
**REFLECTIONS OF ENVIRONMENTALIST APPROACH IN THE
CONTEMPORARY TURKISH NOVELS SIGNIFYING THE NEED FOR
CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION OF NATURE**

*DOĞANIN MUHAFAZA EDİLMESİ VE KORUNMASI GEREKLİLİĞİNE İŞARET
EDEN ÇAĞDAŞ TÜRK ROMANLARINDA ÇEVRECİ YAKLAŞIMIN
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*Geliş Tarihi: 26.10.2016
(Received)*

*Kabul Tarihi: 01.02.2017
(Accepted)*

ÖZ:İnsan ve doğa arasındaki ilişki her daim dünya edebiyatının ve Türk edebiyatının yazarları için önemli olmuştur. Ekokritik bağlamda çevreci yaklaşımı benimseyen Yaşar Kemal'in Yanan Ormanlarda Elli Gün (1955), Zülfü Livaneli'nin Son Ada (2008), ve Latife Tekin'in Berji Kristen Tales From The Garbage Hills (1984) eserleri çevrecilik bilinci ve korunmasının önemini vurgular. Ekokritik yaklaşımın özellikleri, Amerikan ve Türk ekokritikler ve yaklaşımlar açıklanacaktır. Böylelikle, bu eserlerdeki çevreci yaklaşımın yansımaları analiz edilecektir. Sonuç olarak, eserlerin çevre konularını vurgulayış ve ele alış biçimleri ortaya koyulacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Doğa, Çevrecilik, Ekokritik, Edebiyat

ABSTRACT:The relation between human and nature has always been significant for authors of the world literature and Turkish literature. Yasar Kemal's Yanan Ormanlarda Elli Gün (1955), Zulfu Livaneli's Son Ada (2008), and Latife Tekin's Berji Kristin Tales From The Garbage Hills (1984), which embrace the environmentalist approach in accordance with ecocriticism, signify the importance of creation of environmental awareness and conservation. The characteristics of ecocriticism, American and Turkish ecocritics and approaches will be explained. Thus, the reflection of the environmentalist approach in these works will be analyzed. Finally, the way these works emphasize and deal with environmental issues will be revealed.

Key Words: Nature, Environmentalism, Ecocriticism, Literature

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INTRODUCTION

The humankind has been consuming the materials in his/her surroundings for his/her needs since the first settlements he/she established. This consumption process which continues for centuries also leads to destruction of the nature. In this perspective, human being who consumes and gives damage to his/her surroundings, also begins to consider protecting and conserving nature. Thus, the protection and conservation of the nature also becomes an important issue for the authors who aim to create environmental awareness by their works. From this point the environmentalist writers who embrace ecocritical qualities of literature in their work, put forth the importance of protecting nature in whole. Therefore, protecting every living being, conserving the whole which are important issues for the continuation of life in the planet also become significant for these authors' works. In this context, like Aldo Leopold, American author putting forth the importance of conservation and reflecting this idea in his work signifying the environmentalist approach, there are also important Turkish authors who reflect environmentalist approach in their works which contain literary qualities of ecocriticism. From this point, in order to exemplify this approach in Turkish literature, Yasar Kemal, Latife Tekin and Zulfu Livaneli could be mentioned, as these writers try to set such environmental awareness in Turkish society by their certain works. In this perspective, respectively three writers' works as *Yanan Ormanlarda Elli Gün* which could be translated as *Fifty Days Amongst the Forest Fires* (1955), *Son Ada* which could be translated as *The Last Island* (2008) and *Berji Kristen Tales From The Garbage Hills* (1984), signify the importance of creation of environmental awareness and conservation within environmentalist approach. From the point of conservation issue, the idea of conservation in whole points out the protection of nature and especially forests and soil for the existence of nature in whole. So these works point out the importance of environmental awareness, protection of forests and the soils for the conservation of whole and contribute to nature writing style in Turkish literature in the way that Aldo Leopold did for American literature. Therefore, it is significant to analyze these works in the context of ecocritical qualities of literature to reveal the way these works of Turkish Literature reflect nature, its protection, and creation of environmentalist awareness.

METHOD

a. Ecocriticism

Nature and its conservation is a significant issue for certain literary works. In this perspective, in order to analyze the way these works deal with the nature and its protection, it is necessary to reflect qualities of ecocritic and ecocriticism. From this point, as a term ecocritic is "a person who judges the merits and faults of writings that depicts the effects of culture upon nature, with a view toward celebrating nature, berating its despoilers, and reversing their harm through

political action” (Glotfelty, 1996; 69). In this perspective, the analysis of such works dealing with nature will be similar to the principle of the ecocritic who analyses and explains the way the work reflects the approach of the humanity towards the nature.

Besides, it is necessary to emphasize the qualities of ecocriticism in order to reveal the way the work will be analyzed. In this perspective, it is significant to explain it as a term.

Ecocriticism is a methodology that re-examines the history of ideologically, aesthetically, and ethically motivated conceptualisations of nature, of the function of its constructions and metaphorisations in literary and other cultural practices, and of the potential effects these discursive, imaginative constructions have on our bodies as well as our natural and cultural environments (Gersdorf, 2003; 10).

