

YEDİTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

AN ECOFEMINIST ANALYSIS OF
URSULA K. LE GUIN'S *THE WORD FOR WORLD IS FOREST* AND LATİFE
TEKİN'S *MUİNAR*

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Istanbul - 2023

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Latife Tekin's *Muinar*

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Supervisor
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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

AN ECOFEMINIST ANALYSIS OF URSULA K. LE GUIN'S "*THE WORD FOR WORLD IS FOREST*" AND LATIFE TEKIN'S "*MUINAR*"

This thesis analyses Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Word For World Is Forest* and Latife Tekin's *Muinar* through ecofeminist theories. *The Word for World is Forest (WWF)* will analyse its main characters, Captain Davidson, Raj Lyubov, and Selver, through the lens of ecofeminist theory. Captain Don Davidson is the representation of exploitative Westernized mindset, whereas Raj Lyubov represents the in-between state, neither exploiter nor exploited. Selver is the representation of the exploited, indigenous societies. The book discusses the racial and gender estrangement, and the fear it causes to minor and marginalized groups, but also it discusses symbiotic relationship the society has with the nature and how crucial the nature is to the society's survival. Despite its complex and stream of consciousness-like structure, Latife Tekin's *Muinar* is an ecologically conscious book that conveys significant ecological ideas. By highlighting the interconnectedness between the non-human and human world, Tekin promotes eco-spirituality, and ecologically aware thinking through the character, Muinar, as a way to counterbalance damaging anthropocentric thinking. Tekin incorporates a perceptive critique of capitalism exploitation, commercialization, and consumption throughout her book. At first glance, Ursula K. Le Guin's "*The Word of the World is Forest*" and Latife Tekin's "*Muinar*" seem different in terms of theme and literary style. However, they both engage in ecofeminist themes and delve into the theories and discussions of different branches of ecofeminism.

Keywords: ecofeminism, ecocriticism, Latife Tekin, Ursula K. Le Guin

ÖZET

URSULA K. LE GUIN'İN “DÜNYAYA ORMAN DENİR” VE LATİFE TEKİN'İN “MUİNAR”IN EKO-FEMİNİST BİR ANALİZİ

Bu tez, Ursula K. Le Guin'in “*Dünyaya Orman Denir*” adlı eserini ve Latife Tekin'in *Muinar* eserini ekofeminist teoriler üzerinden incelemektedir. “*Dünyaya Orman Denir*”in ana karakterleri olan, Kaptan Davidson, Raj Lyubov ve Selver'ı ekofeminist teorinin merceğiyle analiz edecektir. Yüzbaşı Don Davidson, sömürücü Batılılaşmış zihniyetin temsilidir; Raj Lyubov ise ne sömüren ne de sömürülen aradaki durumu temsil etmektedir. Selver sömürülen yerli toplumların temsilidir. Kitap, ırksal ve toplumsal cinsiyet yabancılaşmasını ve bunun küçük ve dışlanmış gruplarda yarattığı korkuyu tartışıyor, aynı zamanda toplumun doğayla olan simbiyotik ilişkisini ve doğanın toplumun hayatta kalması için ne kadar önemli olduğunu tartışıyor. Latife Tekin'in “*Muinar*”ı, karmaşık ve bilinç akışı benzeri yapısına rağmen, önemli ekolojik fikirleri aktaran, ekolojik açıdan bilinçli bir kitaptır. Tekin, insan dışı dünya ile insan dünyası arasındaki karşılıklı bağıllığı vurgulayarak, zararlı insan merkezli düşünceyi dengelemenin bir yolu olarak *Muinar* karakteri aracılığıyla, eko-maneviyatı ve ekolojik açıdan bilinçli düşünceyi teşvik ediyor. Kitabı boyunca kapitalizmin sömürüsüne, ticarileşmesine ve tüketimine dair algısal bir eleştiriyi bünyesinde barındırıyor. Ursula K. Le Guin'in “*Dünyaya Orman Denir*” ile Latife Tekin'in “*Muinar*” adlı eseri ilk bakışta hem tema olarak hem de edebi üslup olarak farklı görünmektedir. Ancak her ikisi de ekofeminist temalarla ilgileniyor ve ekofeminizmin farklı dallarına ilişkin teorileri ve tartışmaları derinlemesine inceliyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ekofeminizm, Ekoeleştiri, Latife Tekin, Ursula K. Le Guin

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to me who believed in herself no matter what.



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1. INTRODUCTION

People live their lives thinking that ecological disasters are a subject specific to dystopias and science fiction novels. Perhaps it was convenient for heedless individuals to behave as if their every action bore no consequences. However, ecological destruction is a reality and we have begun to experience its consequences in a perceptible way. We are living in times that people warned us about in the 70s. While ecological disasters were once considered shocking, in the 21st century ecological disasters and their terrible consequences are daily news.

Recent years have been extremely harsh compared to other years, with examples such as the temperature reaching 50 degree Celsius in Canada, the boiling death of many marine animals in the summer, the burning of the oceans due to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, and the melting of icebergs (Insider, 2021; Tabuchi & Migliozi, 2021; Poynting, 2023). News of ecological disasters were coming from all over the world, such as forest fires in Australia, and unfortunately Turkey was no exception (Cassidy, 2021). In many cities of Turkey, especially Antalya, there were forest fires that people could extinguish in 10 days (Fahim & Karatas, 2021). Subsequently, floods occurred in the North. There was a flood disaster in Bozkurt, a district of Kastamonu (Daily Sabah, 2022). More than 70 people and thousands of animals lost their lives in both disasters. The endemic flora of both regions has been damaged, and it is not known whether it will recover from these disasters and, if so, how long it will take to recover. Projects carried out solely for economic profit and without considering the future and future lives cause disasters even today. It is terrifying to think about what future generations and lives will experience if we continue on this path.

While the consequences of the disasters we feel today show how we are destroying nature. Now it is time to think about how we can help to restore the delicate balance of nature. Therefore, in the introduction and theory section, I will try to explain the keywords of ecological theories and different schools of ecological thought. First, the terms “nature”, “natural” and “culture” will be explained to understand the various meanings of the terms.

1.1. What is “Nature”, “Natural” and “Culture”?

The word “nature” is one of the complex words in the language. The definition of “nature” is not solid, but it is elusive. It is both familiar and unfamiliar; tangible and abstract; comprehensible and obscure. When one talks about ‘nature’, the reference could be to animals, trees, and oceans, and to ‘natural’ things such as ‘organic eggs’; also “natural” parks and ranges or to certain behaviours expected from society, such as “human nature” or “animal nature”. These examples highlight that 'nature,' initially perceived as simple, is indeed complex. With “nature”, there is a vast number of meanings one might address. (Soper, 1995, p.3)

Nature is referred to the subject of study of natural sciences and biosciences, to the questions of metaphysics regarding the different ways of being of the natural and of the human beings, as well as the environment and its various forms of non-human life. The natural differs from both “the human and the cultural”, but also the concept with which we ask ourselves about “the more or less natural or artificial quality of our own behaviour and our cultural formations”; on the “existence and quality of human nature”; and on the “respective roles of nature and culture in the formation” of the individual and the social environment (Soper, 1995, p.2). Since “nature” and its word formation “natural” and its opposite “culture” are complex words, the difference between “nature”, “natural” and “culture” should be discussed.

Since Ancient Greek times, men associate the ‘culture’ with civilization and the ‘nature’ with wildness and untameable. If something was ‘cultural’ or a man was ‘a person of culture’, it meant that it was in order and in harmony with the civilized society they lived in. If something was ‘natural’, it was meant that it did not belong to the modern society, such as “natural medicine” was overlooked and scorned by scientists because it did not belong to the scientific method. Throughout the centuries, starting with Aristotle, these dichotomies are used to classify and organize the society, especially starting with the theory of “oikos” (Roy, 1999). According to Aristotle, men were seen as more logical and suitable for the public domain, which encompassed politics and decision-making, and therefore, men belonged to polis. In contrast, women were perceived as being more sentimental, private, and primarily focused on

the home and family and belonged to oikos. With Aristotle, the binary opposition such as “man vs woman”, “public vs private”, “culture vs nature” were reinforced (Smith, 2022).

The Enlightenment period and the subsequent Romantic period in the 18th and 19th centuries helped shape ideas about gender roles (Fabricant, 1997). Enlightenment scholars, who associated reason, autonomy, and progress with the traditionally male-dominated public sphere, often emphasized these qualities. Romantic scholars, on the other hand, highlighted emotions and nature while classifying women as domestic and compassionate and associating them with nature. Therefore, the notion “women equal to nature” and “men equal to culture” were stressed.

1.2. Gender and Nature

The concepts of "nature" and "gender" have been historically used to justify the oppression of women and nature. It's important to note that this analysis is based on historical context and perspectives that have been critiqued and challenged over time.

1.2.1. Historical Context

Societies have often functioned within patriarchal institutions throughout history, where men held positions of authority and control, and women were confined to submissive duties. The perceptions of gender roles and relationships were shaped by these institutions, which were firmly established in cultural, religious, and social conventions. It was common to use traditional beliefs, which placed an emphasis on maintaining conventional gender roles, to support these norms.

Religious doctrines and creation myths frequently depicted women as inferior to males in the cosmos in many ancient societies. For instance, in Abrahamic religions, the narrative of Adam and Eve is sometimes understood as implying that Eve's subordination to Adam is implied by the fact that she was created from Adam's rib. Women's societal duties as

submissive carers were justified by the concept that they were meant to assist and serve men, which was reinforced by these religious doctrines.

The notion of women's inferiority was influenced by the natural philosophy of the ancient Greek philosopher, Aristotle. He asserted that women were inferior to men both physiologically and mentally, contending that the female anatomy was an “imperfect” adaptation of the male. Because women were thought to have lower intellectual abilities, this viewpoint was used to support the claim that they were best suited for domestic responsibilities (Clayton, 2004). This served as a foundation for later claims that women's natural propensities were toward nurturing and providing for others.

Enforcing the separation of the public and private realms was one of many fundamental developments brought about by the Industrial Revolution (Warne, 2000). Women were limited to the private domain of the house and family, while men were linked with the public domains of employment, politics, and trade. This division was rationalised by the idea that women weren't equipped for public affairs because of their innate duties as mothers and carers. The idea that women's natural roles were limited to the domestic sphere led to frequent discrimination against them in accessing economic and educational possibilities. These views encouraged the gendered division of work, which caused economic and social disparities between men and women. Because of this system, men were able to dominate the decision-making process, thus excluding women from positions of authority.

Social Darwinism, a theory that applied Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection to human society, first came into being during the Victorian era (McKenna, 2023). By claiming that some groups were inherently more equipped to lead and thrive, this was used to defend the hierarchical social system. The notion of men being naturally stronger and better at leadership, while women being naturally weak and in need of protection, served to maintain gender norms.

The colonisation of other lands by European powers during the colonial era was justified by presenting it as a mission to civilise and raise underdeveloped societies. White women were portrayed as needing protection from the untamed and savage indigenous populations as a result of this rhetoric, which also applied to gender. This idea, referred to as

the "White Woman's Burden," furthered colonial and patriarchal power systems by positioning white women as needing the care and control of white males (Syed & Ali, 2011). Women ought to be domesticated in the same way that nature was.

The historical setting in these instances emphasises how society norms, religious doctrines, and scientific theories were altered to justify gender-based inequalities. The "natural" roles that were given to women were frequently used to justify the subjugation of women by presenting it as a part of the natural order of things. The laws, regulations, and social norms that constrained women's opportunities and liberty were shaped by these views for generations.

1.2.2. Biological Essentialism

The idea that distinctions between men and women are essentially due to biological factors, such as their reproductive systems or hormonal makeup, is known as biological essentialism (Devitt, 2023). This perspective has been used to support the claim that women's responsibilities for nurturing and caring for others are a natural consequence of their capacity for reproduction. This viewpoint held that women were destined to domestic and caregiving obligations due to their biological function as child bearers. This essentialist viewpoint was frequently applied to prevent women from seeking higher education, employment, or positions of public authority, restricting their autonomy, and reiterating their subordination.

During the Victorian era, the ideal woman was frequently presented as the "angel in the house"—a kind, selfless woman who put the needs of her family before her own. This ideal was supported by the notion that women were innately more likely to provide care and emotional support than males (Williams, 1893). Women were therefore expected to put their responsibilities as spouses and mothers first, which restricted their access to education, employment, and public life. Historically, the idea of biological essentialism has been used as justification for banning women from higher education and several professions. It was thought that women's supposedly weaker intellectual abilities made them better suited for domestic work and that a demanding career or a rigorous education could be harmful to their

reproductive health. This idea was used to prevent women from having the chance to advance personally and become financially independent.

Legal limitations on women's rights, such as the right to vote, were kept in place in part due to biological essentialism. Women were supposedly less politically aware and intelligent than men by nature, making them unable to engage in political decision-making, according to opponents of women's suffrage. This argument, which was based on the idea that women are primarily carers rather than civically engaged individuals, slowed the advancement of gender equality.

Certain gender roles and behaviours have frequently been legislated using the idea of biological essentialism. Women were frequently viewed as inactive, emotional, and best suited for domestic life, while men were frequently portrayed as forceful, logical, and fit for leadership. These misconceptions lowered the potential of both men and women and upheld negative gender norms. Gender stereotypes are reinforced and chances for people based on sex are constrained by biological essentialism (Devitt, 2023). Societies have historically justified inequality in treatment and restricted access to chances for women in terms of resources, education, and employment by attributing specific traits and talents to biological differences alone. Rather than recognizing the diversity of human potential, it strengthens the idea that women's fates are fixed by their genes.

1.2.3. Social Constructs

The idea that gender roles and identities are primarily established by biology is challenged by the concept of gender as a social construct. On the contrary, it claims that gender perception is strongly influenced by cultural and societal norms. Gender roles have varied significantly throughout cultures and eras. Roles assigned to men and women were often influenced not only by set biological characteristics but also by economic necessities, power dynamics, and social norms.

Historically, many occupations have been divided along gender lines, with some vocations being perceived as better suited for men while others being referred to as "women's

work." Because of their supposedly nurturing features, careers like nursing and teaching, for example, were frequently considered suitable for women, whereas professions like engineering and politics were kept for men. These socially built occupational divisions have contributed to gender-based wage discrepancies and disadvantages in several industries.

Traditional gender roles have been maintained via the social construct of family labour division. Women have traditionally been expected to shoulder the majority of caring and household duties, while males were given positions relating to paid occupation and outside duties. This concept has solidified the idea that women are largely in charge of caring for and managing the home.

1.2.4. Hierarchy and Power

It is possible to see the relationship between "nature," "gender," and hierarchy/power in the way that these ideas were applied to support and maintain male supremacy. Societies may justify the subjection of women by portraying them as being closer to nature and as a result of a wider system in which men-maintained power over both women and the natural world. Men's position of authority was strengthened as a result of being able to dominate women's bodies, labour, and reproductive abilities. This hierarchy was upheld by the idea that women were naturally nurturing and subservient, which silenced those who questioned the established quo.

