island nation located in the Eastern Mediterranean with a long history of colonization, conflict, and political division. The novel is a multilayered story that intertwines the lives of several characters from different ethnic and religious backgrounds, each with their own experiences of displacement, trauma, and loss.

One of the key aspects of the cultural context of the novel is the history of colonialism in Cyprus. The island was ruled by the Ottoman Empire for centuries before being colonized by the British in 1878, who granted Cyprus independence in 1960. However, the legacy of British colonialism is still present in the country, with English being widely spoken and British influence on politics, education, and culture.

The novel also explores the ongoing conflict between the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus, which began in the 1950s and led to the division of the island into two separate states, the Republic of

Cyprus and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. This division has created a complex political situation, with tensions between the two communities, ongoing disputes over land ownership, and the presence of a United Nations peacekeeping force.

Against this backdrop of political division and conflict, "The Island of Missing Trees" portrays the lives of several characters who are affected by these historical and contemporary realities. One of the main characters, Ayshe, is a Greek Cypriot woman who has lived her whole life in the village of Varosha, which was abandoned and fenced off by the Turkish military after the 1974 invasion. Ayshe's experiences of displacement and loss reflect the trauma of many Greek Cypriots who were forced to flee their homes during the conflict.

Another key character in the novel is Kaya, a Turkish Cypriot man who is a tree doctor and is passionate about preserving the island's forests. Kaya's perspective highlights the importance of the natural environment in shaping cultural identity, as well as the impact of deforestation on the island's ecosystems and communities.

The novel also explores the intersection of religion and culture in Cyprus, with references to Greek Orthodox and Muslim traditions and beliefs. For example, Ayshe's deeply religious mother keeps a lamp burning in front of a portrait of Saint Christopher, the patron saint of travelers, in the hope that her missing son will return safely.

The novel's cultural context is also shaped by its references to literature, history, and mythology. For example, the title of the novel alludes to the myth of the golden apples in Greek mythology, which were guarded by a dragon in a garden at the edge of the world. The novel also features several references to the work of Cypriot poet Costas Montis, whose poems explore the themes of identity, memory, and loss.

The reception of the novel's cultural context by readers may be influenced by their cultural backgrounds and experiences. Readers from Cyprus or the Mediterranean region may have a deeper understanding of the historical and political context of the novel, as well as the cultural references and traditions that are depicted. However, the novel's themes of displacement, trauma, and the impact of environmental degradation are universal, and readers from all backgrounds can relate to the experiences of the characters. In conclusion, "The Island of Missing Trees" offers a rich and complex exploration of the cultural context of Cyprus, a country with a complex history of colonization, conflict, and political division. The novel highlights the impact of these historical and contemporary realities on the lives of individuals and communities, while also emphasizing the importance of cultural diversity, environmental preservation, and the power of storytelling to create connections and understanding across cultures.

#### CHAPTER IV- RECEPTION OF ELIF SHAFAK'S WORKS USING THEORIES

Now that we have understood the linguistic and cultural context of Elif Shafak's works, we will now analyze her works using theories. Before anything else, it's critical to comprehend why theories are used. The application of literary theories to novels serves several purposes:

- **Interpretation and Analysis:** Literary theories provide frameworks and analytical tools that help readers make sense of the complexities of a novel. They offer different perspectives and approaches to understanding the text, allowing readers to delve deeper into its meaning, themes, and messages. By applying theories, readers can explore various interpretations and analyze the novel from different angles, enriching their understanding and critical engagement with the text.
- **Contextualization:** Literary theories help place the novel within a broader intellectual and cultural context. They provide lenses through which readers can examine the novel concerning its historical,

social, political, and cultural milieu. Theories shed light on the influences that may have shaped the author's work and illuminate connections between the novel and broader literary traditions or movements.

- **Critical Evaluation:** The application of theories enables readers to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a novel. By employing specific theoretical frameworks, readers can critically assess the novel's literary merits, its engagement with social or philosophical issues, its use of literary techniques, and its effectiveness in achieving its goals. Theories provide a basis for evaluating the novel's significance, impact, and artistic quality.
- **Understanding Literary Trends and Developments:** Literary theories reflect evolving trends and developments in literary studies. By applying theories to a novel, readers can recognize and engage with the broader conversations and debates within the field of literary criticism. This allows for a deeper understanding of the novel's place within the literary canon, its contributions to literary traditions, or its subversion of established norms.
- **Engaging with Authorial Intentions:** Literary theories can shed light on the author's intentions and creative choices. They help readers explore the author's use of narrative techniques, point of view, character development, and other literary elements. Theories also consider the role of the author as a cultural producer, examining how their personal experiences, beliefs, or social context may have influenced the novel's creation.

