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Uluslararası hakemli ***Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları/ Journal of Language and Literature Studies*** dergisinin 30. Sayısı (Ekim 20224) yazarlarımızın, hakemlerimizin, yayın kurulumuzun ve süreçte yer alan değerli bilim insanlarının üstün gayretleriyle siz okurlarımızın istifadesine sunulmuştur.

Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları dergisi bu sayıyla beraber 15. yılını geride bıraktı. Filoloji alanına ait başta dil, edebiyat, folklor, kültür, çeviribilim, dil ve edebiyat eğitimi gibi makalelere dergimizde yer verilmektedir. Diğer sayılarımızda olduğu gibi 30. sayımızda da gerek yurt için gerekse yurt dışından büyük bir ilgi oldu. Bu yüzden sistem üzerinden makale kabulünün erkenden kapatılmış olmasını bilim insanlarının anlayışla karşılayacağını umuyoruz.

Makale kabulünün sadece **DergiPark** sistemi üzerinden gerçekleştiğini, makaleleri sisteme yüklerken bir intihal programından alınmış intihal raporuyla beraber yüklenmesi gerektiğini hatırlatmış ve yayın ilkelerimiz gereği dergimizin bir sayısında bir bilim insanının sadece bir makalesine yer verdiğimizi de belirtmiş olalım. Makaleler sisteme yüklemeden önce yayın ilkelerine göre düzenlemenin yapılması gerektiğini de hatırlatalım.

Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları dergisinin 30. sayısının yayımlanmasında başta yazarlarımız olmak üzere, dergimize gönderilen her makaleyi özenle okuyup değerlendiren hakemlerimize ve emeği geçen herkese teşekkürü bir borç biliriz. Dergide yer alan makalelerin bilim dünyasına faydalı olmasını dileriz.

Editör

Prof. Dr. Ahmet KOÇAK

Dear Scientists,

The 30th Issue (October 20224) of t***he Internationally Refereed Journal of Language and Literature Studies*** has been presented to the benefit of you, our readers, with the outstanding efforts of our authors, referees, editorial board and valuable scientists involved in the process.

The Journal Language and Literature Research has celebrated its 15th anniversary with this issue. Articles related to the field of philology, especially language, literature, folklore, culture, translation studies, language and literature education, are included in our magazine. As in our other issues, our 30th issue attracted great interest both at home and abroad. Therefore, we hope that scientists will understand the early closure of article acceptance through the system.

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We would like to thank our authors, our referees who carefully read and evaluate every article sent to our journal, and everyone who contributed to the publication of the 30th issue of ***the Journal of Language and Literature Research.*** We hope that the articles in the journal will be beneficial to the scientific world.

Editor

Prof. Dr. Ahmet KOÇAK

Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi
e-posta: dilarastirma@gmail.com
tel: +90 537 675 71 10

Journal of Language and Literature Studies
e-mail: dilarastirma@gmail.com
tel: +90 537 675 71 10

Address: Journal of Language and Literature Studies
e-mail: dilarastirma@gmail.com
phone: +90 537 675 71 10

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The Power of Literary Discourse in Creating Ecological Awareness: First Light by Robert Russell Sassor

Ekolojik Farkındalık Oluşturmada Yazınsal Söylemin Gücü: Robert Russell Sassor'un First Light Öyküsü

Öznur YAĞCI*
Gülşen TORUSDAĞ**

* Van 100. Yıl University, Graduate Student, oznur.altinkaynak@gmail.com,
ORCID: 0009-0002-2210-6378
ROR ID: ror.org/041jyzp61

Sorumlu yazar/Corresponding author:
**Assoc. Prof. Dr., Van 100. Yıl University, Faculty of Letters, Department of Linguistics, Van Turkey, gtorosdag24@hotmail.com,
ORCID: 0000-0002-4323-7097

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Abstract

While the need to move studies on climate change beyond scientific research and to raise awareness about the issue in society is increasing, there is a need for mechanisms that bring discourses about climate change to the public's knowledge. Media discourses and literary discourses are the primary mechanisms that draw attention to ecological consciousness. In recent days when nature is gradually disappearing from the hands of humans, it has become necessary to develop a new way of communicating with nature and natural resources. As Sassor expressed, art is more than a one-way communication tool and it is one of the most effective ways for people to shape their environmental awareness. Getting people to experience this through short stories is possible since they are short literary discourses that can be read in one sitting and are more suitable genre for people in the hustle and bustle of the postmodern world. In this study, Sassor's short story *First Light* was analyzed through a discourse-centered approach. Based on the motifs of death/suicide, regret, longing for the past, nature, sexual identity distortion, and loneliness, it is observed that Sassor's concerns about the deterioration of the ecological balance as well as the distortion of sexual identity in the individual come to the fore.