1.2.5. Exploitation of Nature

The affinity between women and the natural world has often been used as an excuse to exploit the environment. The idea that women should be in charge of caring for the environment came from the perception that they are associated with nurturing and caregiving, which in turn helped to justify their subservient position. This viewpoint fosters gender-based discrimination by ignoring the nuanced relationships between people and the natural world.

The idea that men were inherently better qualified to hold power and make decisions has frequently served as justification for women's exclusion from political leadership roles throughout history (Devitt, 2023). In accordance with this viewpoint, there were fewer women in the government and other decision-making organisations, which strengthened the hierarchical system in which men predominated.

Women have traditionally been assigned caregiving responsibilities for both people and the environment on the grounds that they are inherently more in tune with nature. This theory has been used to support the idea that women are in charge of both maintaining the environment and ensuring the wellness and health of their families and communities (Daily Herald Archive, 2021). However, this has frequently resulted in the exploitation of both women's labour and natural resources, continuing women's oppression.

Furthermore, the marginalisation of women's traditional ecological knowledge is a result of the hierarchical idea that men's understanding of nature is more significant and rational. These insights into local ecosystems and sustainable resource management are frequently part of this knowledge that has been passed down through the centuries, from women to women. Neglecting this information leads to the continuation of dangerous conduct and environmental destruction.

A cycle of alienation and isolation is maintained by hierarchical power structures that place women in inferior roles in both nature and society. Women's ability to handle environmental problems and adjust to shifting conditions is constrained by this cycle.

1.2.6. Intersectionality

Gender discrimination is not an isolated phenomenon, as intersectional feminism underlines. Other forms of oppression, such those based on race, class, and sexual orientation, are intertwined with it. This approach recognizes that underprivileged groups are particularly impacted by the exploitation of nature and women.

Due to their sex, ethnic background, and connection to their traditional territories, indigenous women frequently experience various kinds of oppression. Both patriarchal power structures and prevailing conservation narratives frequently fail to recognize their responsibility to protect the environment and retain traditional ecological knowledge. Recognizing and appreciating their dual responsibilities as conservationists and members of marginalised groups is necessary in order to address their particular difficulties.

Urban environmental problems show interconnectedness in action since underprivileged women are exposed to environmental dangers more than other groups. Pollution levels are frequently higher in low-income areas with insufficient facilities including sanitation and waste management. Due to their responsibilities for caring for others and receiving support from their communities, women who live in these locations are more likely to have negative health effects.

Recognizing the abuse of labour in international supply chains involves interconnectedness. In poor nations, a lot of women are employed in environmentally destructive businesses like textile manufacturing. Due to their employment in unsustainable businesses, these women deal with issues like unequal pay for women, hazardous working conditions, and environmental damage.

1.3. A Map of the Thesis

In Chapter 2, the branches of eco-critical theories will be discussed starting with differentiating between Ecocentrism vs Environmentalism and it will continue with schools of Ecocriticism beginning with Reformists and Deep Ecologists, then discussing the differences between Social Ecology and Socialist Ecology, and concluding the chapter with Ecofeminism.

In Chapter 3, Ursula K. Le Guin's "*The Word for World is Forest*" will be discussed within the frame of ecofeminism. The chapter begins with the short background of Ursula K. Le Guin. After her biography, "*The Word for World is Forest*" will be analysed through its main characters: Captain Don Davidson, Raj Lyubov and Selver. Captain Don Davidson is the representation of exploitative Westernized mindset, whereas Raj Lyubov represents the in-

between state, neither exploiter nor exploited. Selver is the representation of the exploited, indigenous societies. The book discusses the racial and gender estrangement, and the fear it causes to minor and marginalized groups, but also it discusses symbiotic relationship the society has with the nature and how crucial the nature is to the society's survival.

In Chapter 4, Latife Tekin's "*Muinar*" will be discussed within the frame of ecofeminism. The chapter begins with the short background of Latife Tekin. By highlighting the interconnectedness between the non-human and human world, Tekin promotes eco-spirituality, and ecologically aware thinking through the character, Muinar, as a way to counterbalance damaging anthropocentric thinking. She incorporates a perceptive critique of capitalism exploitation, commercialization, and consumption throughout her book.

In Chapter 5, the conclusion will be discussed. In the conclusion, two books will be compared by two categories which are "Ecological Exploitation", and "Gender and Power Dynamics".

2. INTRODUCTION TO ECOCRITICAL THEORY

Similar to various critical theories, ecocritical theory has many branches which they have different school of thoughts, they have clash of essential ideas such as the definition of nature, the real threat to the nature and so on. Ecocritical theory, although relatively new compared other touchstone literary and sociological theories, has been around since the beginning of Romantic Era.

Nature and how it is perceived has traditionally played a secondary role, but it has never been the main point. Most of the time, writers use nature for several reasons. Nature is always in the background, witnessing the story as in *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen or sometimes shaping the story and the characters as in *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte or helping set the tone of the story as in *Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien. However, this started to change when the climate change and its effects became palpable. One of the first literature piece to treat nature as the main character was Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*.

This chapter will discuss the branches of eco-critical theories. The discussion will commence by exploring the differences between Reformists Environmentalism and Deep Ecologists, and then continue discussing the differences between Social Ecology and Socialist Ecology and it will conclude the chapter with Ecofeminism.

2.1. Reformist Environmentalism vs Deep Ecology

When considering ecological issues and how we can solve them, we can see two main keywords, 'ecocentrism' and 'environmentalism'. Although ecocentrism and environmentalism look similar on the surface as both defend the notion "We must protect nature". However, environmentalism sides with anthropocentrism and advocates capitalism whereas ecocentrism advocates living and non-living objects having value. Environmentalism says that nature should be protected in a way that still has a benefit for humanity. Ecocentrism, however, refuses this idea, and even some schools of ecocentrism say that nature should be left

alone and should be untouched by humanity. Environmentalism has been also called “Reformist Environmentalism”.

Reformist Environmentalism has been around for over a hundred years. According to the Reformist Environmentalist, the comfort and happiness of people is the most principal factor and all things surrounding the people, such as nature and animal, is there for the comfort and utility of people. Reformist Environmentalist think the current nature-related problems are “technical problems” and these problems can be solved through “the scientific management” of the nature (Leiis, 1972, p.204). Reformists regard themselves as “progressives, not radicals” as they have no problem with current ideology (Devall, 1979, p.130). Some people, such as scientists, writers, volunteers, have been united in order to protest the current socially accepted standards as these standards’ operations started affecting nature and implicitly, people.

What is socially accepted standard or “dominant social paradigm,” as Devall (1979) would call it (p.130)? A social paradigm is a collectively accepted worldview, a set of values and rules that people believe in and abide by collectively. With these set of rules and notions, people form societies and nations and create their own social reality. The current social paradigm or the world view for Western countries can be defined as individualistic, essentialist, materialist, anthropocentric and egocentric. Individualistic societies put more value on individuals rather than people in societies as a whole. Individual rights, views and beliefs are more important than collective set of values and beliefs. Western societies can be labelled as individualistic as they put more value on individual freedoms and “property rights” and these rights are more important than “responsibilities to nation or the natural environment” (Petulla, 1988, p.13). Essentialism can be defined as an approach that holds that all living and non-living things and humans have fundamental traits that are essential, inborn, and fixed. Therefore, Western societies can be described as essentialist as Western people and scientists use technology and science to understand the world and to determine the characteristics of living and non-living objects on Earth. Materialism is defined as having a propensity to place a higher priority on material things and comfort above spiritual principles. According to Petulla (1988, p.13) and other researchers (Gabriel, 1974; Rokeach, 1974, pp. 222 – 238; Williams, 1967, pp. 20 - 37), “material comfort” and “having fun” is more important than spiritual stuff in society. Anthropocentrism is the belief that humans are more

superior and more important than living and non-living things on Earth and that everything is for human use. This belief is sometimes hand in hand with egocentric belief, which is thinking exclusively on oneself, disregarding the needs or desires of others. Nature is acknowledged in the studies mentioned above as something that humans “cannot afford to run short of” and natural resources are there to be used for “keeping the economy growing” (Gabriel, 1974; Petulla 1988, p.13; Rokeach, 1974, pp. 222 – 238; Williams, 1967, pp. 20 - 37).

With socially accepted standards or social paradigm explained in detail, Reformist Environmentalism abide these standards and with these social paradigms in their minds, they have some movements to make better use of natural resources.

The following are movements advocated by reformist environmentalists are national parks and wilderness, the health and safety of public, proper land use planning, conservation and development of resources, the control of population, the extent of growth and changing human perspective and thoughts towards animals. The idea of creating and preserving the parks, national parks and wilderness gained popularity among reformers who thought creating a space, which allowed people to escape from mundane work routines, would have a good effect on mental and physical health of people living in the cities. Since aristocrats used parks and forests for their hunting activities, reformers saw the opportunity to create urban spaces where people would enjoy and rest. Upper class people supported this movement as their city would have a “cosmetic treatment” such as planting trees, flowers, etc. Sagoff (1974), one of the reformers, justified the preservation of wilderness as nations need to leave legacy to next generations, America’s legacy would be open, endless, undisturbed wilderness, out of which America progressed (p.205). Within the twentieth century, when leisure time activities got popular with lesser work time, the needs for parks and open spaces became government affairs.

The health and safety of the public was on the reformer agenda. With the world wars and rapid development of technology and factories, pesticides used on agriculture and forest became hazardous for people and for animals, the quality of drinking water dropped, and dangerous chemicals mixed with water made it unsafe to consume it. Reformer groups, such as Sierra Club, tried to alert people about the likely dangerous consequences of the chemicals,

the radiation, and other hazardous chemicals. Scientists working for these industries tried to silence the criticisms and accusations. So, it has been shown again and again that big companies and factories working and promoting mass consumption will not accept the deadly consequences of their actions and will try to shift the focal point from the most important. Reformist environmentalists have been striving for laws that would regulate the actions of these industries. They have succeeded in some ways, making these industries more effective in creating less pollution. Even though reformers have striven some laws, the bigger picture and the pollution cannot be overlooked. Without the fundamental and radical changes in society, these laws will be useful until a certain time.

The right way of utilizing land and planning it arose as a response to inefficient and unsuitable land uses, and improper land uses erode the soil and its quality and create erosion. According to reform environmentalists, private property rights should be secured and protected by the state, and private property owners should be encouraged to develop their land for maximum profit (Devall, 1979, p.136; Ferkiss, 1974, p.32).

The movement of the conservation and development of resources is built on the idea that the educated landowner of "renewable resources" will handle the resources for "sustained harvests" for current and future generations. "Scientific management," which is a technically adaptable, qualified approach to the use and management of the land, was thought to be preferable to careless private property use. (Devall, 1979, p.130). According to Devall (1979), this campaign helped to make resource management more professional and facilitate the "centralization of power in large private companies" (p.130). Through "scientific management," nature is "mastered" and managed. Large-scale institutions, both governmental and commercial, have been developed to manage a "resource" like water or to organize its growth (Pirages & Ehrlich, 1974, p.43).

The idea for the control of population is not new. After the Second World War, the birth rate skyrocketed and it was feared that if people kept procreating at this rate, there would be no place to live on Earth as it would be too crowded to live. Paul Erhlich (1968) and Garrett Hardin (1974, p.15) feared that economic expansion could not keep up with population rises. The third of the world's resources were already being used by a small percentage of the

world's population in the 1970s, therefore ecologically, it would be impossible to sustain a high standard of living. That was why programs such as planned parenthood, and birth control were encouraged by the government. Also, it was suggested that so-called developed countries such as the USA, UK should educate the less developed countries such as India, South Africa about birth control and population control. However, the agenda of the 'developed nations' changed in the 70s after the decrease of the birth rate and they focused on how the economy could be developed efficiently (Bogue, 1979, p.110).

The extent of growth is related to population control. It is suggested that the economic development and population increase is correlated by some economists (Mishan, 1980, p.276). Reformist environmentalists believe that there should be a limit to population increase and economic development as the non-renewable resources, as well as renewable sources, have a limit and ecologically speaking, the earth may not be an inhabitable place if people reproduce without a plan. Thereby, a reformer group, the Friends of the Earth (1981), suggests that people should start living in a more conservative way, conservative in this sense means saving energy and using more renewable resources such as solar and wind power, instead of non-renewable energy sources, such as oil, natural gas, and nuclear power. In the 1980s, reformers campaigned for how to conserve energy and different types of renewable energies.

Lastly, reformer environmentalists protested the way animals were treated and tried to change the treatments towards animals. However, their reasoning did not come from an eco-centric point but from an anthropocentric perspective. According to reformer environmentalists, animals help people learn how to be human, and remind them to have human values and expand humans' capacity to feel and think (Shepard, 1978). Reformers helped to change the laws towards animals to use them more efficiently and they tried to build a perspective of how not to exploit animals that are of no use to humans.

Overall, reform environmentalism justifies and defends the ideas and practices of the capitalist industrial society and strengthens the anthropocentric behaviours and ideas. It creates a new type of consumer which is quasi-environmentally aware.

However, ecocentrism and its theories take environmental problems too seriously to cast a veil over them. Ecocritics' goals align with the Reformist goals, Ecocritics want a

revolution, they pursue a new set of epistemology and metaphysics and create a set of environmentally conscious morals and people. Deep Ecologists, one of the branches of Ecocritics, want to topple the dominant paradigm, which is anthropocentric, capitalist and materialist, and replace it with ecologically aware society. They question the modern Western thinking and their dualist mindset and replace it with unity rather than dualism.

In accordance with the theory of Deep Ecology, the human exploitation of the nature is causing a crisis between the relations of nature and society. Humans have wreaked such havoc on the environment that extraordinary steps are required to prevent more devastation, which necessitates a shift in how we think about nature. Without strict political and economic changes and restrictions, it is impossible to suppose, even to hope, that improvement towards a better and eco-conscious society would be achieved. It is also wrong to assume that only one group of the society should change while rest do nothing to change their lifestyle. It is reflexive action to blame the uncontrollable rich, the international big companies and their disastrous actions to make more money without thinking what they sacrifice to the achieve this end. Although big companies take the biggest slice in destroying the ecology and the Earth, it is also normal people's responsibility to take some actions towards a better future. What do we mean by 'normal people'? People who work 9-5 jobs, people who work in the fields, people who go to school, people who produce trash and do not recycle, so basically all people who live and breathe and exist on Earth. Therefore, the changes should come from all directions, from bottom to the top and from top to the bottom. If people want to live in an eco-friendly earth and leave a habitable land to the next generations, their lifestyles and consecutively, their views, ethics, and treatment of the earth should change altogether.

With the fast technological development in 20st century, how 'well' and 'modern' people's lives were measured by how much mass production they consume. With the latest phone's ads, upcoming of the new seasons' clothes, people feel obliged to buy the latest of everything as ads are specifically to design to make them feel obliged without them noticing.

Therefore, both the economic system and the ideology of consumption and production should change. However, even to suggest changing the system is a dangerous idea as people got used to this cycle of life and, even to dream any other way of living is dreaded and out of question.