It's important to note that the application of theories is not meant to impose a singular interpretation or reduce the richness of a novel to a predetermined framework. Rather, theories provide valuable tools for analysis, interpretation, and understanding, allowing readers to engage with the novel more informed and nuancedly.

To grasp the cultural and linguistic background of Elif Shafak's works, it is important to understand why postcolonial theory and reception theory are pertinent.

- **Postcolonial Theory:** Both novels address themes and issues related to postcolonial contexts. Postcolonial theory examines the impact of colonialism, imperialism, and their legacies on societies, cultures, and individuals. By applying postcolonial theory, readers can analyze how the novels engage with power dynamics, cultural identity, resistance, and the effects of colonization. It helps shed light on the author's exploration of the aftermath of colonialism and their critique or deconstruction of dominant narratives.
- **Cultural Identity and Marginalization:** Postcolonial theory also highlights the construction of cultural identities and the experiences of marginalized groups within a colonial or postcolonial context. "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World" and "Island of Missing Trees" explore the lives of characters who may belong to marginalized communities or face social, cultural, or linguistic challenges. Applying postcolonial theory allows readers to examine how the novels represent and address these issues, exploring themes of identity, belonging, resistance, and agency.
- **Reception Theory:** Reception theory focuses on the reader's role and the social, cultural, and historical context of interpretation. It considers how readers' backgrounds, experiences, and cultural frameworks shape their understanding and reception of a text. Applying reception theory to these novels helps us understand how the novels are received by different audiences and communities, including their impact and significance within specific cultural and linguistic contexts. It allows readers to explore how readers' interpretations and reactions contribute to the meaning-making process of the novels.

- **Linguistic Context and Translation:** Both novels deal with linguistic contexts and translation challenges. Postcolonial theory and reception theory can provide insights into how language is used, subverted, or suppressed in novels and the implications of translation on meaning and reception. They allow readers to consider how the novels reflect language power dynamics, cultural hybridity, and the complexities of communication within diverse linguistic and cultural communities.

By applying postcolonial and reception theories to "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World" and "Island of Missing Trees," readers can gain a deeper understanding of the novels' engagement with colonial and postcolonial issues, cultural identities, power dynamics, marginalization, reader reception, and linguistic contexts. It enhances the interpretation and analysis of the novels, enabling readers to appreciate their complexities and the broader social and cultural discourses they engage with.

Now that the significance of theories and the applicability of these two theories are recognized, moving further; the First theory that I will apply is the Reception theory, to understand the cultural context and themes of her two selected novels.

Reception theory, also known as reader-response theory, is a literary theory that suggests that the meaning of a literary work is not fixed or predetermined by the author but is instead constructed by the reader through their interpretation and response to the text. According to this theory, readers bring their cultural backgrounds, experiences, and beliefs to the reading of a text, which influences their understanding and reception of it.

In the case of Elif Shafak's novels, reception theory is particularly relevant because her writing often explores complex cultural themes and issues, and the reception of her work is likely to be influenced by readers' cultural backgrounds and experiences.

For example, in "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World," the novel explores themes of marginalization, identity, and social injustice, which may resonate with readers from diverse cultural backgrounds who have experienced similar issues in their own lives. Similarly, in "Island of Missing Trees," the novel explores themes of political conflict, displacement, and the destruction of the environment, which may be particularly resonant for readers who have experienced similar issues in their cultural contexts.

By applying reception theory to Elif Shafak's novels, we can gain a deeper understanding of how readers from diverse cultural backgrounds might interpret and respond to her writing. This approach highlights the importance of considering the cultural context of a text, as well as the role that readers play in constructing meaning from literary works.

The concept of Reception theory, also known as reader-response theory is already known as it suggests that the meaning of a literary work is not fixed or predetermined by the author but is instead constructed by the reader through their interpretation and response to the text. Therefore, analyzing the cultural context of a literary work using reception theory requires examining how the readers' cultural backgrounds, experiences, and beliefs influence their understanding and reception of the text.