As Gersdorf states, ecocriticism handles nature with its many aspects such as the way it is used, its function in literature and culture and so on. Having an extensive definition, it could be said that ecocriticism focuses on nature’s different representations in the literature as it is in many works written in accordance with the environmentalist approach. From this point is it necessary to explain the evolution of ecocriticism in order to reflect how it reaches to an extensive point about reflecting nature, and its representation in different literary works or cultural practices.

Ecocriticism is a critical enterprise rooted in environmentalist revisions of U.S.- American nature writing and 19th-century Transcendentalism (with a particular focus on Emerson, Thoreau and Fuller), and of the British tradition of late 18th-century Romanticism (most prominently represented by Wordsworth) (Barry, 1995; 249).

Understood from these sentences, ecocriticism evolved from nature writings of 19th century American Literature which involve works such as *Walden* (1854) by Henry David Thoreau reflecting a life in the woods and Romanticism of British Literature which includes *The Ruined Cottage* (1799) and *The World is Too Much With Us* (1802) poems of William Wordsworth emphasizing his environmental concerns in the late 18th century.

In this perspective, it could be said that, two important world literatures as English and American initiated such an environmentalist approach in literature.

However, this trend and approach kept its existence till today and it extended to other cultures and literatures.

Over the last one and a half decades, ecocriticism has evolved from a regional movement of Western American literature scholars interested in drawing attention to the cultural value of nature writing and environmental literature into a growing international and interdisciplinary community of scholars who agree that the current environmental crisis is the troubling material expression of modern culture's philosophical assumptions, epistemological convictions, aesthetic principles, and ethical imperatives (Gersdorf, 2003; 9).

As suggested, in the recent decades, ecocriticism overflowed American literature and it expanded to other cultures and literatures. Therefore, it could be said that these literary characteristics of ecocriticism reached to other literatures of the world as it happened for Turkey. In this perspective, it could be said that the universal literary perspectives of ecocriticism also gives insight to the environmentalist approach in the literary works of contemporary Turkish literature.

b. Land Ethic and Environmental Awareness

Environmental awareness and land ethic which are significant points for nature protection are also crucial issues for nature writing examples of American literature and Turkish literature. From this point Aldo Leopold, as the American environmentalist and author, tries to set environmental awareness and creates the definition called the land ethic in *A Sand County Almanac* (1949) which also puts forth many significant sights and opinions about environmentalism and ecocritical approach. "The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land" (Leopold, 1949; 204). As it is stated by Leopold, his ethic includes not only plants or animals but everything in the world. "The other feels a primary interest in the land as a whole, with incidental interest in its component resource" (Flader and Callicott, 1991; 310). Stated by Flader, Leopold emphasizes the conservation in whole but he points out the significance of the soil in this conservation as the soil is the place where both forestation and deforestation happens and cause of erosion. So, he points out the health of the land, the good care of the soil and how people deteriorate the soil. In this context he claims that the worst deterioration made by humans is on soil. "Of the various symptoms of illness, soil erosion and abnormal floods are by far the most important" (Flader and Callicott, 1991; 313). Leopold states that humans destroy the world and the most dangerous of this destruction happens on soil.

Similar emphasis is also seen in the Turkish literary criticism in the context of ecocriticism. In this perspective, Prof. Dr. Ufuk Ozdag's *Edebiyat ve Toprak*

Etigi (2005) which could be translated as *Literature and Land Ethic* is significant, deals with literature focusing on nature, and emphasizes the conservation of nature idea. Like Leopold's approach which criticizes human beings using the soil wastefully as if it is their property, Ozdag states that "instead of ruling over and exploiting nature, humans should consider themselves as a member of biotic community" (Ozdog, 2005; 38). As the author states, people shouldn't focus on ruling or exploiting the nature but consider themselves as a member of this big family of nature. Therefore it is for sure that both critics representing two different countries' literatures' approach on the environmental issues in the context of creating environmental awareness and land ethic, emphasizes conservation and protection.

DISCUSSION

a. *Yanan Ormanlarda Elli Gün*

The destruction and conservation are also significant and emphasized in the work of Yasar Kemal. In *Yanan Ormanlarda Elli Gün*, he points out how humans give harm to the nature, especially the soil by opening farm fields from the forest areas.

You shall cultivate the soil, but the rain takes away the fertility of the soil. This time you could mostly get one of three share. The third year, you could only get one share. The fourth year all the soil is washed away. The sharp rocks and stones are left. The fields goes away totally. The entire field you opened by doing such labor and killing trees disappears (Kemal, 1970; 148).

The writer points out that the way the peasants open fields by cutting trees. But this process turns into the annihilation of the soil. Because the soil without trees are not fertile and furthermore such naked soil leads to erosion. Yasar Kemal emphasizes the deforestation and the erosion it leads. Similarly, deforestation is also seen in America and told by Leopold. "The record shows that the forest front at times retreated almost to Lake Superior; at times it advanced far to the South" (Leopold, 1949; 27). By these words, Leopold portrays the deforestation in America. In this perspective like Leopold's work, Yasar Kemal's work provides a historical document for deforestation and both point out this issue.

From this point, it is stated in "Conservation: In Whole or Part" article about Leopold that the erosion is the worst. "Thus erosion, a malfunction of soil and water, is more serious than "timber famine," because it deteriorates the entire land community permanently, rather than one resource temporarily"(Flader and Callicott, 1991; 311). So, it could be said that both writers point out the danger on

the soils of their countries. Leopold criticizes the the lack of environmental awareness and people's considering the land as property.