Arne Naess is the first person who coined the term “deep ecology” in his paper “The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement” in 1973 (p.1). In this paper, Naess differentiates the term “shallow ecology”, which is “the fight against the pollution and resource depletion”, and the “deep ecology” which is the “rejection of the man in-environment image in favour of the relational, total-field image”. Later, Arne Naess and George Sessions make proposal for a “Deep Ecology Platform” to outline the deep ecology and make the difference between “shallow vs deep ecology” clear and useful. They outline their principles through eight items:

1. Human and non-human life existing on Earth has elemental value. The value of nonhuman living forms is independent of their utility for specific human needs.
2. The abundance and diversity of life forms are valuable in and of themselves, contributing to the flourishing of both human and nonhuman life on Earth.
3. Humans have no right to destroy this diversity and richness unless it is to meet critical needs.
4. Humans meddling with the non-human world is currently at an all-time high, and the situation is progressively worse.
5. A significant reduction in the human population is compatible with the flourishing of human life and cultures. Such a reduction is required for non-human life to flourish.
6. Changing policies in economy, technology and ideological structures are required to improve the life of conditions of human and non-human.
7. The fundamental ideological shift is away from upholding a prominent level of living and toward recognizing life quality (residing in circumstances of real value). Deep understanding of the distinction between huge and great will exist.
8. Those who agree with the aforementioned statements are required, directly or indirectly, to take part in the effort to bring about the required reforms. (pg. 29)

As it can be understood from the formulation, the deep ecologists focus is not only on contemporary events, but they focus on personal, social, economic, political, and philosophical problems. Deep ecologists claim that humans should shift from the idea of anthropocentrism, which is an idea that claims humans are the centre of the earth and should start adopting the

idea of nature-oriented, or “biocentric or ecocentric” according to Naess (2003, p.79) way of living and thinking.

Systemic exploitation and oppression of nature is a fundamental idea for deep ecologists. All our actions, aware or unaware, are politically relevant. Power structures are changing because of the rapid development of the countries. People assume that government and its states have more power, however, when considered in depth, multinational firms have more power since they hold and manage the money. Especially in environmental problems, it is essential to understand the power structures as this structure decides on behalf of people. One of the problems with people who try to conserve environment is that they do not know enough about these structures, and they think that changing their lifestyle helps the environment. Although it most certainly does, they must understand the necessity of political means and unity to determine kind and quantity of production.

One of the proposals of Deep Ecologist is the idea of lesser population in societies. Limitation of human population should be implemented eventually as the human population got out of control. Governments should implement planned parenthood and other laws that will ensure the limitation of human procreation. This does not mean hating human procreation or even children, but it means the earth we live in cannot take more human than necessary. According to the Deep Ecology, a new set of metaphysics is needed, and humans should change their focus from themselves to the nature and realize that they are not in the control of nature, rather they are a part of it. According to Jacob Needleman (2003, p.77), a philosopher and a scholar, “Man does not perfect nature, nor is man’s primary duty to make nature more efficient.” A new mindset is needed to be implemented and with the new mindset, division between subject and object is to be demolished and replaced with a uniting mindset. Also, Deep Ecologists state that science should not be perceived as the new religion since in 21st century, people state that they only believe in science. Science should be used to comprehend the cosmos and enhance the understanding of creation and self. With science, the use of technology should be minimised to its “ancient place,” and it should continue to play the role of “appropriate tool for human welfare, not an end in itself.” (Needleman, 2003, p.48; Sessions, 1977, p.311). Deep Ecologists support the idea of going back to ancient times which humans maintain their lives with hunting-gathering and producing their own food. Therefore,

they state that “Integration of sophisticated, elegant, unobtrusive, ecologically sound, appropriate technology with greatly scaled down, diversified, organic, labour-intensive agriculture, hunting, and gathering is another goal.” (Schumacher, 2011, p.55). Lastly, they argue that there should be a drastic decrease in the population and governments should control the rate of increase in population and an imperative birth control should be implemented. With the control of population, an ecologic revolution would be easier, and the dominant paradigm could be replaced more swiftly and efficiently.

Warwick Fox (1989, p.5) points out that philosophical Deep Ecology has two main tasks: "A positive or constructive task of encouraging an egalitarian or ecocentric attitude on the part of humans towards all entities in the ecosphere, and a negative or critical task of dismantling anthropocentrism."

Shallow of reform ecological movement's problems are different from deep movement. The former's aim is “social engineering,” altering human behaviour through laws and regulations for the short-term well-being of humans. The Deep Ecological Movement supports the idea of new green parties as the only way to solve the problems, such as mass consumption and production, in a bigger scale is to be active in politics and change them politically. Until the formulated goals created by deep ecological movement is attained by political parties, the life conditions for both living and non-living will be worsened according to deep ecologists.

2.2. Social Ecology vs Socialist Ecology

While Social Ecology and Socialist Ecology share a common origin and certain perspectives, they diverge on various key aspects.

The core of social ecology is the belief that all current ecological issues have their roots in pervasive social issues. This perspective implies that addressing, let alone resolving, ecological issues require a thorough understanding of our current society and its prevalent hypocrisies. The most important ecological disruptions people currently experiencing, aside from those brought on by natural disasters, are rooted in disputes related to economic, racial, ethnic, cultural, and gender issues, among many others. This is to put this statement more

clearly into perspective. In fact, to isolate ecological problems from social problems—or even to downplay or acknowledge only in passing how crucially connected they are—would be to gravely misinterpret the causes of the escalating environmental disaster. In its core, resolving the ecological issue depends on how we interact with one another as social beings. Without realizing that the current market, society is a completely impersonal, self-operating machine built on the brutally competitive drive of "expand or die," people mistakenly tend to blame other factors, like technology or population growth, for developing environmental displacement. People must acknowledge that private approaches to spiritual self-redemption are not nearly as capable of influencing the future of the natural world as economic growth, gender oppression, and ethnic dominance, not to mention "corporate, state, and bureaucratic intrusions" on human well-being (Bookchin, 2006, p.22). Instead of relying solely on egotistical forms of consumption and investment that frequently fall under the oxymoronic label of "green capitalism," these forms of dominance must be challenged through collective action and by significant social movements that address the social causes of the ecological crisis (Bookchin, 2006, p.22).

Bookchin criticizes environmental theorists by stating that they restrict nonhuman nature as a confined space where human ingenuity, vision, and imagination have no role and offer no possibilities by romanticizing nonhuman nature as wilderness and viewing it as more authentically "natural" than human inventions.

Bookchin introduces the concept of dividing nature into 'first nature' and 'second nature'. Humans always preserve a biological evolutionary history, which we might refer to as their "first nature," but they also develop a distinctively human social nature, which we can refer to as their "second nature." Human second nature is most definitely a product of biological evolution's first nature; hence it is far from being unnatural. It is one-sided and ignores the creativity of natural development itself to write second nature out of nature as a whole or even to diminish it. (Bookchin, 2006, p.27). Social ecology encourages us to recognize how the biotic and social worlds have evolved into one nature that is divided into two distinct parts: the biotic nature and the social nature. The evolutionary potential for more subjectivity and flexibility exists in both social and biotic nature. Humans, as adaptable, highly cognitive primates, occupy and modify the natural world as though it were second nature. In

other words, people design an environment that best suits their way of life. In this way, second nature is no different from the biophysical conditions or eco-community that every species must exist in, which it both partially produces and mostly adjusts to depending on its talents. On a fundamental level, whether it is bird making nests or ants digging up tunnels, humans are not doing anything particularly unique when it comes to survival. However, human beings differ from non-human beings, since human beings act with plans about the future and not think about now and here even though those plans are not aligned with the best interest of nature or not. Animals adjust to their environment, whereas humans create via social effort and thought. For better or worse, individuals change the natural world to suit their needs and wishes - not because they are wicked, but rather because they have very naturally evolved to do so across the years. Their cultures are rich in knowledge, and experience; nevertheless, at many stages in their development, conflicts between groups, classes, countries, and even city-states, have caused them to become strongly divided against one another. Nonhuman beings typically inhabit ecological niches, with instinctual urges and learned reflexes serving as the main determinants of their behaviour whereas human beings are united together by organizations that shifted throughout the centuries. More often than not, the social growth that humans undergo through as they progress from their biological development causes problems for both them and nonhuman life. This is not to say that humans act differently from animals or are intrinsically more ecologically harmful in general. The roots of these issues, the ideologies they give rise to, the degree to which they promote or prevent biotic evolution, and the destruction they do to the world are at the core of the current ecological catastrophe. Bookchin (2006) criticizes the deep ecology theory and movement, stating:

The dualistic approach, with its quasi-theological premise that the world was “made” for human use, is saddled with the name anthropocentrism, while the reductionist approach, with its almost meaningless notion of a “biocentric democracy,” is saddled with the name biocentrism. (Bookchin, 2006, p.27)

Also, Bookchin (2005, p.21) criticizes Reformist Environmentalism by stating that the movement sees the nature “as a passive habitat composed of objects” and nature is “rendered more serviceable for human use.” And most importantly, Reformist movement “tends to reduce nature a storage bin of natural resources” (Bookchin, 2005, p.21). According to

Reformist Environmentalists, the ecological attempt to achieve harmony between humans and nature is more like a temporary ceasefire than a stable balance. Reformist Environmentalism does not challenge the fundamental tenet of contemporary civilization, namely that humans must rule nature; rather, it works to support this belief by creating methods for reducing the risks brought on by careless environmental destruction.

Socialist Ecologists believe that there is a global ecological and economic crisis, and that neither can be resolved without a fundamental reform of capitalism - production relationships and of capitalist productive powers. This implies that in order to address the ecological crisis, it is also necessary to address the economic crisis, and vice versa. The solution to both problems is the Socialist Ecology.

Upon deeper analysis, socialism and ecologism seem divergent, given socialism's historical alignment with the Left, but some ecologists' slogan is "neither left nor right, but out front". Some schools of thought of ecologism, such as Deep Ecologism and Social Ecology, have always supported the localism and decentralism and rejected the idea of centralizing power of state. In this line of thinking, ecological theories and localism have always been against the capitalism and socialism. Ecology reflects a particular kind of relationship between people and the natural world, one that emphasizes the integrity of small-scale and local ecosystems. The most prominent political and economic critique of capitalism and socialism in existence today is made up of ecology and localism. Although, at first glance, both socialism and ecologism are perceived as the opposite, however, both have similar goals and ideas that can unite these ideologies together. These goals can be summarized in two points, the economic issues, and local, national, and international ecological issues. Since the end of World War II and its aftermaths, the vast transformation of social and environmental costs of production has been the foundation for the continuation of Western capitalism. Since the global economy began to slow down in the late 1970s, both socialism and ecologism have been given more attention than at any other time in history. James O'Connor (1991, p.5) explains this by "The accumulation of global capital through the modern crisis has produced even more devastating effects not only on wealth and income distribution, norms of social justice, and treatment of minorities, but also on the environment.". He summarized these effects as "accelerated imbalance of humanized nature" (O'Connor, 1991, p.5). The ecological

issues are too complex to be handled only by localism. Although small scale problems might be handled by local, if ecologists want to eradicate the ecologist issues root and branch, they must start planning nationally and internationally. In order to achieve localism, ecologism is to start with national and international scale and then continue to with localism. Socialism and ecology are not contradictory; rather, they assume one another because most ecological problems have both national and international causes, effects, and solutions. Ecology is necessary for Socialism because it emphasizes selectivity and cooperation, as well as the critical role of material exchanges within nature and between society and nature. Socialism is necessary for Ecology because it promotes democratic planning and the importance of interpersonal interactions. Most of the economic and ecological dimensions of the overall harmfulness of modern capitalism, not to mention the devastating interrelationship between the economic and ecological crises, cannot be adequately addressed by popular movements restricted to local authorities and places.

In conclusion, James O'Connor (1991) summarizes the Socialist Ecology and its necessity as follows:

We need "socialism" at least to make the social relations of production transparent, to end the rule of the market and commodity fetishism, to end the exploitation of human beings by other human beings; we need "ecology" at least to make the social productive forces transparent, to end the degradation and destruction of the earth. (O'Connor, 1991, p.12)

2.3. Eco-Feminism and Its Branches

Ecofeminism, a branch of feminist theory, delves into the relationship between women and nature, examining their exploitation by patriarchal capitalist societies. Ecofeminism explores the oppression of women and of nature and how these forms of oppression are addressed and explored in politics, religion, literature, and society and how similar these oppressions are. These similarities encompass the notion that women and nature are treated as commodities, that men are the founders and managers of culture and civilization, and women

are both managers and slave of the nature, and that men dominate women and men, as in humans, dominate the nature. The significance of valuing both women and nature are highlighted by ecofeminism. While discussions about ecofeminism often focus on women, it is important to note that ecofeminism is not exclusively relevant to women; it addresses broader societal issues. It is important to keep in mind that irrespective of gender or sexual orientation, the state of nature as a whole impact humanity all. Ecofeminism, on the other hand, emphasizes how the outcomes of environmental problems are more likely to have a more negative influence on women because of oppressive patriarchal norms. Ecofeminists, like members of other feminism subgroups, fight for gender equality in society and it differs from other branches of feminism by equating the nature and women.

Ecofeminism is a comparatively recent movement, and it was first created by French feminist theorist Françoise D'eaubonne in her essay called '*The Time for Ecofeminism*' in 1974. D'eaubonne claims that "today the most immediate threats to survival are overpopulation and the destruction of our resources; fewer recognize the complete responsibility of the male System, in so far as it is male (and not capitalist or socialist) in these two dangers." (D'eaubonne et al., 2022). In her essay '*The Time for Ecofeminism*' (1974) and, also later in her book '*Feminism or Death*' (1974), D'eaubonne states that although they make up the half of humanity and having an indispensable role in human procreation, women have been reduced to the minority, sharing minority status with queer people, people of other races and minority groups. One of the problems with D'eaubonne tackles is the overpopulation. For many years, women have been denied having access to birth control or men had a control over women's body and men felt to voice their argument of if or when women should take birth control. Since the nature is treated with the same contempt as women, overpopulation is threatening both humanity and the nature. The earth's fertility has decreased due to urbanization and technological society, which is dominated by men, while overpopulation, which is also dominated by men, has increased. Women must take action to save both themselves and the world. With ecofeminism, D'eaubonne (2022; Gates, 1996, p.13) explains "human beings would finally be regarded as persons and not first and foremost as males or females. And our planet, close to women, would become verdant again for everyone." D'eaubonne explains the aim of ecofeminism as not creating a more equitable and better

society but it is to make sure that humans or other living and non-living things not going extinct like some certain species did and continuing to live and preventing history from ending. However, this threat of overpopulation is biased and two-sided. Some Anglo-Saxon theorists and Deep Ecology theorists, like Arne Naess, talk about the problem of overpopulation and overexploitation but these problems are presented as if they are caused only by 'developing' countries. In the past and still in present, there are many Western governments imposing birth control to 'developing' countries as if these overpopulated countries exploit the earth and its resources more. D'eaubonne (2022) comments on Western hypocrisy, saying "How can they talk about the dangers of overpopulation when the American people are known for consuming 45 percent of the natural resources of the planet?" (p.45). This hypocrisy between the statements and actions is motivated by profit policies and racism as D'eaubonne concludes. That is why, D'eaubonne states, people need an ecofeminist revolution. Although D'eaubonne is the first person to use the term and explain it, Ecofeminism has branched into several categories. The main branches are Liberal Ecofeminism, Cultural Ecofeminism, Social Ecofeminism, and Socialist Ecofeminism.