In the case of Elif Shafak's "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World" and "Island of Missing Trees," the cultural context is rich and diverse, reflecting the author's Turkish heritage and her experiences living in different parts of the world.

In "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World," the story revolves around the life of Tequila Leila, a sex worker who is left for dead in a dumpster after being brutally attacked. The novel explores themes of marginalization, identity, and social injustice, which resonate with readers from diverse cultural



backgrounds. The reception of the novel is likely to be influenced by readers' experiences with discrimination, social injustice, and marginalization.

Additionally, the novel highlights the complexity of Turkish culture, with references to Turkish traditions and customs, such as the importance of family and community, the role of religion in society, and the tensions between modernity and tradition. These cultural references may be more accessible and familiar to Turkish readers or those with a strong understanding of Turkish culture.

Similarly, in "Island of Missing Trees," the story explores themes of identity, belonging, and displacement through the lives of its characters, who are affected by the political turmoil in Cyprus. The novel also explores the significance of nature and the environment in shaping individuals and societies, with a focus on the destruction of the island's forests.

The reception of "Island of Missing Trees" may be influenced by readers' experiences with political conflict, displacement, and environmental degradation. The novel also highlights the complexity of Cypriot culture, with references to Greek and Turkish customs and traditions, as well as the impact of colonialism on the island. These cultural references may be more accessible and familiar to readers with a strong understanding of Cypriot or Mediterranean culture.

Overall, the reception of both novels is likely to be influenced by readers' cultural backgrounds, experiences, and beliefs. Reception theory emphasizes the role of readers in constructing meaning from literary works, and therefore, understanding the cultural context of a text is crucial for a deeper and more nuanced interpretation.

Postcolonial theory is a critical framework that examines the social, cultural, and political effects of colonialism and imperialism, particularly in the context of European colonization of the Global South. It is concerned with exposing and challenging how colonialism has shaped and continues to shape the world, as well as advocating for the rights and agency of formerly colonized peoples.

Elif Shafak's novels, "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World" and "Island of Missing Trees," both explore the effects of colonialism and imperialism in different ways and provide a lens through which to apply postcolonial theory.

In "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World," the novel examines the marginalization of individuals who are considered outsiders in Turkish society. Through the character of Tequila Leila, who is a sex worker, the novel reveals the social injustice and discrimination that people in marginalized communities experience. Moreover, the novel explores the tension between tradition and modernity, with characters navigating the effects of Westernization and globalization on Turkish culture and identity.

In "Island of Missing Trees," the novel explores the impact of political conflict and displacement on the island of Cyprus. The novel highlights the legacy of colonialism in the region, particularly in the context of British and Turkish occupation of the island. The novel also explores the relationships between different ethnic and religious groups on the island and the impact of colonialism on these relationships.

In both novels, Shafak's use of language and narrative structure challenges dominant Western perspectives and highlights the complexity of cultural identity. By centering the stories and perspectives of marginalized individuals and communities, Shafak highlights the need for a more inclusive and diverse understanding of culture and society.

Overall, the application of postcolonial theory to Shafak's novels emphasizes the importance of understanding how colonialism has shaped culture and society, and the need for decolonization and social justice.

In Elif Shafak's novels "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World" and "Island of Missing Trees," postcolonial theory can be applied to analyze the linguistic context and themes that emerge from the novels.

Postcolonial theory focuses on the power dynamics between colonizers and colonized, and how these dynamics continue to influence society even after colonization ends. In both novels, Shafak explores the legacy of colonialism in Türkiye and Cyprus, respectively.

In "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World," the main character, Tequila Leila, is a sex worker who is murdered and her body is dumped in a dumpster. The novel follows Leila's consciousness as it begins to fade and she remembers her life story and the relationships she formed with other marginalized individuals. The novel uses multiple languages, including Turkish and Arabic, and highlights the diversity of cultures within Istanbul.

Postcolonial theory can be applied to the novel in several ways. Firstly, the novel critiques the way that society marginalizes and dehumanizes sex workers, who are often viewed as disposable. This can be seen as a legacy of colonialism, where the bodies of colonized peoples were often exploited and commodified. Additionally, the novel explores the relationships between Türkiye and its Arab neighbors, which have been shaped by the history of colonization and conflict between different groups.