Keywords: Ecological concerns, literary discourse, sexual identity distortion, First Light, Robert Russell Sassor.

Öz

İklim değişikliğine ilişkin çalışmaları bilimsel araştırmaların ötesine taşıma ve toplumda konuya ilişkin farkındalık yaratma ihtiyacı artarken, iklim değişikliğine ilişkin söylemleri kamuoyunun bilgisine sunacak mekanizmalara ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır. Ekolojik bilince dikkat çeken bu mekanizmaların başında medya söylemleri, yazınsal söylemler gelmektedir. Doğanın giderek insanın elinde kaybolmaya başladığı son günlerde, doğayla ve doğal kaynaklarla iletişim kurmanın yeni bir yolunu geliştirmek zorunlu hale gelmiştir. Sassor'un ifade ettiği gibi sanat, tek yönlü bir iletişim aracı olmanın ötesinde, insanların çevre bilincini şekillendirmenin en etkili yollarından biridir. İnsanların bunu kısa öyküler yoluyla deneyimlemelerini sağlamak mümkündür. Kısa öyküler bir oturuşta okunabilecek kısalıkta yazınsal söylemler olduğundan postmodern dünyanın koşuşturmacası içindeki insanlar için daha uygun bir türdür. Bu çalışmada, Robert Russel Sassor'un *First Light* adlı kısa öyküsü söylem odaklı bir yaklaşımla çözümlenmiştir. Söylemde, 'ölüm/intihar, pişmanlık, geçmişe duyulan özlem, doğa, cinsel kimlik bozulması ve yalnızlık' gibi motiflerden hareketle, Sassor'un, ekolojik dengenin bozulması yanı sıra bireyde cinsiyet kimliğinin değişmesine ilişkin kaygılarının ön plana çıktığı gözlenmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Ekolojik kaygılar, yazınsal söylem, cinsel kimlik bozulması, First Light, Robert Russell Sassor.

Introduction

While there is an increasing awareness of not only limiting the issues related to climate change with scientific research but also including society in this awareness, there is a need for mechanisms that present the relevant discourses to the public.

The happiness of man is related to his relationship with nature. The entire planet is a living space that must be protected but above all, must be recognized. Thus, it is possible to say that literary discourses are very important tools for transferring information that will teach people to love and respect the world to future generations. The perception of the human body not as a part of the ecosystem but as a superior being to all other living things in this system is based on many cultural and social foundations. The anthropocentric approach, which sees man as the sole ruler of the universe, accepts nature as a resource that has been put at the service of man and therefore can be used unlimitedly by human beings and controlled in line with various economic interests. This anthropocentric idea, in which nature is seen as a source that human beings can consume to meet their own needs, and humans are perceived as a separate entity from the ecosystem, has been adopted as a universal truth by societies around the world, and unlimited consumption and destruction of natural resources is accepted as a normal action. However, human beings are not aware that by destroying the natural environment with this colonial understanding, they are also slowly destroying their existence. This is an issue that should be emphasized with the importance that people commit suicide in a sense by destroying water, air, soil, plants, and animals, sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously, irreversibly, through actions that are accepted as normal by society. As long as nature is seen as a source to be exploited, the human body will also get its share (Opperman, 2006, p. 1-18).

Solutions for ecological destruction and environmental pollution affecting the whole world come to the fore in the United States. In his speech announcing the Clean Power Plan on August 3, 2015, Barack Obama states that climate change is no longer a problem of the future that we expect our children and grandchildren to experience. He also states that we are the first generation to feel the impact of climate change and the last generation to be able to do something about it. Therefore, the environmental movement and solution proposals emerge in the United States. Literary studies on nature and environment gain momentum here, and the ecocriticism approach is also centered in the United States. Eco-literature becomes a widespread literary genre since the beginning of the 21st century. In America, writers address nature-human relations with an interest in using, understanding and presenting nature in their literary works (Toska, 2017, p. 18-20). As understood from the above sentences, writers working to prevent the damage done by human beings to nature and to strengthen ecological awareness see literary discourse as a tool that reveals the hidden spirit of the natural environment and conveys the help cries of nature to the masses. As Toska (2017, p. 101-103) points out, considering that environmental crises are directly linked to the cultural ideologies that shape human actions, the most effective area where people can experience their cultural struggles, needs, desires, thoughts and situations is art, or, more narrowly, literature. Literature, through its power of imagination, can enable readers to travel to different lands, experience an environmentally sensitive and harmonious life, and draw people's attention to nature, environment, and other beings. It is a fact that literature, through concepts and imagination, can make significant contributions to understanding, preventing, and finding solutions to ecological problems that humans face and will probably face in the future. As Toska quotes Murphy (2009, p. 13), "... Can

stories save a river? This article describes how a group of writers and academics used a storybook to guide local people to clean up a polluted stream." In this case, it is possible to conclude that literature, that is, fictional works, are more effective and important than purely scientific discourses in creating ecological awareness.