In short the power to injure land health grew faster than the consciousness that it can be injured. Land, to the average citizen, is still something to be tamed, rather than something to be understood, loved, and lived with. Resources are still regarded as separate entities, indeed, as commodities, rather than as our cohabitants in the land community (Flader and Callicott, 1991; 311).

As Leopold states, people consider the world as a place full of resources given for the usage of the people and they consider all these as their property. Leopold criticizes this and claims that humans like other living creatures are members of the land community. However, as Leopold stated in the first half of the twentieth century, the similar wastefully approach of human towards nature existed and reflected in the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century in Yasar Kemal's work.

Yasar Kemal points out this situation and emphasizes the lack of environmental awareness. Besides, he criticizes people's considering the land and the entities on it as commodities of human beings, and not perceiving themselves as equal beings with other living beings and members of the biotic community.

He grabs the axe, cuts the peel and eats the sweet parts of the peel. Then he walks towards the other tree. He applies the same to other tree as well. Thus, the tree dries and dies. Even though you sue the men for killing the tree, he isn't punished. Killing tree is not considered as a crime. A couple of years later, the trees get rotten and the men uproot the fresh ones and make wood and then turns that area into a field. All those fields are dried tree fields. All those barren fields which are washed away by the flood as far as the eye can reach are old fields which are taken from dried forests and they can't be called soil anymore (Kemal, 1970; 123).

As understood from the sentences, people consider the soil and the entities on it as materialistic objects and exploit it. Therefore, such an exploitation also shows the need for conservation in whole. Because the destruction begins by a single tree and it leads to destruction of a forest and then destruction of the soil which turns into a barren land. The land which was a forest area suffers from erosion.

But that's not the only method that humans apply for destruction of a forest in order to open farm fields. They also deliberately burn the land and cause deforestation. The book is full of such stories that humans burn the forests deliberately. "I was expecting. I know that they set thirty fires in a night. Don't let

it start, it lasts long long time” (Kemal 1970; 105). The writer points out that some people set fires. These are the peasants around the forest. They aim to open fields. But writer points out the destruction this situation leads.

After the forest burnt, the water washed away the soil. The rocks were left behind. There were deers, brother. They were in herds on Topalceviz Mountain. We used to go for hunting. I know that I shot ten deers in a day. Thirty, forty of them in one place, in Topalceviz Mountain. Bright, red deers with big horns. Now, none of them left. They went away” (Kemal 1970; 121).

The writer points out the importance of conservation in whole otherwise as it is in the story, the soil, the trees and animals on it disappear. So forest and soil are the most important parts for the protection of the entire environment as destroying one of it leads to destruction of all biological diversity. But unfortunately the farmers prefer the farm land to nature which surrounds and let them live on as Leopold states. “Thus a farmer who conserves his soil but drains his marsh, grazes his woodlot, and extinguished the native fauna and flora is not practicing conservation in the ecological sense. He is merely conserving one component of land at the expense of another” (Flader and Callicott, 1991; 316). It is pointed out how the farmers prefer the materialistic objects to the protection of nature.

But, the situation shows the lack of environmental awareness because people are not aware that they are burning the country in the whole as Yasar Kemal states in his work.

And the fire goes on on other side. Now in İzmir, Kemalpaşa, Karacaagaç, Icel, Silifke, Anamur, Antalya, Manavgat, Gundogmus, Alanya, Korkuteli, Elmalı, Kas, Mugla, Fethiye, Koycegiz, Aydın, Karacasu, Manisa, Balıkesir, Dursunbey, Bandırma, Adana, Kadirli, Kozan, Eskisehir. In brief, seven seasons, four corners of the country... a country, its forests are burning (Kemal, 1970; 107).

It is stated that the fires in the forests not only affect that area but affect all of the country. Because, these fires are everywhere and affect each corner of the country and people should be aware of it as conservation of one forest is conservation of all of the country. In order to emphasize this situation, the writer explains how forest are significant and affect the nature, life in all over the country.

When passing through Central Anatolia, man almost jumps out of his skin in front of that arid, drought, the infertility of that cruel nature. If the human could survive in that Central Anatolia’s God

dammed nature and rain drops fall at least once in a year on that barren land which looks like hot sheet iron, it is because of the forest lines in the coasts (Kemal, 1970; 172).

Kemal points out those forests all over the country are important and destroying one part of it affects another part of the country. At the same time this situation reflects the Leopold's idea of thinking like a mountain. According to Leopold, if the nature had been analyzed just considering the current data instead of historical perspective, the deterioration in the ecosystem wouldn't have been understood. That's the meaning of the "thinking like a mountain" (Ozdogan, 2005; 40), it is perceiving the whole. In this perspective, Yasar Kemal provides the data of the past and today for the environment and portrays the deterioration.