Similarly, in "Island of Missing Trees," Shafak explores the legacy of colonization in Cyprus, a country that has been divided since Türkiye invaded the northern part of the island in 1974. The novel follows several characters who are impacted by the division, including a Greek Cypriot woman who discovers a rare tree on her property and a Turkish Cypriot man who is struggling to come to terms with his father's involvement in the invasion.

Postcolonial theory can be applied to the novel in several ways. Firstly, the novel critiques the way that the division of Cyprus has perpetuated violence and mistrust between different ethnic groups. This can be seen as a legacy of colonialism, where the British Empire used divide-and-conquer tactics to maintain control over its colonies. Additionally, the novel explores the impact of colonization on the environment, as the rare tree becomes a symbol of the fragile ecosystem of the island.

In conclusion, Elif Shafak's novels "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World" and "Island of Missing Trees" both explore the legacy of colonization and its impact on society and the environment. Through the use of multiple languages and complex narratives, Shafak highlights the diversity and complexity of these issues and invites readers to consider the ongoing effects of colonialism in our world today.

Using theories, we have now grasped how her works were received, as a result, now we can better comprehend how her books were received in Türkiye in terms of their language and cultural setting.

Elif Shafak's work has had a significant impact on the cultural and linguistic context in Türkiye. Here are some key aspects to consider; Cultural Reflection: Elif Shafak's novels often delve into the complexities of Turkish society, addressing historical events, cultural traditions, and societal issues. Her work has been praised for its ability to capture and reflect the diverse cultural fabric of Türkiye. Through her storytelling, Shafak explores themes such as identity, gender roles, social inequality, political upheaval, and the clash between tradition and modernity. Her novels contribute to the ongoing dialogue on Turkish culture and its evolution. Socio-Political Engagement: Shafak is known for tackling politically and socially sensitive subjects in her works. She fearlessly addresses issues such as censorship, freedom of expression, minority rights, and the role of women in Turkish society. Her novels provoke discussions and challenge prevailing narratives, prompting readers to reflect on their own cultural and societal contexts. Linguistic Diversity: Shafak's novels often incorporate multiple languages and linguistic styles, reflecting the linguistic

diversity found in Türkiye. Turkish, Kurdish, and other languages are sometimes interwoven, showcasing the richness and complexity of the country's linguistic landscape. By incorporating different linguistic elements, Shafak highlights the multilingual nature of Turkish society and gives voice to marginalized communities. Reception and Controversies: Shafak's work has garnered both critical acclaim and controversy within Türkiye. Her novels have faced censorship attempts and legal challenges due to their provocative subject matter and frank exploration of sensitive topics. The reception of her work in Türkiye reflects the ongoing debates and tensions surrounding freedom of expression, cultural representation, and the boundaries of artistic creativity. International Recognition: Shafak's international success has also influenced her reception within Türkiye. Her novels have been translated into numerous languages and have gained recognition worldwide, expanding her readership and amplifying her impact. This international reception has contributed to her standing as a prominent Turkish author, making her work a point of pride for many within the country.

Understanding the reception of Elif Shafak's work in the cultural and linguistic context of Türkiye involves analyzing how her novels resonate with Turkish readers, provoke discussions on societal issues, and contribute to the ongoing dialogue on cultural identity, politics, and artistic freedom. It also entails considering the controversies and challenges she has faced as a writer who pushes boundaries and engages with sensitive topics within the Turkish context.

## 5. CONCLUSION WITH POSSIBLE OUTCOMES AND LIMITATIONS

There are several limitations to the Reception of Elif Shafak's works Limitation 1: Cultural Bias One of the limitations of researching the reception of Elif Shafak's work in cultural and linguistic contexts is the potential for cultural bias. As a Turkish-British author, Shafak's work is influenced by both her Turkish and British identities, and it can be challenging to disentangle the cultural influences from her writing. Researchers may come from different cultural backgrounds, which may impact their interpretation of Shafak's work. Therefore, it is essential to acknowledge the potential for cultural bias and take measures to minimize it. Researchers may need to collaborate with experts from different cultural backgrounds to obtain a more nuanced understanding of the reception of Shafak's work.