From its inception in the seventeenth century until the 1960s, liberal feminism dominated the history of feminism. Its foundations are in liberalism, a political theory that acknowledges that nature is made up of atoms that are influenced by outside forces, in a conception of human nature that sees people as autonomous, self-interested individuals, and in capitalism as the best economic system for human advancement. It embraces the egocentric philosophy that holds that the best society emerges when each person realizes her full potential for productivity. Therefore, what is beneficial to everyone is beneficial to society as a whole. Liberal feminists have claimed that women's exclusion from educational and economic possibilities has stopped them from fulfilling their own capacity for creativity in all aspects of human life and that they are no different from men as rational individuals. Liberal ecofeminists believe that ecological issues are caused by the unchecked use of pesticides and other environmental toxins, as well as the excessively fast development of natural resources. If social reproduction is made ecologically sound, the way the social order reproduces through administration and laws can be improved. The proper methods for tackling resource issues are therefore improved science, conservation, and legislation. Women, like men, could assist to

the betterment of the environment, and the preservation of resources provided they are given equal “educational chances” to become scientists, natural resource managers, regulators, lawyers, and legislators (Merchant, 2005, p.200). Therefore, women could overcome the social discrimination because of their genders and work with males to further the cultural goal of environmental protection. Liberal ecofeminism is another supporter of Reformist Environmentalism with feminism in the frame since they want to find a way to a better make use of nature and they do not want to change the current social paradigm.

Cultural, or Spiritual, Ecofeminism is another branch of ecofeminist theory. With the second wave of feminism, which emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s, came cultural feminism. Cultural ecofeminism is a reaction to the idea that nature and women have been equated and undervalued in Western culture. The issue that drives many ecofeminists was raised in Sherry Ortner's 1998 piece *"Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?"*. Because of their anatomy, social status, and mentality, women have historically and across cultures been perceived as being closer to nature than men. Cultural ecofeminists believe that direct political action can transcend and free both women and nature, providing a solution to this problem. Many cultural feminists commemorate a time in prehistory when pregnant female images, and other goddess worshippers' images served as symbols of nature, and where women were highly valued as the givers of life. However, a new patriarchal culture deposed the matriarchal goddesses and put patriarchal gods in their place, whom the matriarchal goddesses then became obedient to. The scientific revolution of the 17th century further damaged nature by the idea of a nourishing earth with the idea of a machine that could be managed and fixed from the outside. Cultural feminists regard the metaphysics and philosophy of mechanism as profoundly masculinist and exploitative of a nature historically portrayed in the female gender. Men have created and control most of the technology, science, and industry on the planet. Cultural ecofeminism, which frequently has an anti-science and anti-technology stance, glorifies the bond between women and nature by reviving old rituals centred on goddess worship, the moon, animals, and the female reproductive system (Merchant, 2005, p.202; Stone, 2014). For many ecofeminists, an idealized view of nature as mother and goddess serves as a source of motivation and empowerment. It is believed that spirituality can lead to both social and personal improvement. Carolyn Merchant explains Cultural Ecofeminism as

For cultural feminists, human nature is grounded in human biology. Humans are biologically sexed and socially gendered. Sex/gender relations give men and women different power bases. Hence the personal is political. The perceived connection between women and biological reproduction turned upside down becomes the source of women's empowerment and ecological activism. Women's biology and nature are celebrated as sources of female power. This form of ecofeminism has largely focused on the sphere of consciousness in relation to nature—spirituality, goddess worship, witchcraft—and the celebration of women's bodies, often accompanied by social actions such as anti-nuclear or anti-pornography protests. (Merchant, 2005, p.202)

Although Cultural Ecofeminism has many supporters in the feminism circle, it also has many critics as Cultural Ecofeminist ideas are essentialist, reductionist, exclusionary and not in depth. It is essentialist as Cultural Ecofeminists believe that there are sets of innate characteristics of male and female and these characteristics cannot be changed. It is also criticized for being reductionist and exclusionary since not every woman's experience and where they are at life or what they go through can be the same. Cultural Ecofeminism does not talk about issues caused by racism, classism, or poverty. One might even suggest that Cultural Ecofeminist willingly choose to ignore these issues as they are not aligned with their ideas and most Cultural Ecofeminists were white hetero women. Also, according to this theory, everything man does is bad and everything woman is good and holy. Only women can have the capacity to empathize and care about nature as women's physiology is similar to nature's cycle and men cannot and do not have this capacity. Cultural Ecofeminism excludes men and contradicts with feminism as feminism's main goal is to bring equality to both men and women. Lastly, this theory is criticized for being not in depth with modern world. Cultural Ecofeminism falls short of explaining how capitalism influences nature through an understanding of capitalism.

A distinct branch of Ecofeminism is Social Ecofeminism, inspired by Bookchin's Social Ecology. One of its supporters, Janet Biehl (1988, p.7) explains Social Ecofeminism as "it accepts the basic tenet of social ecology, that the idea of dominating nature stems from the domination of human by human." Social Ecofeminism believes that with only decentralized communities, humans can build ecological oppress-free societies. Biehl (1988, p.7) states that

“Only ending all systems of domination makes possible an ecological society, in which no states or capitalist economies attempt to subjugate nature, in which all aspects of human nature—including sexuality and the passions as well as rationality—are freed.”. Social Ecofeminism promotes the freedom of women by dismantling social and economic structures that convert everything into a market society. It proposes a system of decentralized communities that would overcome the public-private duality required for capitalist production. In decentralized communities, women can start to participate freely in public life and in local government jobs as everyone is responsible in the community and the job distribution is done regardless of sex, class, or race. Social Ecofeminism is aware of the physiology and reproductive system of men and women and accepts that women and men are different. However, Social Ecofeminism condemns that these differences can entail gender superiority or domination, unlike Cultural Ecofeminism who believes that women are superior to men as it is women who continue the bloodline of humanity. Social Ecofeminism believes that both women and men have the capacity to care for their own race and also, for nature.

The final branch of ecofeminism is Socialist Ecofeminism, derived from socialist ecology with a focus on feminism. It assumes that nonhuman nature serves as the material foundation for all life and that maintaining human life requires access to food, clothes, shelter, and electricity. The social and historical constructs of nature and human nature change over time because of human action. Humans must establish enduring relationships with nature because it is an active subject, not a passive and obedient entity to be controlled. Unlike Cultural Ecofeminism, Socialist Ecofeminism offers a criticism of capitalist patriarchy and focuses on the relationship between production and reproduction as well as between production and effects on nature. As the bringers of life, women in traditional societies and tribes have always had an interaction and relationship with nature as women were responsible for food as a gatherer and they planted, tended, and harvested the crops in agrarian societies and also used these crops as medicine and clothes. However, this intimate relationship between nature and women were severed in industrial and capitalists societies. Men took over women’s jobs as gardeners, healers, midwives, and many nature-related jobs. Men took over agricultural production as agriculture became specialized and industrialized, while migrant and slave women and men provided the labour required for field work. The duties of middle-

class women changed from production to domestic reproduction, putting more emphasis on greater domesticity and the raising and upbringing of children. As sociologist Abby Peterson notes that with capitalism, men oversee and dominate the creation of exchangeable goods, while women are in charge of reproducing the labour force and social networks. Peterson (1984, p.6) explains this as “Women’s responsibility for reproduction includes both the biological reproduction of the species (intergenerational reproduction) and the intragenerational reproduction of the work force through unpaid labour in the home. Here too is included the reproduction of social relations - socialization.” Therefore, Socialist Ecofeminist movement offers a criticism of capitalist patriarchy that dismantles the prevailing Eurocentric culture, strives to reunify people and nature, and seeks to liberate the oppressed and disadvantaged. It consists of both men and women who fight to establish a democracy on the planet regardless of their sex, race, class, and all discriminatory elements. In a way, the Socialist Ecofeminism acts an umbrella term for people who support socialism, feminism, ecology, and postcolonialism.

As evident from the discussion above, various schools of thought exist regarding ecologism and environmentalism. Some have interesting and some have crucial things to add to the pile. Some have same and some have contradictory ideas. Nonetheless, all of them contribute to the ecologic theory. In the following chapters, the books will be discussed using these theories.

3. Ursula K. Le Guin and *The Word for World Is Forest*

3.1. Ursula K. Le Guin and Her Background

Ursula K. Le Guin was an American speculative-fiction writer, best known for her Hainish universe and Earthsea series. Le Guin wrote various works of literature, including 23 novels, various short stories, 11 volumes of poetry, 13 children's books, and five essay collections, and she translated some literature works (Le Guin, 2019). Her contribution to the literary world played a vital role in women's literature and moreover, it played a key part in science-fiction literature written by woman authors. She was born in Berkley, California to an academic and intellectual family, her father, Alfred Louis Kroeber, was an anthropologist, and her mother, Theodora Kroeber, was a writer. She obtained her bachelor's degree in Renaissance French and Italian literature at Harvard University in 1951. Guin continued her education at Columbia University, where she earned a master's degree in French in 1952. Her pursuit of a PhD began shortly after, and however, she dropped out of her PhD studies when she got married to Charles Le Guin in 1953.

Her writing was influenced by her early exposure to mythology and anthropology thanks to her upbringing. She was influenced by many writers such as Virginia Woolf, Jorge Luis Borges, and Charles Dickens to name some. Even though she claimed she had never read Jung before, her most famous series, Earthsea, had Jungian archetypes. Many of Le Guin's stories demonstrate how Taoism significantly impacted her worldview. (Spivack, 1984, p.1; White, 1999, p.2). In contrast to the anthropologists of the Hainish realm, who make an effort to avoid interfering with the civilizations they come across, one of the rules Ged, the protagonist in *A Wizard of Earthsea*, learns at the very beginning of the story is to refrain from using magic until it is inevitable to use it. (Spivack, 1984, p.1). Le Guin's depiction of harmony in the Earthsea realm exhibits significant Taoist teachings and influence. The Earthsea island is shown to be built on a fragile balance that is disturbed by someone in the original trilogy. Bringing together opposites like good and evil or light and dark is another important Taoist concept. Several Hainish works tackled this process of reconciliation, with

The Dispossessed standing out. Contrary to traditional Western tales where good and evil are constantly at odds, in the Earthsea universe, it is the protagonists' misperceiving of the harmony of existence that is portrayed as immoral (Cummins, 1993, p.68; Slusser; 2006, pp. 31 -36; White, 1999, pp. 51 -55).

Le Guin created fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and a variety of literary styles, thus her work is difficult to categorise even though she is most recognized for her speculative fiction (White, 1999, pp. 51 -55). She attracted the attention of speculative fiction, children's literature, and contemporary critics for her writings. Le Guin stated that she preferred to be described as an "American novelist." (Phillips, 2012). Many of her writings have a philosophical, psychological, or sociological underpinning (Cadden, 2005, pp. 80 - 81; Spivack, 1984, p.9). As a result, Le Guin has been called the "patron saint" of this literary subgenre, and her works are commonly referred to as "soft" science fiction (Landon, 2015, p.177; McGuirk, 1994, p.141- 154). Le Guin offered the description "social science fiction" for some of her novels even though she acknowledged that several of them were not at all science fiction. According to Le Guin, the phrase "soft science fiction" alienated people and had a narrow notion of what constituted good science fiction (Lafreniere, 2008). Le Guin's choice of settings for many of her books reflects the impact of anthropology. Many of her main characters are either anthropologists or observers who are travelling to a foreign world or land. Le Guin frequently explores and analyses alien cultures in her writing, especially those of the humans who inhabit worlds other than Earth in the Hainish Universe. Le Guin's characters have a deep exploration of themselves as they learn about these foreign realms, challenging their perceptions of what is "native" and what is "alien." (Cummins, 1993, p.5).

Le Guin's writing style can be labelled as postmodernist, and it was regarded as unconventional at the time the books were published. Le Guin's style was a stark difference from the framework of classic science fiction, which was predominantly written by men, and was plain and linear (Reid,1997, p.5). Her most known and famous series, Earthsea, adopted an unorthodox storytelling structure, called "free indirect discourse," and Mike Cadden (2005, p.92) described this discourse as one in which the protagonist's emotional states are not explicitly detached from the storytelling. With this storytelling structure, the purpose seems to be to make the protagonists appear friendly to the characters in the story and also, to readers

and it also helped to eliminate the suspicions towards a character's ideas and emotions that are attributed to direct narration (Cadden, 2005, p.92 -93). Le Guin explored the themes of gender, sexuality, morality, and political systems in her works and especially in Hainish Cycle.

Hainish Cycle took place in a future era in which human civilizations on planets around several surrounding stars, particularly Terra (Earth), were making their first exchanges and forming diplomatic ties. They were also forming a confederation under the leadership of the oldest and most peaceful of the human nations, Hain. According to this narrative, humans did not emerge on Earth but rather as a result of interplanetary settlements that Hain had established in the past, followed by a significant amount of time in which space travel was no longer possible. Following the fall of the Hainish civilization, the colony planet, which also included Earth, lost track of the existence of other human planets. The Ekumen stories described the attempts to restore a community on a universal scope using NAFAL (Nearly As Fast As Light) interplanetary transport that took decades to travel among planets, but the journey was sensed by the traveller as only taking weeks or months due to time distortion, and instant intergalactic contact using a machine called the ansible. As a result of Hainish genetic-altering experiments, many civilizations possessed unique and unusual genetic features, such as the Athshean civilization which has the ability to dream while awake in *The Word for World Is Forest* (1972), and Gethen civilization which is a society of androgynous people who only experience active sexuality once a month and are unable to predict which sex will appear in them in *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969).

Hainish Cycle includes 9 books which are *Rocannon's World* (1966), *Planet of Exile* (1966), *City of Illusions* (1967), *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969), *The Word for World Is Forest* (1972), *The Dispossessed* (1974), *Four Ways to Forgiveness* (1995), *The Telling* (2000) and *The Birthday of the World: and Other Stories* (2002) and a handful of short stories.

Le Guin explores numerous social and environmental contexts to observe and analyse the sociological, political, and anthropological effects of human progress and evolution in those circumstances. However, Le Guin frequently disregarded the notion of a “Hainish Cycle” as explained in one of her interviews about the order of the books:

What order they ought to read my science fiction books in — the ones that are called the Hainish or Ekumen cycle or saga or something. The thing is, they are not a cycle or a saga. They do not form a coherent history. There are some clear connections among them, yes, but also some extremely murky ones. And some great discontinuities (Le Guin, 2007)

3.2. *The Word for World is Forest* and Its Summary

The Word for World is Forest (WWF) revolves around a military lumber settlement established by the Terran people on the planet Athshea. The native Athsheans have been reduced to slavery by the colonists, who abuse Athsheans severely. One of the indigenous, named Selver, eventually leads a rebellion against the Terran colony after his wife, named Thele, was sexually assaulted, and killed in the process by a Terran military captain, named Captain Don Davidson. Athshean people are successful in forcing Terrans to flee the planet. However, in the process of their rebellion, the Athshean people lose their peaceful and pacifist nature and, unfortunately, learn how to kill.