In this process of deterioration, the lack of land ethic is an important factor as Leopold states. "There is yet no ethic dealing with man's relation to land and to the animals and plants which grow upon it" (Leopold, 1949; 203). Leopold emphasizes the need for ethic concept which is required to be acquired by people. This kind of lack about land ethic is reflected by Yasar Kemal as well. He tells about the forest fires and reflects a person's words who experienced fires in the region. "Peasants of creek also start a fire in the forest. They don't know that forest is the heart of the country. They are pagans, infidels" (Kemal, 1970; 203). Yasar Kemal points out lack of land ethic and its result for the country where deforestation is inevitable. Because, throughout the novel, the writer points out the different qualities of the trees for humans, the richness it bring to the people. "The tree becomes medicine for a patient as the doctor offers respiration of pine tree air for the patient. Tree not only becomes medicine but also the house, the roof or the chair for the people" (Kemal, 1970; 215). In this context, similarly Leopold considers the wood as a main necessity for life. "It has become a generally recognized fact that wood is, and still continue to be, one of the necessities of life" (Leopold, 1949; 37). Like Kemal, Leopold signifies the importance of wood, forest for the humanity.

But both writers state how the forest has been consumed and the green country turns into a place like nightmare. In this perspective, Kemal talks about forest fire. "We won't be able to put off the fire. The huge mountain will burn. That's how it is. That's how the country burns. A country burns and we watch it as audiences" (Kemal, 1970; 102). Kemal points out how the forests are consumed as Leopold states in Curt Meine and Richard L. Knight's *The Essential Aldo Leopold: Quotations and Commentaries* (1999) work about him. "Furthermore we know that the lumber supply of our country, once believed to be inexhaustible, is now almost used up; two decades, it is estimated will see its end" (Meine and Richard, 2006; 37). So it is pointed out that forest is not an ever ending resource. Thus, for each country and each case, the result becomes deforestation. In this context, Leopold emphasizes the importance of deforestation for conservation by

exemplifying it in his acts in real life. “During the dry years of 1930s, the Leopold family had to plant their pines and prairie plants many times over before they took hold” (Meine and Richard, 2006; 119). In addition to these efforts, Leopold comes out with many offers for reforestation which could stop erosion of the soil.

I would advocate that either the state or the national government put all land under inspection as to adequacy of erosion control and force all owners, whether private or public, to conserve their lands or pass title to some owner that will (Meine and Richard, 2006; 78).

As understood from these words, like his own efforts, Leopold points out organized, more active efforts for protection of the soil. He puts forth some suggestions for the protection of the forests as well. “It is to cut no tree that is not be used, and so head up the branches and tops of the trees that are used that fire cannot spread from one to another” (Meine and Knight 38). He provides biological suggestions for reforestation.

Similar to Leopold's suggestions which point out the protection of land and forests, Yaşar Kemal comes up with suggestions for protection of the land and the forest. He suggests establishing new settlements in the plain lands and keep the people away from the forests and adds many other solutions.

My suggestion is that: the borders of the forests should be drawn, big maps should be prepared according to these borders, the region should be separated into regions, every year another region's people should be moved to previously determined and established villages. The plans of next five, ten years should be prepared for this (Kemal, 1970; 173).

Yaşar Kemal points out both the conservation and management of the forests. In this context, clearing forest lands from people is a similar approach to Leopold who is even against the motorized tourists as he states in his work *A Sand County Almanac*. “The retreat of the wilderness under the barrage of motorized tourists is no local thing: Hudson Bay, Alaska, Mexico, South Africa are giving way, South America and Siberia are next” (Leopold, 1949; 166). Leopold again states that humans bring harm to the nature and shows that he thinks like a mountain which is also considering the next decades as Yaşar Kemal does. In this perspective, Kemal states how things get worse by the time. “Turkish forests could only give 3.5 million cubic meter wood in a year. However every year 17 million cubic meter wood are taken from these forests. If such rapid cutting process goes on, within twenty, twenty five years, all the forests of the country will have been consumed”

(Kemal, 1970; 170). The writer provides today's and tomorrow's technical data and situation. When he does this, he gives scientific information. Thus, he proves that he provides reliable information as Leopold does and tries to convince reader. This shows the common point of Leopold and Kemal's writing as both of them try to create environmental awareness and for this aim they put the scientific data into the works. So that both writers contribute to the development of nature writing and environmental awareness in their countries. Yasar Kemal points out the significance of this by his words in the novel. "I travel in order to write about the forest. This stirred up the advocate. A crucial, untouched issue. It is related to a nation's destiny" (Kemal, 1970; 158). So Yasar Kemal touches this issue and tells the importance of the Turkish nation's forests and nature.

b. *Son Ada*

Likewise, Zulfu Livaneli points out these issues again after fifty three years of publication of *Yanan Ormanlarda Elli Gün* in his work *Son Ada* which reflects not much has changed about environmentalist approach since Kemal's work's publication. Livaneli's story describes disappearing trees and deteriorating nature due to humankind as it happens in Kemal's work. From this point even with its such environmentalist approach, the book emphasizes the importance of thinking like mountain. Because years and years after the publication of Kemal's work, nature and the forests are still important issues and under threat. So the two books represent yesterday and today of Turkish forests and the nature. In this context, Zulfu Livaneli's *Son Ada* is a sight to today's forests in a more fictional approach but his approach still has many similarities with Aldo Leopold and Yaşar Kemal. The events take place in an island of which name and location is not defined. But it could be said that it is a microcosm of the country itself. "The president was not such a person who would give up after a few attempts. According to him, what happened in the mainland is being repeated here as a small model of the mainland" (Livaneli, 2008; 88). The writer tells about the peaceful life of the people in the island where people live in harmony with nature; and distortion of this harmony which begins by the arrival of a general who ruled the country as a result of coup d'état. In this perspective and as a characteristic of ecocritical approach, it could be said that by the text's environmental messages which points out the negative changes the general made on nature of the island, the author tries to reflect the political and cultural and natural condition of the country.

