

***İklimkurgu: İklim Değişikliği, Antroposen'in Poetikası ve Ekoeleştiril İzler*, by Kerim Can Yazgünoğlu, Konya, Çizgi Kitabevi, 2022, pp. 192, ₺140,00 (paperback), ISBN: 9786051968391.**

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In an epoch when the large-scale effects of human actions on the planet's ecosystem are highly debated, Kerim Can Yazgünoğlu's *Climate Fiction: Climate Change, the Poetics of the Anthropocene, and Ecocritical Traces* (2022) is a timely response to the ways in which literary scholarship has recently turned towards a more environmentally conscious paradigm. While the start of the period of human-induced climate change is still not certain, with scholars and scientists being divided into two camps (one following the industrial view and the other the early-anthropogenic view) (Ruddiman 45), the literary impact of such palpable transformations on the world's climate has exposed itself in the form of climate fiction (also known as clifi). Yazgünoğlu's contribution is, therefore, both to the field of literary studies and to the environmental humanities. Thus, the author's wide scope of research, which has culminated in a to-the-point ecocritical analysis, bears a two-fold significance. The book does not only draw attention to the human and nonhuman needs that require addressing on ecological, social, and political grounds at once but also introduces to the Turkish academic and general audiences the main concepts related to the Anthropocene and to what he calls "its poetics," *i.e.* climate fiction.

In his brief preface to the book, Yazgünoğlu states that, in 2021, Türkiye faced one of the worst draughts in its history, leading to a shortage of crops and threatening both human and nonhuman lives, which indicates the rationale behind his monograph. In line with the aim of presenting his audience with a guide to turn to, he explains his choice of

major works produced in Anglo-American climate fiction, familiarising the first-time readers of climate fiction with significant elements of the genre and offering a compilation of substantial ecocritical analyses of selected works for advanced researchers in the field.

Following from the need to highlight the importance of anthropogenic climate change, in the Introduction, the author mentions humans as a dominant species that has geologically altered ecosystems, thus acknowledging them as one of the geological forces of the earth. Pointing out how humanity has reached an irreversible ecological threshold, Yazgünoğlu refers to how *oikos* (home) has transformed with the global climate crisis (11), perhaps into a space of threats, a place of the uncanny. The book thus explores climate fiction as a subgenre in speculative fiction and a new trans-generic term for literary texts set in the future or present on Earth or on different planets, covering different temporal and spatial parameters, directly problematising climate change and its effects on humans and nonhumans. Noting that anthropogenic climate change signifies not just a cultural crisis, but also a crisis of imagination, Yazgünoğlu discusses how clifi writers describe the socio-cultural, economic, theological, technological, and ecological devastations spurred by the current global climate crisis (11). The Introduction also serves as a template for briefly summarising the intricate relations between ecocriticism and clifi. Borrowing ideas from leading ecocritics, such as Cheryll Glotfelty and Serpil Oppermann, Yazgünoğlu offers several definitions of ecocriticism and lists several related approaches ranging from nature writing, deep ecology, environmental justice, ecofeminism, ecopsychology, urban ecology, Marxist ecocriticism, and political ecology to postmodernist and posthumanist ecocriticisms as well as elemental and material ecocriticisms (14).

The author scrutinises, in the following chapters, selected literary works that deal with extreme heat, wildfires, floods, drying lakes and rivers, desertification, irregular weather changes, freezing climates, and extinct species, with a variety of (ecological, literary, or theoretical) attitudes and techniques that he categorises under several subheadings. For Yazgünoğlu, climate fiction writers create a new genre, in which the aforementioned crisis of imagination inevitably redefines the boundaries of contemporary literary texts. Deriving his framework from Mike Hulme's discussion in *Why We Disagree about Climate Change* (2009), Yazgünoğlu divides his monograph into four main chapters: "Lamenting Eden," "Presaging Apocalypse," "Constructing Babel," and "Celebrating Jubilee." In Hulme's understanding, these four categories, despite their Biblical underpinnings, represent "four myths about climate change," where the word myth refers to "the very specific anthropological and non-pejorative sense of revealing meanings and assumed truths," not speculations or fabricated narratives (340). Likewise, Yazgünoğlu's chapters revolve around solid literary examinations accompanied by scientific facts and scholarly theories concerning the Anthropocene, rather than a further mystification of the already unknown. As Hulme relates each of his four themes with "nostalgia," "fear," "pride," and "justice" (Yazgünoğlu 14), so does Yazgünoğlu in his ecocritical analyses of prominent examples of climate change novels.

The first chapter, “Climate Crisis and Literature: Climate Fiction,” is “a theoretical intervention,”¹ in the author’s own words (14). This chapter aims to locate climate fiction as the point of convergence for literature and climate crisis, and is divided into three subchapters, namely, “Climate and the Human,” “Climate Crisis and the Anthropocene,” and “the Poetics of the Anthropocene, the Anthropocene of Literature: Climate Fiction.” Starting with the dynamic relations between climate and Anthropos, Yazgünoğlu looks into the etymological roots of the word climate, thus tracing climate and the weather as categories that define and explicate the relationship between humankind and the environment (18–19). Exploring various climate change narratives from myths to contemporary fiction, the author discusses the widespread themes that underlie the function of such narratives. Among these themes, as Yazgünoğlu argues, technocratic power, climate refugees, social separation and/or isolation, societal collapse, as well as lawlessness are mostly forefronted (43).