Limitation 2: Limited Availability of Translations Another limitation of researching the reception of Shafak's work in cultural and linguistic contexts is the limited availability of translations. Shafak writes in Turkish, and her works have been translated into many languages, including English, French, and German. However, some languages may not have translations available, which limits the ability to examine the reception of her work in those contexts. This may lead to an incomplete understanding of how her work is received in certain linguistic and cultural contexts.

Limitation 3: Influence of Political and Historical Contexts Another limitation of examining the reception of Shafak's work in cultural and linguistic contexts is the influence of political and historical contexts. Türkiye has a complicated political and social history, and Shafak's work reflects her experiences growing up in that context. Therefore, it is essential to consider the political and historical context when examining the reception of her work. The reception of her work may be influenced by the political and social climate of the time, and researchers need to account for these factors when interpreting the data.

Limitation 4: Limited Scope of Research A further limitation of researching the reception of Shafak's work in cultural and linguistic contexts is the limited scope of research. Shafak has written numerous novels, and it may be challenging to examine the reception of all her works thoroughly. Researchers may need to focus on specific works or themes, which may limit the scope of their research. This limitation may impact

the generalizability of the findings, as they may not be representative of the reception of Shafak's work as a whole.

**Limitation 5: Researcher Bias** Finally, there is the potential for researcher bias when examining the reception of Shafak's work in cultural and linguistic contexts. Researchers may have preconceived notions about Shafak's work, which may influence their interpretation of the data. Additionally, researchers may have a personal or professional relationship with Shafak or her work, which may impact their objectivity. Therefore, it is essential to acknowledge the potential for researcher bias and take steps to minimize it, such as using multiple researchers or employing a grounded theory approach.

**Conclusion:** In conclusion, several limitations need to be considered when examining the reception of Elif Shafak's work in cultural and linguistic contexts. These limitations include cultural bias, limited availability of translations, the influence of political and historical contexts, the limited scope of research, and researcher bias. By acknowledging

Elif Shafak is a renowned Turkish-British author who has gained international recognition for her literary works. In this paper, we have examined the reception of two of her novels, "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World" and "Island of Missing Trees", in cultural and linguistic contexts. Through an analysis of various reviews, critiques, and interviews, we have gained insights into how these works have been received and interpreted by readers and critics alike.

One of the major themes that emerged from our analysis is the importance of language in Shafak's works. Shafak's use of language is not only reflective of her Turkish and British cultural heritage but also draws on her experiences of living in different parts of the world. Her works often feature multilingual characters and incorporate a variety of languages, which adds to the richness and complexity of the narratives. The use of language also reflects the author's engagement with issues of identity, diaspora, and the complexities of cross-cultural communication.

Another important aspect of Shafak's works is their engagement with cultural and historical contexts. In "10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World," Shafak explores the social and cultural dynamics of Istanbul, particularly its underbelly, while "Island of Missing Trees" deals with the complex and contentious history of Cyprus. Through her works, Shafak encourages readers to engage critically with the historical, cultural, and political contexts that shape the lives of her characters. Her works also reveal the complexities of identity formation in a world that is increasingly interconnected and globalized.

The reception of Shafak's works has been largely positive, with critics and readers praising her innovative use of language, her engagement with complex themes, and her ability to create memorable characters and narratives. However, there have also been some criticisms leveled against her works, particularly concerning their engagement with Turkish and Muslim cultures. Some critics have accused Shafak of being too critical of Turkish culture and Islam, while others have praised her for her boldness and courage in challenging societal norms and conventions.

Overall, it is clear that Elif Shafak's works have made a significant impact on the literary world, both in Türkiye and beyond. Her innovative use of language, engagement with complex themes, and ability to create memorable characters and narratives have won her numerous awards and accolades, and her works have been translated into more than 50 languages. Through her works, Shafak has challenged readers to engage critically with the complexities of cultural and linguistic diversity and has demonstrated the power of literature to bridge cultural and linguistic divides.

In conclusion, the reception of Elif Shafak's works in cultural and linguistic contexts highlights the importance of engaging critically with issues of identity, diaspora, and cross-cultural communication.

Through her innovative use of language and engagement with complex themes, Shafak has challenged readers to confront the complexities of the world we live in and has demonstrated the power of literature to bridge cultural and linguistic divides.

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