Zulfu Livaneli like Yasar Kemal is an environmentalist. Besides Livaneli and Kemal are close friends due to their common harsh lives in which both were forced into exiles for their political beliefs. In this context not only their life stories are similar but their approach to nature is similar. Being a journalist and writer as Yasar Kemal, Zulfu Livaneli is also a director and an agriculture technician. So he has the scientific knowledge about the nature and reflects his such quality in his

work. “Anyway, apologizing, I shall give you this information: There is an interesting species of pine tree, pinus pinea. On these tall trees, reherce pistachios grow” (Livaneli, 2008; 78). Like Aldo Leopold and Yasar Kemal, Zulfu Livaneli provides scientific information in order to show that he gives reliable information about the nature of the island. So he aims to convince the reader about the importance of protection of nature because ecological conscious is important for the conservation idea as Leopold states. “I have no illusions about the speed or accuracy with which an ecological conscience can become functional” (Meine and Richard, 2006; 75). But similarly, as it is in *Yanan Ormanlarda Elli Gun*, such scientific information is especially provided about the trees which are main parts of the forests. In this context, it could be said that forests are one of the most important parts of the nature protection of them is a significant case for the work as it is in Yasar Kemal’s text.

So it is stated in Livaneli’s work that protection of them is the main cause and such protection requires the conservation in whole as Leopold claims and Yasar Kemal examplifies in his work.

The rich businessman stopped the settlement on the island and didn’t let more houses to be built. Because, he didn’t want the forests, on which the natural beauty, silence and thosand kinds of the green of the island are reflected, being spoiled (Livaneli, 2008; 11).

The writer presents all beauties, natural greatness of the island and the most important part of it as forests. This situation represents the need for the conservation in whole, especially the forests because forests contain all those beauties as the writer states. Because forest is in every part of the life of the people in the work as it is in Yasar Kemal’s work. The forest is the living area of the people as they live under the shade of it. The forest is the source of their house as they build their houses from these trees. “This was a world which wrapped itself up to jasmine smells and is wrapped with same warm climate in winter and summer, away from all mainlands with forty houses which are lost among the forests” (Livaneli, 2008; 7).

So forests mean life for these people but like the people whom Aldo Leopold and Yaşar Kemal mention, the people of the twenty first century do the same destruction on forests as the people of the first half of the twentieth century did. They cut the trees. Livaneli points out this destruction of the people in his work. Before the trees are cut down, people could rest under the shade of it but with meaningless reason of the general, the forest was damaged. “The shade above our head was so dense that we didn’t use to see the sun. This wonder of nature was

one of our treasures in the island. Someday we experienced the haplessness of seeing that those trees on the road were pruned” (Livaneli, 2008; 33). The writer points out how their treasure was taken from them. And he emphasizes that this treasure was taken due to meaningless order of the general who orders the trees to be cut and consider this as a necessity of civilization. “The trees have grown up, interlaced, and took this place’s out look away from a civilized place where people live” (Livaneli, 2008; 34). As it is stated, the danger of civilization which humans create is represented. As Leopold and Yasar Kemal claim, human is a threat to nature, especially forest if they live close to it.

In such destruction, the chain of deterioration happens in nature as it is stated here and in Yasar Kemal’s work. “The sun was on us with it’s all rage. As this situation confused the seagulls as it did us, they were gathering on the road and diving into the trees as if trying to see whether the trees which prevent them to see the road before, exist. They passed over my head couple of times like a bolt” (Livaneli, 2008; 37). Livaneli points out deforestation and how destruction of one entity in the nature leads to a reaction and disturbs all other living beings in the nature. So he offers the need of the harmony between nature and human as Leopold offers. “The most clever thing that the settlers of the island did was not disturbing the seagulls, the real owners of the place, and not threatening their lives” (Livaneli, 2008; 12). The author points out the Leopoldian approach which sees human as a member of the world like other living beings. In this context like Leopold and Yasar Kemal, Livaneli offers the harmony with the nature. “At the end, a harmony was set between humans and seagulls, with a silent treaty, these wild birds and people who run away from recluse life had a deal on not mixing the life fields of each other” (Livaneli, 2008; 12). Livaneli points the importance of this harmony between living beings. Otherwise the harmony, peace could be lost as it happened in the story. As the men attack the seagulls with meaningless reason and request of the general, seagulls attack the people and this signifies that a threat on nature turns back to human.

So the writer points out the importance of environmental awareness and informs about the possible loss of natural beauties to the ones who are not aware of importance of the environment around them.

Actually, we weren’t even thinking that this life was beautiful, we were so got used to it that we were just living it. The human doesn’t think about the sea he sees everyday, the seagulls which perche on the rock in front of the house, the trees which create shade as beautiful (Livaneli, 2008; 8).