The novel started with Captain Don Davidson's point of view. Davidson was from Earth, also known as Terra, and he was the head of Smith Camp, a military lumber camp. Since Earth did not have forests anymore and needed wood, which was "more prized than gold" as gold "could be got from seawater" but "wood came only from trees" and the wood was "a really necessary luxury on Earth," Terrans explored other planets to find wood and shipped them back to Terra (Le Guin, 1972, p.11). While the Earth was "a desert of cement," New Tahiti was a world full of forests (Le Guin, 1972, p.8). At Smith Camp, numerous indigenous Athsheans were exploited under the name of Voluntary Labour Routine, both as domestic servants and as slave workers at the camp, though Davidson did not agree with the term as he explained "Slaves are human. When you raise cows, you call that slavery? No." (Le Guin, 1972, p.11). Davidson visited "Centralville," the colony's administrative centre, in the desire "to see the new women for himself" which was sent from Terra as "Colony brides" but also as "Recreation Staff" and Davidson desired to "be the first in line with at least one of them" (Le Guin, 1972, p.8). When Davidson went back to camp, he found it burned to the

ground. He thought either another camp attacked the camp or another off-planet species attacked the camp. He did not think creechies, the derogatory name Davidson called the Athsheans, could do it as they were perceived as non-violent creatures. However, when he investigated, he found four Athsheans waiting for him, one of them was Selver who tried to attack Davidson when Davidson raped and killed his wife. Selver explained that they killed two hundred men, attacking from the forest where nine hundred Athsheans had been hiding. Athsheans let Davidson go and they told him to inform the colony headquarters about the attack on the camp.

In the second chapter, Selver wandered the jungle for five days following the incident until stumbling across Cadast, an Athshean village. Once he recovered from his lengthy journey. Selver told the locals about how the Terrans destroyed his village, Eshreth, and then constructed their headquarters there. He also informed them of the numerous camps where hundreds of Athsheans were taken into slavery. He claimed that the reason he led the assault on camp Smith was that the Athsheans regarded life's value in a divine way that the Terrans did not and Terrans killed Athsheans "as they kill trees, by hundreds, and hundreds and hundreds" (Le Guin, 1972, p.20). Selver explained the difference between Athsheans and yumens, the name Athsheans called for humans, as madness because "there is a wish to kill in" humans whereas Athsheans did not kill one of their own or they did not kill out of joy (Le Guin, 1972, p.20). Also, Athsheans knew how to dream and control them, whereas humans did not know how to dream and only dreamt in their sleep. Selver said he tried to show Raj Lyubov, the anthropologist in the colony, and even Lyubov "called the world-time 'real' and the dreamtime 'unreal' as if that were the difference between them." (Le Guin, 1972, p.20). After Selver told his story, he fell asleep and the headwoman of the town, Coro Mena, declared that Selver was "a god that knows death, a god that kills and is not himself reborn." (Le Guin, 1972, p.21). Following some argument, Coro Mena sent messengers with Selver's account to the head women of neighbouring villages, and Selver himself departed for the Terran headquarters.

At Centralville, there was an investigation going on about the attack that took place at Camp Smith. At the investigation meeting, two ambassadors from the worlds Hain, Mr. Lepennon, and Tau Ceti, Mr. Or, joined the colony staff and other participants as their ship

happened to be passing by to drop new colonists. According to Lyubov, the attack was motivated by the colony's abuse and enslavement of the Athsheans as he said Terrans "have killed, raped, dispersed, and enslaved the native humans, destroyed their communities, and cut down their forests." (Le Guin, 1972, p.31). The colony's commander, Colonel Dongh, accused Lyubov of misjudging the Athsheans as being passive since Lyubov "believed the Athsheans to be incapable of killing men, his kind, or their kind. He had written long papers to explain how and why they couldn't kill men." (Le Guin, 1972, p.27). The ambassadors gave the colony an ansible, machine that made it possible to speak immediately with Terra and the colonial government. They informed Terrans that the regulations of Terra's colonial regime and the government had changed since Terrans colony on Athshe last heard from ITC, a telecommunication machine that took 27 years to transfer the message. Additionally, the ambassadors stated that Terra had joined the "League of Worlds" which was "some kind of league among the civilised worlds (Le Guin, 1972, p.33). When Terrans contacted Earth's government, the government ordered them to let all Athshean slaves go and the contact with Athsheans had to be kept to a minimum. The government stated that "A policy of avoidance is strongly advised; a policy of aggression or retaliation is strictly forbidden." (Le Guin, 1972, p.37). In retaliation for an attack Davidson carried out, he was sent to a different camp under the command of a more senior officer. Davidson, on the other hand, defied his commanders' orders and launched sadistic additional assaults on Athshean towns.

Following the investigation, Lyubov returned to Tuntar, an Athshean town, where he had been observing and studying all summer. At the town, he saw Selver and realised "how deep his liking and loyalty to Selver" and he wished to rekindle their friendship saying "wrong no longer lies between us. And even if it does —it always did—all the same I...I am the same man I was" (Le Guin, 1972, p.44-45). However, Selver shut him out and warned him to stay out of town centre. The Athsheans launched a major assault on Centralville under Selver's direction two nights later as all Terran women were at the camp. Lyubov's hut was purposefully left out of the onslaught, but Lyubov was killed by a collapsing structure as he was escaping. All the Terran women were killed so that Terrans could not breed and overpopulate Athshe. Selver said they killed women to "sterilize" humans (Le Guin, 1972, p.56). The men who remained were gathered into a pen, where Athshean slaves were forced to

stay, and imprisoned. The survivors of Centralville were clueless about Davidson's murders in the south, which Selver informed them they attacked as retaliation for Davidson's attacks. Selvan and Terrans made an agreement, and humans agreed to remove all their outposts and settle in the land they had logged in Middle Sornol with a mutual vow of peace. Humans would live in Middle Sornol until the next Terran ship came and took them from Athshe. Colonel Dongh consented to Selver's terms and ordered the withdrawal of all their existing outposts, including the one where Davidson resided.

However, when Captain Davidson heard the news, he defied Colonel Dongh's orders saying Colonel Dongh and the people at Centralville "had just gone spla, lost their nerve." (Le Guin, 1972, p.62). He claimed there was something in the planet that just "made ordinary humans begin to get as stupid and out of touch with reality as the creechies were " (Le Guin, 1972, p.63). He fortified the camp and said it was time to "show the creechies that they might push around those sheep on Central but on New Java it was men they had to deal with" (Le Guin, 1972, p.64). He started attacking Athshean towns rather than going back to Centralville and his purpose was just to "terrorize them and never let up on them" (Le Guin, 1972, p.65). Following a few weeks, Davidson attacked the nearby Athshean settlement with no success. One night, the Athsheans raided Davidson's base, Java Camp, but all the people in the base—aside from Davidson and two others, Post and Aabi—were killed or seized. Davidson, Post, and Aabi managed to flee in a chopper. In the chopper, Post and Aabi wanted to go back to Centralville, however, Davidson knocked Post out and put his revolver against Aabi's head and ordered him to return and fight with Athsheans. Aabi turned the chopper, but the chopper crashed into a tree in the dark. Post and Aabi were killed in the chopper, and Athsheans captured the injured Davidson and brought him before Selver.

Selver explained that both Selver and Davidson were gods. He said they "bring each other such gifts as gods bring. You gave me a gift, the killing of one's kind, murder. (...) I give you my people's gift, which is not killing." (Le Guin, 1972, p.70). Selver said he would not kill Davidson as there was no justification for killing him, but he would be treated as one of the Athsheans who went mad. Davidson was put on Rendlep, a deserted island, which Terrans called the Dump Island since Terrans cut all the trees, nothing grew there anymore. The remaining survivors were evacuated from the planet three years later by the Terran ships.

The League of Worlds put Athshe under a prohibition, according to the ship's captain, therefore the Terrans might only return to study or observe the Athsheans. One of the diplomats accepted Lyubov's research that Selver had preserved and assured him that Lyubov's efforts to safeguard the Athsheans would not be overlooked and that his work would be valued appropriately. The book ended with Selver's reflection that even though the Terrans may have been driven off the planet, his people had learned the skill of senseless killing.

3.3. *The Word for World is Forest* and Ecofeminism

The Word for World is Forest (WWF) is a book that explores many themes and can be read and analysed through the lens of Marxism, Postcolonialism, Postmodernism, and many other literary theories. One can trace ecofeminist ideas in Le Guin's novels. In this part of the thesis, WWF will be analysed through its main characters, Captain Davidson, Raj Lyubov, and Selver, and it will be explored through the lens of ecofeminist theory.

3.4. Captain Don Davidson

While Selver and Raj Lyubov are grey and certainly not perfect saint characters, Captain Don Davidson can be described as "purely evil" (Le Guin, 1989). Captain Davidson represents everything that is wrong with the real world and the fictitious world in the story. Davidson is the mirror image of Western's socially accepted paradigm. His worldview aligns with the contemporary Western perspective. The first chapter of the book starts with Davidson's point of view, therefore his anthropocentric and androcentric thoughts and ideas can be read and understood.

Le Guin skilfully employs Davidson as the embodiment of capitalism whose greediness has no limit, and his only purpose is to control and exploit human or non-human beings who is considered inferior to achieve his ends. From the very first page, Davidson calls himself "a world-tamer" and he "tamed a fair patch of wilderness in just three e-months." (Le Guin, 1972, pp. 9-10). He represents the technophilic Western society as he views the

Athsheans forest as a waste, since “he still couldn’t see why a soybean farm needed to waste a lot of space on trees if the land was managed really scientifically” (Le Guin, 1972, p.8) and this is evident not only in his exploitation of Athsheans but also in his technological orientation on Earth appears in his thoughts as well, as he thinks to himself “Get enough humans here, build machines and robots, make farms and cities (...) For this world, New Tahiti, was literally made for men. Cleaned up and cleaned out, the dark forests cut down for open fields of grain” (Le Guin, 1972, p.9). Laroche and Munroe explains the techno-philia as "Dominant technologies and scientific discourses that propagate 'objectivity' turn both women and nature 'into passive' objects, to be used and exploited for the uncontrolled and uncontrollable desires of alienated men" (Munroe & LaRoche, 2017, p.4).

The social and ecological environment are seen as opportunities for fresh investment and labour since the capital's owner class is driven by a profit-driven expansion imperative. As a result, capital in the real world, or Davidson in the book moves on with a boundless mentality, causing destruction to society and nature. Non-capitalist cultures are absorbed into and confined inside the governing capitalist whole as “Other—barbarians, savages, human animals, and eventually (with the growth of science), ethnicities and races,” thereby confirming their place at the bottom of a class hierarchy. (Kovel, 2007, p.130) Furthermore, Davidson values nature exclusively for its material usefulness and ignores its intrinsic worth, having a utilitarian and instrumentalist attitude toward it. Davidson is an example of the colonialist mindset that dominates Western culture in this regard. Davidson says wood “was a really necessary luxury on Earth. So, the alien forests became wood.” (Le Guin, 1972, p.11). Nonetheless, it is contradictory to suggest that wood is a "necessary luxury". According to consumer culture theorist James Twitchell, luxury items are "totally unnecessary" (Twitchell, 2002, p.1). Only the capitalist system that forces a narrative of need on its commodity makes the logging of the forest imperative (Otto, 2012, p.104).

Davidson sees himself above the “primitive” Athshean and treats them like animals as he thinks they have no emotion, and they “don’t feel pain” and he thinks they are like “robots” (Le Guin, 1972, pp.11 -12). He defends his actions by arguing that the Athsheans do not deserve to be in charge of their own resources since they are incapable of understanding the notion of ownership and they “have no government, no central authority” (Le Guin, 1972,

p.56). To Davidson, the ‘man’ is the civilised as he explains his idea proudly to one of his fellow soldiers “Primitive races always have to give way to civilized ones. Or be assimilated” (Le Guin, 1972, p.12). In “*Dancing at the Edge of the World: Thoughts on Words, Women, Places*”, Le Guin mocks the rationale of the “Civilized Man” who believes everything, and everyone can be used to achieve his goals:

Civilised Man says: I am Self, I am Master, all the rest is Other – outside, below, underneath, subservient. I own, I use, I explore, I exploit, I control. What I do is what matters. What I want is what matter is for. I am that I am, and the rest is women and wilderness, to be used as I see fit. (Le Guin, 1986, p.161)

In essence, this quote encapsulates Davidson’s character, thereby reflecting the broader anthropocentric, androcentric, racist, sexist, and essentialist worldview prevalent in the Western society portrayed in the novel. Throughout the book, Davidson regards himself higher than non-humans, including the nature and Athsheans as he thinks he is a “saviour” but moreover, he considers himself superior to other races in humanity as he thinks “Blood tells, after all. You couldn’t be fully human without some blood in your veins from the Cradle of Man.” (Le Guin, 1972, pp. 38 - 63). He uses the racial slur “poor yellow bastards” when he describes the Asian-descended soldiers. (Le Guin, 1972, p.63). Furthermore, he describes Raj Lyubov as “Some men, especially the asiatic forms and hindi types, are actually born traitors.” (Le Guin, 1972, p. 38) As a result, there is a hierarchy between species, human vs. nonhuman, as well as a hierarchy within humans, these hierarchies being gender and race. Athsheans are treated as inferior and enslaved as animals, yet their females are seen as human and targeted for rape. Davidson treats women in a manner that is reflective of his attitude toward the Athsheans. He does not accept the autonomy or choice of women and views them as things to be exploited for his own pleasure. He routinely rapes Athshean women and finds nothing wrong with it because she does not show “no pleasure, no pain” and she “just lay there like mattresses” (Le Guin, 1972, p.11).

Davidson thinks “a man is really and entirely a man is when he’s just had a woman or just killed another man” (Le Guin, 1972, p.39). Davidson views the world in dichotomies, man/ woman, human/ aliens, us/them. According to Karen Warren, androcentric thinking

adopts a "logic of domination" that supports the dichotomy of men and women, gives men a higher status than women in this pair, and therefore, it validates the inequality between the sexes. In line with this argument, male dominance justifies the use of social, political, and economic influence to oppress and exploit women and supports a superior political, economic, and social status for men. According to Warren and other ecofeminists, the goals of feminism and environmentalism must recognize the parallels between this male-centred reasoning and the cultural thinking that creates a dichotomy between culture and nature, gives culture a higher value, and thus permits human dominance over nonhuman nature.