In the second chapter, Yazgünoğlu follows the theme of “Lamenting Eden: Metamorphosing Climates, Changing Natures” and seeks an answer to the fundamental question of what nature is in contemporary ecocritical debates, through his analysis of Julie Bertagna’s *Exodus* (2002). The subchapter “Loss of Climate, the Lament of the Human” problematises the social construct of the dichotomy between human and nature as well as that between civilization and wilderness, mentioning how societies collapse when rivers and lakes grow toxic with pollution. The second subchapter, “Transforming Hyperclimates, Metamorphosing Natures and Humans: Julie Bertagna’s *Exodus*,” illuminates what Yazgünoğlu coins as “dark hyperclimates,” inspired by Timothy Morton’s concepts of dark ecology and hyperobjects. According to the author, dark hyperclimates and ecological disasters with fatal consequences deprive people of food, indicating that life itself will become composed of despair alone and the borders between life and death will erode eventually (73). As such, Yazgünoğlu, through his analysis of Bertagna’s novel, points out the inseparability of hyperclimates or weather conditions from nature(s). Revealing the author’s new materialist-posthumanist stance is the following idea: Hyperclimates, just like weather events, are simply actors of a network that play out a choreography in the wider scope of the planet where the false dichotomies of nature/culture, animate/inanimate, human/nonhuman, and life/death, contrary to what we have come to imagine, are intertwined, relational, and inextricable.

The third chapter, “Climate Apocalypse: End of the World, the Deluge, and Flood Fiction,” is divided into two subchapters: “The World Is a Hell: The End and the Beginning” and “Flood Fiction and Megan Hunter’s *The End We Start From*.” This chapter focuses on the “end-of-the-world” thesis, brought about by the current climate crisis, which is seen as a sign of the Apocalypse. Exploring Megan Hunter’s *The End We Start From* (2017) as an example of flood fiction, which can be categorised as a sub-branch of climate fiction,

¹ Translations from Turkish to English belong to the author.

the chapter discusses the temporal scale of the Anthropocene while de-mythologising the flood and relocating the theme as an omen of the current global climate crisis.

In the fourth chapter, “Constructing Babel: Anthropocentrism, Human as *Homo*, Ecomodernism, and Anthropocenic Recognition,” where the author relates the human desire to dominate nature with the state of hubris and the resulting anthropogenic climate crisis, there are two subchapters titled “*Homo*, Anthropos, and Anthropocentrism” and “Human and Climate Crisis in Ian McEwan’s *Solar*.” Looking into the ways in which humans abuse climate crisis, Yazgünoğlu discusses various ideas from such scholars as Eileen Crist, who views the Anthropocene as the confirmation of *Homo sapiens*’s “Promethean” image (131) and Dipesh Chakrabarty, who respectively presents *Homo* and *Anthropos* as “homocentric” and “zoocentric” approaches to the concept of the human (141–160). Yazgünoğlu’s interpretation of McEwan’s novel as a satirical depiction of the selfish, greedy, and uncaring individuals created by consumer culture and global capitalism (128) is significant in this array. In this interpretation, Yazgünoğlu relies on Greg Garrard’s evaluation that the novel is in fact a comic allegory of the destructive effects of selfishness (124).

The fifth chapter, “Celebrating Jubilee: Climate Justice, Climate Refugees, Global Climate Migration, and Immigrant Ecocriticism” covers three novels. With sub-chapters “Climate Justice and Climate Refugees” and “Climate Injustice and Climate Refugees in Clifi: Monique Roffey’s *Archipelago*, Ray Hammond’s *Extinction*, and John Lanchester’s *The Wall*,” this chapter revolves around the tensions between the individuals under threat and a world that is undergoing constant transformation without providing any stability for its citizens. The author then discusses the narratives of care, empathy, and ethics. By doing so, he links the function and purpose of ecological narratives, especially clifi, to an ethics of care. He argues that this kind of narratives has the capability of evoking such feelings as compassion and responsiveness, thus closing the gap between the privileged and the vulnerable in the face of the climate crisis, despite injustices triggered by the combined threats of poverty and political corruption.

The conclusion, “Clifi as the Literarisation of Climate Change,” draws our attention to the insistence of climate fiction on the dynamic relations between humans and the environment, from the epic of *Gilgamesh* to the advent of the genre with J. G. Ballard’s *The Drowned World* (1962) and to examples that are more contemporary. The author questions whether the global climate crisis condemns us to nothingness, extinction, or death. Highlighting once more the embeddedness of the human species in the nonhuman environment and the interconnectedness of the two in especially their susceptibility, Yazgünoğlu finalises his monograph with his remarkable words: “Climate fiction is the voice of the climate tragedy; it is a lament to the earth” (180).

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- ✘ The author of this review confirms that their work complies with the principles of research and publication ethics.
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- ✘ This review was screened for potential plagiarism using a plagiarism screening program.
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