The writer points out the importance of environmental awareness as Leopold and Yasar Kemal do in their works. He points out the losses that the lack of environmental awareness could cause. In this context the deforestation becomes main subject for Zulfu Livaneli as it is for Yaşar Kemal. Like Yasar Kemal, he points out that deforestation which causes erosion and loss of all of the land. In this perspective, Livaneli doesn't directly point out erosion and loss of soil but destruction of all land as a result of such damage done on nature and forest.

They were asking where the island is. Where is our island? When we go beyond long distances, used to stop over and rest on this island and so did our ancestors. But now our island doesn't exist. Where will we land and perch? (Livaneli, 2008; 76).

In this sentence, writer describes the view of the island from the eyes of the seagulls flying above the island where general destroys the nature. In this context, from the point of the view of the seagulls, Livaneli points out the total destruction, the loss of the country as Yasar Kemal points out by the destruction of fires.

Such destructive events that human beings lead destroy the ecological balance of nature. In this context, like Yasar Kemal and Aldo Leopold, Livaneli states the importance of ecological balance and conservation in whole as destroying one part of the nature leads to destruction of another part and the balance disappears. Livaneli exemplifies this situation in his novel by the means of the foxes which are left in the forest in order to decrease the numbers of the seagulls which attack people after the trees are cut down and people become visible to them. But as Leopold claims such interference into the nature is dangerous.

I thought that because fewer wolves meant more deer, that no wolves would mean hunters' paradise. But after seeing the greenfire die, I sensed that neither the wolf, nor the mountain agreed with such a view (Leopold, 1949; 130).

Leopold states that his killing a wolf was not a conscious interference to the ecological balance and this wasn't good for the ecology. Similarly, people of the island in Livaneli's work try to decrease the numbers of seagulls as they attack people. So they bring foxes but this leads a chain reaction and deteriorates the ecological balance. "Dear friends, do you understand? The snakes increased as you deteriorated the ecological balance. Because previously, seagulls were eating the snakes. The foxes that you put against the seagulls created a new threat you had never expected" (Livaneli, 2008; 144). Livaneli refers to that kind of unconscious interference to the nature. So conservation in whole idea was praised again. It could be said that for land management, Leopold also offers some interference

such as adding some animals into an area but this must be done very carefully not like in the novel. Because at the end, the number of the seagulls decrease so rapidly that they almost disappear and this signifies how human could destroy life, even themselves on earth.

In this case, as the writer points out, the heaven could turn into a nightmare as it happened in *Yanan Ormanlarda Elli Gun* by destruction of all forests. Similarly in Livaneli's work, the heaven island turns into a nightmare due to attacks of seagulls and snakes. "Maybe someday we get rid of this dreadful island" (Livaneli, 2008; 170). Understood from these words, the island which is described as a beautiful place at the beginning of the book turns into a nightmare at the end due to human interaction to the nature. This situation signifies how human could be destructive as it happens in Yasar Kemal's work. In this context, it is shown that the most dangerous destruction happens on forests again. Forest is the source of life for both works. People live next to it or in it and destruction of it becomes the end of their lives in that area. In this perspective, the book shows how humans put cyanide in the forest in order to get rid of foxes as they lead a decrease on seagulls and an increase on numbers of poisonous snakes. But this act deteriorates the situation and causes the death of many animals in the forest.

They brought cyanide into the forest. They were going to put this poison on meat and leave it in the forest and would hunt the foxes. They did as they said and the result happened disastrous. This time not only the foxes, but also all kinds of living beings who lived in the forest and ate these meats were dying due to cyanide. Island turned into a death camp (Livaneli, 2008; 171).

Livaneli points out that the most important part of land conservation is forest and damaging it causes the end of life cycle. In this context, burning the forest in order to get rid of the foxes brings the end of the island in the novel. Like Yasar Kemal's focus, the author finishes his work with a fire. The fire is set by humans as it is done in the stories that Yasar Kemal tells. But similar to Kemal's stories, at the end of this story the fire doesn't provide benefit to humans and solve the fox problem but mostly brings destruction to them and the nature. "When we look at from the shore, we saw that the huge trees on the way of the fire burned like matchsticks which were lighted by one by and burned totally" (Livaneli, 2008; 175). As understood from the sentences, as a request of general, in order to get rid of foxes, the forest is totally burned down and all people have to leave the island by destroying nature. In this perspective it could be said that

many societies on the surface of the earth disappeared or are disappearing due to environmental disasters and destructions. However, nature renewed itself each time, continued its existence,

but, human kind has always had losses due to the environmental destruction he/she made on his/her surroundings (Ayaz, 2014; 281).

Therefore, the destruction is annihilation of human kind, not just the destruction of the nature and author warns people about that possibility.

When the writer tells how the people destruct the life in the island and have to leave their habitat by burning the forest over there, still he finishes the book with some optimistic views which are like suggestions that Leopold and Yasar Kemal provide. He claims that the life will begin in the island again by the arrival of the exiled writer who is the first settler and his planting new trees.

The writer is still fugitive. There are people who saw him set for a travel to go back to island. He will begin to live in the island again at these days. He will plant trees again. He will build houses. There will be his old friends who will go there to help him. The island will resurrect. We will begin to live in the island again. We will rejoin our paradise on earth (Livaneli, 2008; 183).

The writer states the importance of forests, trees again as they are source of life. He is telling about rebuilding the island. This rebuilding and planting tree resemble to land management idea of Leopold. Like his idea, Livaneli points out the importance of planting trees and enriching the nature if there is lack of certain entities in the nature, and forest with trees are the most important ones as all three writers Leopold, Kemal and Livaneli emphasize.