3.5. Raj Lyubov

Raj Lyubov is the anthropologist of the Terrans who have settled on the forest planet of Athshe. He is one of the few people who makes an effort to comprehend and interact with the indigenous Athsheans, a tranquil and highly intelligent race of little, furry humanoids. When first came to Athshe, Lyubov felt "oppressed and uneasy in the forest", however after spending four years, he feels he is "completely at home under the trees, more so perhaps than anywhere else." (Le Guin, 1972, p.42). This feeling of easiness and feeling at home can be interpreted as Lyubov moves from the role of the assimilator to assimilated, only it is reversed for him, since he is one of the colonizers, it is unexpected for him to go native and start to comprehend the colonized mindset. Unlike Davidson, Lyubov does not try to assimilate or belittle the Athshean culture. Before Lyubov came and take him as an interpreter and assistant, Selver was used as a servant. They form a bond and start teaching each other their language and culture. Fascinated by their ability to dream, Lyubov starts learning how to dream but he is not as successful as the Athsheans. Lyubov tries to free Selver and his wife from the labour camp, but upon learning the death of Thele, Selver attacks and tries to kill Davidson. Davidson beats Selver to the point of death, it is Lyubov who stops him and heals Selver. That is why Lyubov is a likable character who starts to understand how damaging human colonization of Athshe is and how it affects the Athshean people and their way of life. In the conference at Head Quarters about the attack, he explains that humans "have irrecoverably wrecked the native life-systems on one large island" and if they continue to log, they could turn the

habitable places into desert in less than ten years (Le Guin, 1972, p.35). However, another human tries to justify this action by saying that there is a chance of adaptation and survival. Lyubov, then, tries to defend his point by saying,

That's what the Bureau of Land Management said about Alaska during the First Famine. How many Sitka spruce have you seen in your lifetime, Gosse? Or snowy owl? or wolf? or Eskimo? The survival percentage of native Alaskan species in habitat, after 15 years of the Development Program, was .3%. It's now zero. A forest ecology is a delicate one. If the forest perishes, its fauna may go with it. (Le Guin, 1972, p.35).

He is ridden by an "irremediable guilt" about the colonizing and destroying the Athshean culture and forest that he does not care about his self-respect as long as Athsheans are saved from humans. He says, "Wrongs done could not be righted; but at least they were not still being done." (Le Guin, 1972, p.43). When he goes to observe one of the villages, he notices that Athsheans' nature has changed. He cannot believe that these pacifist, gentle beings started to act like humans, he asks himself, "when their unaggressiveness ran so deep in them, right through their culture and society and on down into their subconscious, their 'dream time,' and perhaps into their very physiology" (Le Guin, 1972, p.43). He causes friction with the other humans because of his efforts to defend and assist the Athsheans, which finally leads to his tragic demise. In his death, he pleads Selver to go back his old self and his own pacifist, tranquil root and stop killing humans considering these killings destroy what is essential in Athshea's symbiotic and harmonious living.

While Lyubov is rather likeable character, that does not change his role and what his role comprises. Even though he is Indian descended, a race Davidson regards inferior to himself, he is the colonizer man in the end. He is not so different from Davidson though his narrative is softer and milder. He sleeps with women sent to the camp and has used Athsheans as slaves. So, Davidson's and Lyubov's characters should be treated differently, but it does not change the fact that he is on Athshe the same reason as Davidson.

3.6. Selver

Selver is another key character in the book, and he is a resident of the forest planet, Athshea. He has a strong connection to nature and understands the value of protecting it. His people's way of existence and the ecosystem Athsheans live in are threatened when Terrans arrive to Athshea and start destroying the forest. Selver is enslaved by humans and tortured to violence and his wife, Thele, is raped to death by Davidson. Selver takes the lead in the fight back against the human invaders "because they are dangerous" and "they go about in torment killing and destroying, driven by the gods within, whom they will not set free but try to uproot and deny." (Le Guin, 1972, pp.24 - 25). Although Athsheans value life itself, if humans resist to leave their planet, then "they must be burned out of the Lands, as nests of stinging-ants must be burned out of the groves of the cities." (Le Guin, 1972, p.25). Unfortunately, to achieve their goal, they leave their pacifist nature and kill humans who resist them before humans "drove them mad." (Le Guin, 1972, p.57)

The notion of interconnectivity, which acknowledges that all forms of life are interconnected and interdependent, is one part of ecofeminism. Selver is a good example of this since he respects the interactions between the various species of his planet, including the plants and animals, and believes that they are crucial to maintaining the ecosystem's equilibrium. Athsheans' symbiotic living with nature is another distinct aspect about them. Unlike Davidson who has clear cut ideas of how the nature should be tamed and controlled scientifically, Selver understands the ambiguity of nature as he describes the forest "Nothing was pure, dry, arid, plain. Revelation was lacking. There was no seeing everything at once: no certainty." (Le Guin, 1972, p.17).

When he explains the differences between humans and Athsheans, he says they are closely related however humans "have left their roots behind them, perhaps, in this other forest from which they came, this forest with no trees" (Le Guin, 1972, p.24). He also understands the connection between environmental damage and the subjugation of his people when humans consider the planet as a resource to be exploited for their own advantage, without concern for the repercussions. Nevertheless, when Selver begins to kill humans to safeguard the forest and his people he fears "he was cut off from his roots, that he had gone too far into the dead land of action ever to find his way back to the springs of reality." (Le Guin, 1972,

p.22). Criticizing patriarchal power structures that support environmental damage and social inequity is another facet of ecofeminism. One could interpret Selver's resistance to the humans as a challenge to this patriarchal and colonizer power structure. He represents the colonial countries who tries to resist the colonizers. He resists human attempts to dominate and subjugate him and his species by claiming his own agency and freedom however these costs him and his species greatly as they lose their innocence. He also recognizes the importance of collective action and works to unite his people in their resistance since Athsheans are a species who does not have a government.

The social system of Athsheans can be described as matriarchic as “women ran the cities and towns” and they have no government or any central authority, but only Headwomen who are the decision makers, also Athsheans do not live together as a country, but they live in clans (Le Guin, 1972, p.21). In Lyubov’s report about Athsheans, it states that “Rape, violent assault and murder virtually don’t exist among them” (Le Guin, 1972, p.31). Each clan has their own culture, language and “infinite ramifications of manners, morals, customs, crafts” (Le Guin, 1972, p.21). In Lyubov’s report, it also states that Athsheans are “static, stable, uniform society. They have no history. Perfectly integrated, and wholly unprogressive.” (Le Guin, 1972, p.31). There is no hierarchy among Athsheans, their social structure consists of Great Dreamers who are men who dream in Men’s Lodge, women who are the decision makers and run the cities and other men “who remained hunters, fishers, weavers, builders, those who dreamed only small dreams outside the Lodge” and Old Women who worked as interpreters and keepers of “other documents, rumours, problems, myths and dreams” and the final decision about the town is “always the Old Women’s choice” (Le Guin, 1972, p.21). Although the languages and the culture change among the clans in real time, they use the old tongue in the dreamtime, and it has minor variations and is understood by men who dream. Every Athshean can dream, however it is a few men who is trained to control the Great Dreaming which is a telepathic communication that has no spatial or time limit. According to Athsheans, there is not any difference between real-time and dreamtime, that is why they think Terrans are crazy because Terrans claim there is a difference between real-time and dreamtime.

But they only dream in sleep, you said; if they want to dream waking, they take poisons so that the dreams go out of control, you said! How can people be any madder? They don't know the dream-time from the world-time, any more than a baby does. Maybe when they kill a tree, they think it will come alive again! (Le Guin, 1972, p.24).

For species like Terrans, time is a linear concept. One can only move forward in time, they cannot go back, they can only reminisce. The concept of time is man-made. There are two sharply divided concepts of time: the real-time and dream-time. Soldiers in the camp either go to sleep and dream in sleep or they take drugs to dream. In their sleep, they think their dreams are unreal or with their drug-induced haze they do not realise the potential of their sleep. They represent a more industrialized and Westernized mindset. A sense of advancement, development, and hope for the future are frequently connected to this linear concept. Terrans introduce a linear conception of time to exploit Athshea's resources for their own benefit. Whereas, the Athsheans have a cyclical understanding of time that is strongly intertwined with the natural cycles of the world around them. They have a more fluid and holistic understanding of time, which takes into account the seasons, natural cycles, and repetitive features of life. Indigenous and traditional societies, which focus on living in harmony with nature rather than controlling it, often seem to adopt this cyclical perspective. By accessing this cyclical knowledge in dream states, Athsheans strengthen their ties with the world and each other. Using these opposing conceptions of time, Le Guin reflect on what happens when a cyclical and interconnected ecosystem is forced to accept a linear, exploitative way of thinking. The degradation caused by human activity serves as a warning about the risks of ignoring the cyclicity and natural balance of life in favour of unlimited development and resource extraction.

Ursula K. Le Guin's book "*The Word for World is Forest*" explores ecofeminist ideas through its depiction of the exploitation and destruction of a forested planet, and the resistance of its indigenous inhabitants, who are largely female. The book shows that the destruction of nature and the subjugation of women is inherently intertwined. One cannot be solved without the other. However, it cannot be stated that the patriarchy is the only cause of these problems. Murray Bookchin, the founder of Social Ecology theory, states the core of social ecology is the belief that almost all current ecological issues have their roots in pervasive social issues.

This perspective has the implication that these ecological issues cannot be addressed, much less resolved, without a thorough comprehension of our current society and the dominant hypocrisies inside it. The most important ecological disruptions people currently experiencing, aside from those brought on by natural disasters, are rooted in disputes related to economic, racial, ethnic, cultural, and gender issues, among many other. Mary Mellor supports this idea by stating that “Patriarchy only exists as one form of hierarchy, it is neither the original, nor the primary oppression” (Mellor, 1997, p.158). The social ecofeminist Gaard states that “Features unique to social ecofeminism include . . . its analysis of the hierarchical structure of oppression as even more descriptive than the specific forms of oppression” (Gaard, 1998, p.43). Throughout the book, it is evident that the subjugation of women and nature is caused not only by a patriarchal mindset but primarily by economic factors. Terrans search woods throughout the universe, as they have exploited and destroyed their own forests and ecological balance. They subjugate the Athsheans since Athsheans are a species who have no concept of violence. By using Davidson’s character, Le Guin shows that the solution to subjugation of women and nature cannot be solely solved by dismantling the patriarchal society, as the problem is too complex to tie it to one cause.

Derek Wall (2010, p.7) explains “The root of ecological crisis is economic”. Since the limitless growth mindset includes the superiority of the ones who hold the capital, it also means the growth of one culture and erasing of the cultures who cannot defend either their culture or their ecology. Tony Clarke (Clarke et al., 2001, p.141) explains this erasure as “A global monoculture is emerging, which not only disregards local tastes and cultural differences but threatens to serve as a form of social control over the attitudes, expectations, and behaviour of people all over the world.” This global monoculture mindset is what Davidson wants and tries to implement on Athshea. He tries to erase the culture of Athshea and enforce his culture both on Athshean people and also, other Terrans as well.

Hence, the revolutionary approach to addressing such a disaster involves exposing capitalism, highlighting its practices and consequences, and then challenging the economic structure with a newly envisioned 'democratic mode of production' (Otto, 2012, p.104). This new style of production would confront the “global capitalism” which is socially and

environmentally untenable and is the main root of “anthropogenic pressures on planetary boundaries”. (Otto, 2012, p.104)

Therefore, in *The Word for World Is Forest*, Ursula K. Le Guin raises awareness about current world problems rather than imaginary ones. She takes the problems known to her readers and changes setting to create the defamiliarization effect. Because she believed that human nature involves both the greatest and worst of its kind, Guin stuck to her original intention of challenging her readers' political beliefs, perceptions of race, and gender rather than daydreaming about a future she believed was impossible. The book discusses the racial and gender estrangement, and the fear it causes to minor and marginalized groups, but also it discusses symbiotic relationship the society has with the nature and how crucial the nature is to the society's survival. Darko Suvin summarizes this as "the main thrust and strength of Ursula K. Le Guin's writing lies in the quest for sketching of a new collectivist system of no longer alienated human relationships, which arise out of absolute necessity for overcoming an intolerable ethical, political, and physical alienation" (Suvin, 1975, p.265).

This chapter explored an American speculative fiction book, *The Word for World Is Forest* by Ursula K. Le Guin, through the lens of ecofeminism. In the next chapter, a Turkish magical realist book, *Muinar* by Latife Tekin will be discussed through the lens of ecofeminism.

4. Latife Tekin and *Muinar*

4.1. Latife Tekin and Turkish Literature in 1980s

The feminist movement, whose effects became increasingly evident in Turkey since the 1970s, has tirelessly worked to establish itself as a crucial and significant subject in the realm of Turkish literature today. One of the most significant contributors to the feminist movement in Turkish literature since the 1980s is Latife Tekin. She was born in 1957 in the village of Karacafenk, in the Bünyan district of Kayseri. She moved to Istanbul with her family when she was nine years old. She completed her primary and secondary education in Istanbul and graduated from Beşiktaş Girls' High School in 1974. She worked in the Istanbul Telephone Department in 1976 and 1977 (Yalçın & Çakıroğlu, 2001). Latife Tekin recounts her life story in an interview with Şenay Kalkan in 1983:

I was born in 1957 in Karacafenk village of Kayseri. I started school as soon as I learned to walk. The school was the boys' room in our house. I learned to read and write while dealing with jinn under the cedars. In Karacafenk, jinn and fairies lived under the cedars. my childhood passed between them [...] My father used to work in Istanbul. Now I forget who told me that my mother was a strange woman with a broken heart. (Kalkan, 1983)

In most of her interviews, Tekin stated that the migration from the village to the city was a traumatic experience for her (Kalkan, 1983). She says “I came to Istanbul in 1966. It was as if my childhood was split in two by a sharp pain. Unfulfilled dreams shattered the people among whom I was born and raised.” (Kalkan, 1983). Tekin focused on the experiences of the poor and those who migrated from villages to big cities in her early works. What sets Tekin apart in Turkish literature is her unique approach to the theme of migration. While many writers explore this topic from a realistic and socialist standpoint, Tekin employs a 'magical realist' perspective in her works. Writing down the experiences Tekin gained from encountering city life is not just only shedding light on the experiences of families who migrated to big cities in Turkey in the 1960s. In addition, it is important in terms of making

new contributions to the migration theme, which could seem insignificant, at first glance, to the history of Turkish literature, however it sheds some light to those who experience it in the framework of society and individuals. Tekin recalls her early years:

I was nine years old, we migrated from the village to the city, I knew nothing about the city. I started school in Beşiktaş. There was a huge difference between me and the children around me, from clothing and language to all manners. I could only relate to children from poor families, other children excluded me. This was a great honour for me. I made an intense effort to comprehend the city. (Tekin, 1984)

Tekin's first book, *Sevgili Arsız Ölüm* was published in 1983. Tekin enriched the speech patterns of Anatolian people with her oral literature and gained a great reputation with her first novel about the life of a village-origin family. Latife Tekin is renowned for her distinctive literary style, which combines magical realism, political satire, and social critique. Her writing is known for its use of vibrant, colourful vocabulary, sharp sense of humour, and inventive storytelling. Akerson observes that Tekin offers perspectives from both within and outside. According to him, Tekin is “introverted, not judgmental, not pedantic, loving and tolerant towards her heroes, but not in full identification with them” (Akerson, 1984).