These three writers put forth the importance of forest and try to explain this to people. So their writings gain much importance. In this context as Yasar Kemal points out the importance of such environmentalist writings, Livaneli puts forth the importance of such writing at the last sentences of his book.

My dear friend, do you remember that someday you told me to tell my story by exemplifying the suggestion of “Cultivate your Garden” which the gardener in Istanbul gave to Candide who looks for serenity in Voltaire’s book? Just tell your story. I did so. I told how we lost the last island (Livaneli, 2008; 183).

The book ends with such words by exemplifying the importance of nature writing. Because people lose their country by destroying nature and the writer tries to make people pay attention to this issue and points out the importance of such writing for creating environmental awareness as Yasar Kemal does, too.

c. *Berji Kristin Tales From The Garbage Hills*

When Kemal and Livaneli point out environmental awareness for a more green and clean nature compared to existing one, Latife Tekin presents a very contrast view and portrays a world without forest and green in her work *Berji Kristin Tales From the Garbage Hills*. The work focuses on the daily life in the slum of Istanbul where people live in tin shacks made of garbage materials and away from the green nature but just in the center of trash of the city in 1960s.

Latife Tekin, who has given the underprivileged masses a voice that can be heard by the world of literature, has presented the reading public another masterful fiction set in Istanbul's shantytowns, built overnight on hills of garbage, particularly on one dump that is provisionally called Flower Hill. What has given Turkish literature is even more impressive. She has provided Turkish, whose literary practitioners have been gradually bankrupting their language on ideological cleanups, with the surprising enrichment of her unadulterated, irrepressible, inventive, hijinks language, which bursts forth like the thousand-and-one flowers on hills of garbage" (Gun, 1993; 886).

Explained by Guneli Gun, the author tells about the people living in shantytowns and as the title suggest the houses on this garbage hill are resembled to flowers. Therefore, the author points out a life where there is no green, no forest but just garbage. Furthermore, as ecocritical approach aims to reveal, the author puts forth a cultural and political event by reflecting the nature and surroundings of the people.

In *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills*, the squatter settlement built on rubbish tips may appear bizarre or unreal to some readers, but in fact refer to a 'real' phenomenon in Istanbul of the 1960s. In the experience of millions who, since the 1960s, have been flowing into the village" (Tekin, 1993; 12).

The author explains this cultural and political situation by her own words in the work and depicts the slums of Istanbul, she points out those forgotten 1960s urban, migrant people who migrated from village to city with lots of hopes but ended up in dumb. Therefore, by the means of ecocritical approach, she also emphasizes a cultural problem in her work. She states that these people don't live in the hills of greens but on the hills of garbage. In some context, in contrast to Yasar Kemal's descriptions which reflect disappearing forests, the works reflects an extinct kind of life, a totally destructed environment without trees. Because "the idea that the reasons for the emergence, development and maintainance of the suicide like attitudes, behaviours and perceptions of human beings, who almost prepeare their ends by the means of largely human originated nature disasters, toward nature are

originated from human approaches is one of the opinions that is dominant in ecocriticism.” (Toska, 2009; 14). In this context, the Tekin provides portrayals just like an ecocritic’s description which shows an area where there are signals of extinction such as houses which are made of dumb and there is no nature but garbage. This area is a total contrast of Kemal’s and Livaneli’s worlds and reflects a very negative view of nature which is almost non-existing

From this point, the author reflects the difficulties of life in this area where the forests, which Yasar Kemal asks to be protected almost 30 years ago, don’t exist. “The scavengers pointed out that the ramshackle walls and makeshift roofs would never stand up to the wind, so the squatters decided to rope down the roofs and nail supports to the walls” (Tekin, 1993; 16). Like Yasar Kemal’s erosion on soil emphasis, the author emphasizes the wind erosion on the houses. As there are no trees to protect the people from the winds, people have to learn to live with that wind which is so powerful that could take off the roofs of their houses made of garbage materials. In this perspective, the author points out that how humans destroy the nature, especially the trees. “Towards the end, not a single tree was left upright on the hill and the garbage was reduced to shreds” (Tekin, 1993; 22). The author tells that the authorities, who come to demolish these people’s shacks also devastate the trees around. Therefore, the trees fall and disappear among this garbage hill as a result of the attack of a group of human beings toward another group of people.

In this perspective, in contrast to disappearing tree, the houses which open like flowers are mentioned. “When Flower Hill broke into blossom, the first thing to be erected by daylight was a mosque with a minaret made of tin plate, but the very day the mosque went up, the night wind tore it apart and blew it away” (Tekin, 1993; 26). By blossom word, the author refers to the flowers which open in the nature, but these are not the flowers of the nature, these are the houses of the garbage hill made of garbage. The author compares and contrasts the nature and urban life. She emphasizes that nature disappears but instead garbage appears and transforms into living ground of these migrants coming from rural to urban. Furthermore, she points out the poor living conditions of people in such a surrounding.

In early summer, showers of pure white from this factory began to pour over Flower Hill. At first they thought it was snow and were amazed. Then an intolerable stench reached the huts within three days this factory snow had withered the first blossoms on Flower Hill and wilted the branches of trees. Hens curled up with drooping necks and died, and people were unable to hold their heads upright.