The image of women in Turkish novels has been formed and shaped by male writers for a long time, since male authors are more in number and consequently, more known than female authors due to the patriarchal society in which they live. Following the founding of the Republic, Turkish women writers, becoming increasingly active and visible in the literary scene, endeavoured to reshape the image of women crafted by male writers in Turkish literature. Furthermore, these women writers sought to establish a distinct female identity, diverging from the portrayals by their male counterparts (Aksoy, 2009). Irzık and Parla explain this reformist re-creation as:

This fiction is one of the most important pillars of the control exercised over women's voices, identities, and bodies, because whenever women make their presence visible or audible in the public sphere, they are doing something against their own nature, provoking words about themselves by attracting inappropriate attention, and being

covered up. it means that they become ugly and disgraced because they reveal a being whose purity must be preserved. (Irzik & Parla, 2004, pg.7)

This idea of women's purity was questioned by woman authors so that it showed the that the woman is not an object to be looked at and her body is not something that outside elements have a say on. Women, like men, are living and breathing creatures who have their own thoughts and ideas. In their book, Irzik and Parla explains the women authors rebel against the patriarchal society by just existing. Yet, this quest for a new voice and identity proved to be short-lived. Women's movements and organisations in Turkey were forced to find new venues for operation because of the military intervention of September 12th and the effects of the depoliticization process that followed during the time when the rise of women's movements and feminist movements after 1980 was at its peak in the Western world (Uğurlu and Balık, 2009). In those years, socialist theory and practices were interrupted by the coup, so even talking about those topics was dangerous and could put people in jail. It was inevitable that collectivist thought would leave its place to individualism. Not only in Turkey, but also the incredible rapid progress of technology and the uncontrollable growth and immigration to the cities spread the idea of individuality to the world. The idea of "woman as an individual" gained great importance as people slowly turned away from socialist ideas and left its place to individuality. The idea of a politically-socially pioneer woman has left its place to the idea of an individual woman. One example of this change in the literary and social world could be shown through Duygu Asena's work. Duygu Asena wrote "*Kadının Adı Yok*" in 1987 and it is one of the literary works that reflected on these developments in the literature. (Baydar, 1995).

While Latife Tekin is a writer who keeps up with these changes, she wants to clarify one thing. Latife Tekin aims to be recognized not only as a writer but specifically as a woman writer. In an interview, she states that while examining her novels, it is important to include and examine the themes of gender discrimination as well as poverty, not only focus on the context of her novels:

If there is a difference, a difference in feeling, a difference in theme in my books, it is because I am a woman as much as I am poor. I care about my own history. Because I don't think it's actually individual. I really have a resistance here; no matter what, I

decided to write by listening to my own heart, listening to my own inner voices, the voices that make up me. (Karaca, 2006: 268)

While showing the traditional family structure and patriarchal society in her novels, Tekin also reflects on the secondary position of women, therefore she does not need to feel to emphasise gender inequality again as it is woven in the very fabric of society she wrote about. Since the society which she lives in reminds herself again and again that women are a lower class, and they belong to home life rather than society. Considering she uses her experiences to inspire and flourish her literary side, that is why Tekin's images of women can seem semi-autobiographical. Using these experiences but never letting it make the experiences only unique to her makes Tekin unparalleled in her writing. Tekin's works intersect with not only feminist issues but also, class, ethnicity, and sexuality. In her books, Tekin understands that women's experiences are influenced by their diverse identities, as well as the social setting in which they are raised. The essence of the feminist struggle is based on "the presence of women in a different world of perception and handling it sensitively" (Argunşah, 1999). The female characters in Tekin's novels act as organic individuals formed by the society in which they live, rather than acting from a feminist motive to lecture the readers.

Since the beginning of her career, she has drawn attention to issues of discrimination, class conflicts and colonialism, in addition to feminism. Therefore, it was no surprise when Tekin started to give more importance to the ecological crises in her novels, especially with the novel "*Ormanda Ölüm Yokmuş*", which she wrote in 2001. Given that the author spent a significant amount of time in Istanbul, it can be argued that she was influenced by the city's pollution and the diminishing natural balance, leading her to leave Istanbul in the mid-90s. Thinking that "people can only be happy in nature" (Börekçi, 2014), Tekin explains her escape from urban life as follows:

We polluted Istanbul and Marmara; we lost our beaches. This is how it is all over the world... They are pouring poison from the Black Sea on us, we lost the Gulf of Izmit. But we still act like nothing will happen. There is an indiscretion in man's desire to live and his relationship with life. (Börekçi, 2014)

Her desire to save and preserve nature, which she claimed to have 'forgotten in her political period,' and to live in harmony with nature, is evident in her recent novels (Börekçi, 2014). Also, Tekin left Istanbul in 1995 and moved to Bodrum to found “Gümüşlük Academy Art, Culture, Ecology and Scientific Research Centre Foundation” in 1996. Since then, the foundation has been a guest house to many researchers, writers, lecturers, students of all areas of the academy.

Muinar, which will be examined in this section of the thesis, is a novel where Tekin delves into ecofeminist thoughts and revolves around the dialogues of two women. In this novel, where Tekin's ecofeminist understanding coincides with her cultural ecofeminist thought, she repeatedly emphasises that the city and urban life destroy nature and the patriarchal and greedy capitalist system is the main reason for the destruction and exploitation of nature and women. The novel glorifies and cherishes women as gender and emphasises that women and nature are twin-like, and one cannot exist without the other.

4.2. *Muinar* and Ecofeminism

Despite its complex and stream-of-consciousness-like structure, Latife Tekin's *Muinar* is an ecologically conscious book that straightforwardly conveys important ecological ideas. By highlighting the interconnectedness between the non-human and human world, Tekin promotes eco-spirituality, and ecologically conscious thinking through the character, Muinar, as a way to counterbalance damaging anthropocentric thinking. Furthermore, *Muinar* is a postmodern feminist novel that utilizes feminist revisionism and historical reimagining. It deconstructs and rewrites myths and epics. Tekin uses postmodern satire and sarcasm, fractured and confusing narrative structures, and a strong sense of fun to highlight the oppression and victimisation of women as well as environmental devastation. She also incorporates a perceptive critique of capitalism exploitation, commercialization, and consumption throughout her book.

Muinar is a novel centred on dialogues between two women, rather than relying on a traditional plot. There are only two characters, Elime, a middle-aged woman who lost her

purpose in the world and Muinar, an ageless hag who has woken up in Elime to teach her how to navigate through life as a woman and to help Elime to find her voice again. The personalities of these two women are disparate. Muinar can be described as an ageless spirit with a talkative and fiery temperament, who never forgets the importance of the wisdom of old times, who is not bound by any geographical place and defines herself as an old hag. Regardless of where they were born, Muinar awakens in the hearts of women who are oppressed but never bow down and who have been treated unfairly. Throughout the book, she tells the stories of these women to Elime. Muinar has gone through these women and in her own words, Muinar "does not wake up among the women who enter the cage and chirp at the man, she wakes up among those who walk towards the abyss and the pit..." (Tekin, 2006, p. 212)¹, and now she has come to wake up inside Elime as Muinar's "mission is to prepare you for old age" (Tekin, 2006, p.60).

4.3. Muinar's Appearance and Character Traits

The book starts by Elime questioning herself if she has gone mad since Muinar woke up inside her and started talking to her. Throughout the book, Muinar tries to help Elime to find herself and her voice by reflecting on her thoughts and action. Muinar asks.

Is this darkness inside you, in your head? You're nowhere in the light, you're nowhere in the air, you're nowhere in the water, you don't seem to exist (...) You just seem to exist nowhere in the darkness, I'm trying to make you say that, you keep trying to claim yourself for nothing. (Tekin, 2006, p.69)

An implied connection between nature and Elime is suggested, as she appears to not exist at all, almost as if she were dead. Human world and the natural world are intertwined. Muinar suggests that Elime's idea of self is detached from her natural surroundings. The thought that Elime "doesn't seem to exist" in the elements of light, air, and water represents a sense of alienation from nature. In modern industrial cultures, people have frequently disassociated themselves from nature involuntarily, resulting in insensitivity to environmental

¹ Muinar is not translated into English. All the quoted texts are translated by me.

deterioration and a sense of alienation from self and the environment. Muinar's attempt to have Elime “say that” as well as her comment that Elime is "trying to claim herself for nothing" could be understood as a look into this involuntary act of alienation.

While Muinar teaches Elime how to live, Elime tries to learn more about Muinar. Elime asks Muinar what to call her, she says “The word old woman (hag) is too harsh, it's not nice, can I call you auntie?” (Tekin, 2006, p.23). Muinar gets offended by saying “Once upon a time, an old woman woke up inside me, very early, I wasn't even twenty-five, I was stupid and told her the same thing, the audacity!” (Tekin, 2006, p.23). Muinar was also a human woman for a while, and the same voice awoke within herself. Although the word "old woman" is perceived as an insult in slang, Muinar believes that it is an expression of respect, an earned honour, rather than an insult, and she repeats her stance on this word in many places in the book. In patriarchal societies, old women were perceived as useless since they could not give birth anymore, work, and younger people thought old women got more absent-minded as they got older. However, in matriarchal and Goddess religion-based societies, old women or hags were respected and thought to be wise people as they had their time and old age was the period where they lead and convey their wisdom to the youth.

Despite being an ageless hag, Muinar stays updated on the modern world, enriching herself by following various topics, columnists, and expressing interest in discussions and talk programs. Elime notes that Muinar does not spend her days “praying and wishing,” which defies the conventional expectation of an old woman in Turkish society (Tekin, 2006, p. 21). Elime’s thoughts on how an old woman spends her time reflects the society she lives in. In Turkish culture, it is common for women to become more interested in religion as they age, spending their days praying and repenting for the sins they have committed.

When Elime asks Muinar about her appearance, she says “Come into my dreams, I don't want to picture you as a toothless, grey ball of energy in my mind.” (Tekin, 2006, p. 39). Muinar describes her appearance as “My expression is as bright as the sun's round. Even if I appear, you cannot look at my face, your eyes will be dazzled. I'm vibrating at the speed of light inside you” (Tekin, 2006, p. 39). Therefore, Muinar’s physical appearance or lack of it can be described as an entity who is similar to angels in Abrahamic religions since they are

also described as a body of light. In the Bible, the angels are described as “shone like the sun” (Revelation 10:1) and their appearance is “like lightning, and his clothing white as snow” (Matthew 28:3). In Quran, angels are described that they “were created from light” (The Qur'an 15:26). Also, angels guide people to the right path as Muinar tries to do with Elime.

4.4. Muinar and Cultural Ecofeminism

Muinar can be read and analysed as a manifesto of cultural ecofeminism, reiterating its core thoughts. The idea that women and the natural world are equated and underappreciated in Western culture is supported by cultural ecofeminism. Many cultural ecofeminists find inspiration and empowerment in the idealized conception of nature as mother creator and goddess. Spirituality is said to have the potential to change people on a social and personal level. Cultural Ecofeminism believes that nature is alive just like humans. This idea is often referred to as eco-spirituality.

Eco-spirituality is a thought process that merges ecological awareness with spirituality, rooted in a deep respect for nature. It regards nature, both living and non-living, as a source of spiritual insight and a medium to connect to others and also, a physical or material existence. It considers nature to be sacred and a source of wisdom. This viewpoint refers to the wisdom of indigenous and ancient cultures, mostly based on matriarchal religions, which has long maintained the idea that the natural world has mystical wisdom and purpose. Eco-spirituality often stresses how ecosystems, and all living beings are interdependent. It views the intricate web of life as a representation of a larger cosmic or spiritual harmony, in which all things are interconnected and dependent upon one another. Eco-spirituality condemns the dualistic thinking that affects lives of beings, and it endorses a holistic way of living and understanding, stressing the interconnectivity of life. Eco-spirituality urges people to have nature ethics established on the notion that protecting nature is a moral and spiritual obligation. These ethics guide people to make more ecologically conscious changes and decisions and try to live in harmony with nature. Thus, a large number of people and organizations motivated by eco-spirituality participate in environmental activism. They consider preserving and restoring nature to be a spiritual act of devotion to the planet and its welfare. To give an example,

Chipko Movement, one of the most famous environmental activist movements, happened in India in the 1970s. To protest the threat of deforestation and profit-seeking logging, local women in India started hugging trees. Although the protest's main leaders were men, the women of Chipko were the most significant actors as logging activities affected their livelihood and environment the most. These protests took about 3 years and with the constant patience of non-violent protesters, it was considered one of the most successful environmental protests (Reese, 2016).

Throughout the book, Muinar advocates for eco-spirituality, emphasizing that the world suffers the consequences of people's unconscious consumption frenzy. She says, "The world is dying, it has been bombed from the belly... Make a plan and hit America" (Tekin, 2006, p. 26). The reference to "hit America" can be explained as America has one of the biggest consumption cultures in the world. Thus, by "hitting America", Muinar implies that you can destroy one of the factors feeding over-consumerism.

4.5. The Exploitation of Nature and Women

In *Muinar*, the causes of the exploitation of nature and women are stated as patriarchy and capitalism. The causes, explained by Muinar, are overlapping, and intertwined. When discussing ecological destruction, Muinar argues that the most significant reason is political. She criticises the government that was in power in the book: "You left the end of the rope; life lives its own life in bloodshed in this country." (Tekin, 2006, p. 21). Politics are used to pass the law and enforcements to profit and benefit from nature. Muinar says "For the western lumberjack, the forest is first and foremost a business" (Tekin, 2006, p. 55). Muinar frequently criticises nature's commercialization, in which natural resources are largely viewed as commodities to be exploited for profit. The emphasis on the forest as a 'business' serves to reinforce this perspective. This commodification devalues nature by considering it as a resource to be taken and profited from. The remark implies that the Western lumberjack, who represents a person inside the prevailing power structure, perceives the forest largely through an economic lens. Power structures such as patriarchy and capitalism have a significant role in fostering environmental exploitation. Profit is prioritised over the well-being of ecosystems

and local communities in this perspective. The primary purpose of the lumberjack is resource exploitation, which could cause adverse effects on the environment. Such practices frequently result in deforestation, habitat degradation, and ecosystem change, having negative implications for both the natural world and vulnerable human groups. While talking about the destructive behaviour of mankind, Muinar says:

They swallowed Africa's diamonds and gold. AIDS has spread and is burning the continent. (...) They will leave your lands fallow. Europe's tripe is deep, more shit will come out of there. Let the people go crazy, I will rejoice, let the nations not go crazy, we have business with drunken Europe... (Tekin, 2006, p. 78)

"Swallowing Africa's diamonds and gold" alludes to the historical and ongoing exploitation of Africa's natural resources. Exploitation of nature is more in some parts of Earth thanks to patriarchal and capitalist regimes. While exploiting the natural resources of Africa, the capitalist regimes do not think the consequence and the effects of exploitation on human beings. The mention of the expansion of AIDS in Africa implies that because of several factors, including inadequate healthcare infrastructure, poverty, and socioeconomic inequality, people are affected. These effects are caused by environmental degradation and resource extraction. The destruction of the environment can have a negative impact on the health and well-being of marginalised people, particularly women. However, capitalist regimes only think about the profit, and they do not care about the severe consequences of their actions. Leaving "your lands fallow" implies the likely scenario of Western over-consumption. After exploiting an entire continent and extracting its natural resources, Western colonialist powers left African countries damaged and less prosperous. Last sentence of the quote implies a desire to respond to the ecological crisis and urges people to act. Ecofeminism advocates for collaborative action and an understanding of the relationship of gender, power, and the environment.

Within Cultural Ecofeminism, women are regarded as stewards of nature. Since women and nature are regarded as one, it should be women who take care of the environment. Muinar curses men as they exploit the nature whereas women cherish and respect the nature by saying:

Their eyes were on the seeds in our palms, we were planting those seeds with the tip of our fingers so that we would hurt the soil, they tore the skin of the earth with iron, it was said to men that they cannot work without tools. (Tekin, 2006, p. 47)

The scientific revolution of the 17th century further damaged nature by the idea of a nourishing earth with a machine that could be managed and fixed from the outside. Cultural ecofeminists regard the metaphysics and science as profoundly masculinist and exploitative of nature which is historically referred as female. Men have created and controlled most of the technology, science, and industry on the planet to benefit from nature. That is why most cultural ecofeminism has an anti-science and anti-technology stance.

The notion of women as the environmental steward is echoed throughout the book. Muinar says “The man painted the world with blood and killed it. Women will keep the world alive” (Tekin, 2006, p. 116). It implies a critique of patriarchal and violent structures that have caused harm and ecological damage. The assertion that “women will keep the world alive” underscores the capability of women to care for and defend the natural world. Recognizing and honouring the contributions of women to sustainable practices and environmental protection is crucial. It challenges the notion that male domination is the primary force influencing the world and offers an alternate viewpoint. By underlining the possibility for women to play a crucial role in nurturing and sustaining the natural environment and criticizing the destructive activities of patriarchal structures, this remark supports ecofeminist concepts. It emphasizes the necessity of overcoming sexism and advancing social structures that are more just and environmentally responsible.

People do not realise the bleak consequences of overexploitation of nature and how severely the consequences will affect people and also, every living and non-living thing in nature. Muinar describes a future scene of this consequence:

Bird beaks will rain down on your head from the sky... Squirrels' tails have become shorter; they are inoculating the trees with putrefactive fungi. Protect your air to breathe. These are signs of doomsday. The world saves itself; it has shaken people off many times. There are thousands of these businesses in every corner, the criminals move

forward with the power of money. Are they going to remove our bushes? Let them rush in from your border, you only have three forests left. (Tekin, 2006, p. 55)

The delicate balance of nature is disrupted, and an ecological imbalance is depicted as bird beaks dropping from the sky and squirrels exhibiting odd behaviour. Ecosystem disruptions can have a domino effect on many species, including humans. The phrases "signs of doomsday" and the world "shaking people off" depicts a sense of panic and catastrophe surrounding the state of the ecosystem. Profit-seeking corporations and industries are engaging in unsustainable practices that lead the earth toward ecological disaster. The fear of losing trees emphasises the critical need of protecting natural environments. In a sense, what Muinar says in the last sentence can be read as a call to action to address environmental crises, criticise the role of profit-driven industries in ecological deterioration, and preserve surviving natural places.

Another scene showing the negative effects of humans on nature is when Muinar sees a seagull flying with a bag wrapped around its foot. Elime says "Poor seagull, it's wandering around in the sky as if it received an advertisement." (Tekin, 2006, p. 59). The sight of a bag wrapped around the seagull's foot signifies human polluting and environmental damage, which could damage and disrupt the lives of wildlife. The expression "Poor seagull" expresses sympathy for the seagull's suffering as a result of its entanglement with human-made garbage. It is critical to recognise nonhuman beings' intrinsic value and their right to live free from damage caused by human actions. The analogy drawn between the seagull's flight and "receiving an advertisement" also serves as a critique of commercial society and consumerism. Through excessive consumption and production of waste, these characteristics of modern civilization contribute to environmental degradation.

Transitioning from the discussion of ecological exploitation, the book also delves into the portrayal and representation of women in society.

4.6. The Images of Woman

Muinar complains about women's passivity and their push towards this passivity by saying "It is good for women to speed up, they just sit still, (...) let them get up and run towards everything, let them meet life at the foothills of the mountains." (Tekin, 2006, p. 24). Since assertive women are seen as a danger in society and efforts are made to suppress them. In fact, a woman is always in action, she changes every day due to the body she was born into. Every month, the woman finds herself in a cycle, and thus, by nature, the woman and her body are always in motion. While her body is preparing for this cycle in her childhood, she tries to harmonise herself with this cycle, and in later ages when this cycle stops, this time she tries to prepare herself for its absence. Therefore, Muinar encourages women to embrace this continuous cycle of motion. Accordingly, women should accept a cyclical perception of the world, unlike men who perceives the world in a linear way. In Cultural Ecofeminism, there is no beginning or end, life is an endless cycle and women are more in harmony with the cycle as their bodies are the representation of this cycle.

That is why women are discriminated among societies and they are placed as inferior because they do not fit the Westernized linear way of thinking. Muinar describes gender discrimination as an ancient war between men and women:

We were against those who discriminated between living and non-living things. This is the essence of the war between men and women, we were fighting against those who broke the bones of the mountains and plucked the feathers of the plains. (Tekin, 2006, p. 72).

Cultural Ecofeminism rejects all kinds of discrimination and strives to end it. Muinar protests the discrimination made by religions by saying "Let them pass the genocide law, we fought like clouds, women are prisoners of war, in their minds they have made us servants of heaven" (Tekin, 2006, p. 35). In Abrahamic religions, women are seen as secondary. In Christianity, the secondary place of women is stated in the Bible as "for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake" (1 Cor. 11:8-9). Women were ordered to be submissive to their husband as this was their duty to husband and also to God. In King James Holy Bible it is stated "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church:

and he is the saviour of the body.” (Eph. 5:22-23). Women were also ordered to be silent as in the Bible, it stated “Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence” (1 Tim. 2:11-13). In Islam, women are told to obey their husband as in Quran it is stated “Men are the caretakers of women, as men have been provisioned by Allah over women and tasked with supporting them financially. And righteous women are devoutly obedient and, when alone, protective of what Allah has entrusted them with.” (The Qur'an 4:34). In Abrahamic religions, heaven is a place which has endless happiness and abundance to people who dedicate their earthly lives to God and take actions to please God. Muinar protests that even in heaven, women are servants. The position of women is always in the lower class, whether it be on earth or in eternal heaven.

Because of their supposedly secondary place, women are also exposed to inexplicable violent acts in the world. Muinar talks about the awful acts of violence against women and exposes the atrocities and oppression that women endure in certain countries:

They rain down stones on women's heads, they bury them alive in the ground, they burn their ashes into the air, anyone who wants can catch them and strangle them with their hands... Girl, you will enter my bosom, a light shine on every woman's head, God commands so. Cover your head so that no other eyes touch your hair. The light-mad male species is slaughtering the female gender, if you neglect your duty, you are useless. (Tekin, 2006, p. 115)

Patriarchal institutions have control over women's bodies and behaviours. Instructing women to cover their heads indicates that they must follow rigorous restrictions in order to escape assault. Muinar shows a gloomy scene of violence and oppression against women while it alluded to the greater ramifications of patriarchal dominance. Unfortunately, in certain regions, if not all over the world, women are trying to live their lives as described by Muinar. They are hated simply because they were born female. Strangely, it can be seen that birth rates are higher in those societies. It is truly astonishing that they hate women so much, although they are so dependent on women to continue their lineage, since giving birth is only unique to women.

From an ecofeminist perspective, this quotation above serves as a reminder of the interdependence of gender, power, and environmental issues, as well as the urgent need to challenge oppressive structures and work towards a more just and sustainable society for all.

In *Muinar*, the themes of ecological exploitation, gender norms, how women are seen in society are explored. The book sheds light on both the present and the future with many of the subjects it covers. In conclusion, Latife Tekin's 'Muinar' argues, through cultural ecofeminism, that women, due to their nature and similarity with nature, should be regarded as superior to men. Additionally, the book emphasizes the significance of women as the most crucial members of society.

5. The Conclusion

Le Guin's "*The Word for World is Forest*" and Latife Tekin's "*Muinar*" are discussed throughout this thesis. At first glance, Ursula K. Le Guin's "*The Word for World is Forest*" and Latife Tekin's "*Muinar*" seem different in terms of theme and literary style. However, there are more similarities between them than initially apparent.

Both Ursula K. Le Guin and Latife Tekin use magical realism in their books to show their readers that the stories in their books try to reflect both a story and reality. Both writers do not want to be confined in a label where the rules are already set by predecessors who were mainly men. Ursula K. Le Guin stated she preferred to be described as an "American novelist." (Phillips, 2012). Likewise, Latife Tekin prefers to be described as a woman writer as she says "I am a woman as much as I am poor. I care about my own history" (Karaca, 2006: 268). Both writers wanted to create their own history and rule. One can see that in their amazing works.

Despite being written in different times, *The Word for World is Forest* in 1972 and *Muinar* in 2006, both novels delve into ecofeminist themes and delve into the theories and discussions of different branches of ecofeminism that are still relevant today. These themes can be explained in two categories which are "Ecological Exploitation", and "Gender and Power Dynamics".

5.1. Ecological Exploitation

Ecological exploitation is one of the profound topics of Ecofeminism. The main theme of both *Muinar* and *The Word for World is Forest (WWF)* is based on ecological destruction, and they also discuss other ecological issues through this theme.

In *WWF*, we witness how, after destroying their own world, people greedily destroy the nature and forests of the peaceful society of Atheshea. The planet Atheshea in Le Guin's book is very rich in natural resources, especially priceless timber. Large-scale deforestation is carried out by Earth's colonisers for financial gain, motivated by an exploitative and capitalist mindset. The indigenous people, the Athesheans, are deeply spiritually connected

to the forest and work in harmony with it. Accordingly, the cultural and spiritual values of the Athsheans are violated by the exploitation of forests that goes beyond simple environmental concerns.

The brutal and unconscious behaviour of colonialists, such as cutting and burning large areas of forest, causes irreparable ecological damage. In the story, a once-rich forest is transformed into a desolate area, showing the effects of brutal exploitation. The delicate balance of life in Athens is disrupted by environmental degradation, which also damages the biosphere. The condition of the forest is directly related to the well-being of the Athsheans. The colonists of Earth are abusing not only the environment but also the Athshean way of life through exploitation. The story therefore highlights how environmental and cultural factors are intertwined and emphasizes that ecological exploitation involves more than just resource extraction.

In *Muinar*, Muinar's rebellion against the established order, her call to Elime to take action, people's carelessness towards nature, and the notion that nature will spare no effort to protect itself are reiterated on every page of the novel. In "*Muinar*", the rapid industrialization and modernization of the environment is attributed to the exploitation of the environment. The main character, Muinar, observes how her natural environment changes as traditional rural areas are replaced by industrial zones and urban growth, thanks to the women she wakes up in. In the novel, unbridled development that puts economic growth ahead of environmental sustainability is criticised and talks about how it harms society. Muinar talks about how modernising environmental regulation methods and greed against growth lead towards an environmental disaster.

Environmental degradation can have a severe influence on the health and well-being of marginalized populations, particularly women. However, capitalist governments are primarily concerned with profit and are unconcerned about the serious implications of their acts. Ecofeminism promotes collaborative action and a better understanding of the relationship between gender, power, and the environment. Women are viewed as nature's caretakers in Cultural Ecofeminism whose ideas are echoed throughout the book. Because women and nature are considered one, it should be women who care for the environment. Muinar condemns males for exploiting nature, whilst women cherish and respect nature.

5.2. Gender and Power Dynamics

It is impossible not to discuss gender and power dynamics and how these dynamics play a great role in gender equality. In *WWF*, the narrative changes between 3 men, Don Davidson, Selver and Raj Lyubov. In *Muinar*, the narrator is Elime and throughout the book, there is not one male narrative or dialogue. The book shows dialogues between two women.

Patriarchal society and gender roles play an important role in *WWF*. Colonisers are trying to implement the roles of Earth's society on Athshea as well. The native Athsheans are subjugated by the human colonists, who stand for a hierarchical and patriarchal culture. This subjugation extends to social structures and gender roles in addition to the environment. The majority-male Earth colonists impose patriarchal control upon Athshe. Their control over resources, land, and the imposition of their own cultural norms are evidence of their supremacy over others. An oppressive patriarchal society that views nature as a resource to be subjugated and managed makes the exploitation of forests easier.

Power dynamics are maintained through violence, with Athshean women suffering significantly. The novel emphasises how similar environmental exploitation and women's oppression are in order to establish a clear connection between the two types of exploitation. In addition to the destruction of their habitat, colonists also directly physically attack Athsheans and rape Athshean women. The story also examines the liberation of the environment and oppressed communities as the Athsheans fight colonists under the leadership of Selver. We witness how, in taking back this freedom, they lose the ability not to kill, which is the most essential parts of their identity. The struggle against patriarchal society is inextricably linked with the struggle for ecological balance. In the novel, the Athsheans resist both ecological exploitation and oppression by challenging the occupiers' authoritarian gender standards.

The conflict between a modernising world and traditional, rural ways of life is shown in "*Muinar*". In the novel, we see Muinar's rebellion and speeches against the exploitation of nature and traditional gender stereotypes that generally limit women to housework. Modernization, patriarchal society, disrupts the balance between people and their environment and deepens already existing gender inequalities. In *Muinar*, it is

emphasised that men hold the power, but this power should actually belong to women. Women's bond with nature and their similarities in bringing life just like nature emphasise that women are actually superior to men and that this superiority should be reflected in society. Muinar's disdain for women who sympathize with men and submit to them cannot be overlooked. According to her, these women are misogynists and, in any case, Muinar does not wake up in such women and curses them. According to her, women should only sympathize with other women, and they have the power to lead within themselves, not submit.

We also see in the book that the balance of power in societies has been disturbed. We witness that the real power lies in Western capitalist societies and that other people live according to these ideas. Muinar rebels against this power imbalance and argues that women should be the ones ruling. Since women are more caring, sensible, and sensitive to nature, they should reject the westernized mindset and turn within themselves to find their voice.

5.3. Conclusion

Both “*The Word for World Is Forest*” and “*Muinar*” stand out with their visions of a better and more just society. Even though the themes and plot of the two books were written in different times and places, by two women who were raised in different environment did not meet each other, the message they convey is clear and unambiguous. If we do not adjust our attitude towards nature, we will be the ones who will suffer the terrible consequences. Regardless of the setting, be it green-furred aliens on a distant planet or present-day Istanbul, the nature we inhabit is our responsibility, and we are consistently cautioned to protect it.

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