In the middle of playing, children turned dark purple as if drugged and fell into a deep sleep. One of the sleeping children never woke up (Tekin, 1993; 27).

Tekin states how factories pollute air and nature which surround these people. In this perspective as, “ecocriticism is an interdisciplinary approach that also deals with the relation among the literary world, in which cultural factors and human will be reflected, examined and evaluated in the best way, and ecological destructions, natural disasters, environmental problems” (Toska, 2013; 220), the writer exemplifies these man made disasters in her literary work. She mentions about a factory nearby the garbage hill. She points out how the pollution the factory gives out and harms the trees. She tells that the branches of trees wilt and people begin to be sick. Therefore, she describes a world where nature disappears but garbage, the waste of humanity appears and control lives. She describes a possible future for all mankind by portraying this small group of people and their lives.

In this horrifying example of urban life, the author makes references to natural life, the life in village.

Back in the village the community shepherd girls who used to milk the sheep that grazed out in the summer pastures at night were called ‘Berji Girls’ by the community who held the job of bringing in the milk and carrying it to the village in the high esteem. A girl’s upbringing was measured by the way she went about milking the sheep (Tekin, 1993; 31).

The work tells about the village life, the girls, as innocent beings, and the milk which signifies purity. In this context, the title as *Berji Kristin Tales From the Garbage Hills* reflects a contrasting situation. When Berji signifies purity and nature; garbage hills are the result of destruction and mass consumption of the nature by humans. However, the promotive messages are put forth into the novel in the context of future ecological expectations.

Gullu Baba said that one day the earth would form a crust over the garbage hills and new huts would be raised on the garbage, and flowers of all colours would spring up around the huts. And even inside the huts green, green grass would sprout”. According to him, the tins and bottles and bits of plastic which gleamed under the brilliant green grass on both slopes of the refuse would bring crowds to Flower Hill to look at the iridescent effects of these hills, and at the huts where grass and flowers sprang up inside. He said that huts on Flower Hill would multiply even more, and the wind would lose its former strength but would carry sounds from ear to ear and hut to hut (Tekin, 1993; 40).

By the words of Gullu Baba who is considered holy by that society, a future with green locations is promised. It is believed that grass and flowers will blossom. Therefore, similar to Kemal and Livaneli, the author emphasizes her hopes for an all green future in contrast to gray and dirt of that garbage hill.

In the context of providing such contrasts portrayals, the story provides city and village contrast in order to emphasize the significance of the disappearing nature. “He had meant to live for many years with his first wife whose fragrance, he believed, came from the flowers of her native village” (Tekin, 1993; 130). The author tells about a man who lost his first wife. Tekin signifies lost wife with flowers and native village both of which are symbols of nature against the polluted, wasteful urban. From this point, the author reflects the condition of nature in the garbage hill. “Bayram of the Pine is the only one on Flower Hill to have a pointed pine tree before his hut”(Tekin, 1993; 117). The writer points out that there is no tree in the garbage hill but just one. In this perspective, when Yasar Kemal was aiming to protect forests, Tekin portrays a nightmare like world which turned into just desolation from the forests that Yasar Kemal and Zulfu Livaneli mention. In this context, Tekin emphasizes how humans kill the nature, destroys it. “Those flowers too, like others on Flower Hill, afflicted by pollution from the factories, wilted before anyone could smell them”(Tekin, 1993; 141). She points out the pollution that factories cause, and the harm given on the nature and the loss of the nature. However, the author concludes the story by the hopeful words of a girl who signifies purity and natural beauty. “She described the trees, water melons, and sweet melons, the houses and rivers of the other world” (Tekin, 1993; 149). The girl tells about her dreams, hopes and wishes for future. Her dreams and hopes are based on trees which form the disappearing forests, water melons and rivers which are beauties of nature.

CONCLUSION

Finally, nature is the entity which surrounds us, the entity which allows us to live. In this perspective the significance of it equals to existence of the people. Therefore, the significance of the nature is reflected not only by American writers and critics such as Aldo Leopold but also by Turkish critics and writers. These writers as Yasar Kemal, Zulfu Livaneli and Latife Tekin who embrace the characteristics of ecocriticism in their works, respectively, *Yanan Ormanlarda Elli Gün*, *Son Ada*, *Berji Kristen Tales From The Garbage Hills* focus on environmental issues. Therefore, these three writers in different time periods point out the same issue, the threat against the nature by human. They state that this treat by humans exists in each writers' periods. So they explain the threat and solutions for this. In this perspective their solutions are very similar. It could be said that

these three writers suggest the conservation of the nature in whole and emphasizes the importance of forest protection in this process. For this protection they write about nature and lead to creation of environmental awareness in readers. In this perspective when Yasar Kemal and Zulfu Livaneli point out how the forests are disappearing in the different decades they publish their works, Latife Tekin takes environmentalist the issue a step further and portrays the human lives away from forest but in the garbage. Therefore, by their writings in which each writer reflects the human's approach to nature within cultural, political and social aspect, each author aim to help the protection of nature in his time and country. In this perspective, their writings reveal that the need of protection for nature exists all the time so creation of natural awareness is crucial and a necessity as the threat of human on nature exists all the time.

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