As can be understood from Opperman's statements, ecocriticism, which examines the reflection of nature in literature, has supported global environmental problems with concrete evidence through various works by many authors and has paved the way for the establishment of environmental awareness among people. According to the authors who adopt the theory of ecocriticism, the main purpose of literature should be to ensure ecological awareness in society, as human beings reconsider their relationship with nature and thus prevent the unconscious destruction of the natural environment to meet personal needs (Opperman, 1999, p. 29-46). The theory of ecocriticism, which aims to eliminate the sense of superiority between man and nature, emphasizes that human beings cannot exist alone in the universe, but can survive as long as they interact harmoniously with the air, water, soil, and many other living things that make up the ecosystem.

In the theory of ecocriticism, two different approaches are used, namely Social Ecology and Deep Ecology, while trying to identify and solve environmental problems. According to Social Ecology, nature is not everything that exists in the ecosphere. For social ecologists, nature is not the same thing in the past and present. They see nature as a developing and continuous structure. Nature is an evolutionary development that has to be seen as a very long process of differentiation that expands. No matter how different this process may be, it is an evolutionary process that accumulates from the inanimate to the living and finally the social one (İdem, 2002, p. 9). Social ecologists divide nature into two, different from the usual perception of nature. First nature can be defined as non-human nature, wild nature, as the cumulative evolution of the natural world. Second nature includes all human-created values. In other words, everything that is humanistic and social is taken into second nature. In this respect, it parallels the approach of deep ecology, which considers humans as a part of nature (İdem, 2002, p. 7-20).

On the other hand, deep ecology is put forward by Norwegian philosopher Arne Naes in 1973, based on the assumption that all living things on earth are valuable not because of their needs or services to each other, but because of their inner essence. It argues that the environmental problem stems from the views that discriminate between humans and nature. According to deep ecology, every element on earth, animate or inanimate, that is part of nature, has the same rights and opportunities in nature in terms of the value of its existence. This approach criticizes the marginalization of nature by humans, the fact that humans consider themselves separate and superior to nature, and the unconscious exploitation of nature as a source of raw materials (Naes, 1986, p. 10-31). Today, the scientific study of environmental problems by ecocritics, not under a spiritual/cultural title, is again related to the vital impact of the environment on human beings. Because it is the human beings themselves who will be harmed because of the growing problems, ecologists need to report that there is serious debate about the existence of the problems, their extent, the type of threats, and possible solutions.

According to the ecocritical approach, literature should create an ecological self in people because people are more likely to read a novel, story, or poem rather than drowning in scientific data that explains natural destruction. Therefore, the fact that art can affect human thought forms the basis of this movement's responsibility for literature. As it is known, industrialization in line with

capitalist interests has caused the ozone layer to be thinned and this has caused climate change. The increase in the global temperature will spread problems such as drought, thirst, famine, and epidemic diseases soon. In this context, awareness calls are made not only by scientists but also by those who produce literary works. In these works, in which the negative impact of the human being who dominates nature is emphasized, themes related to climate change and environmental problems are evaluated through an ecocritical approach.

Postmodern stories are one of the best examples of this genre. They lack traditional fiction and plot. In most stories, time and place are uncertain. Free associations form the basis of fiction. As Torusdağ expressed, the postmodern short story transforms the passive reader who is accustomed to easy-to-understand texts into the active reader who is forced to read which requires more effort and attention (Torusdağ, 2019, p. 160). Since postmodern stories are short and do not contain detailed information, in these stories, where many things are implied but not expressed directly, imaginary structures are given more place. The reader has to make inferences because of the resulting implicit structures and sometimes feelings of incompleteness. Even though it seems there is a chronological time, the transformation of a moment that is tried to be captured into internal time can be a stylistic feature. Post-modern literature invites the readers to resolve obscure points about the character, event, time, or place by removing them from the passive state. In this way, the readers become more active in front of the text.

In literature, postmodernism manifests itself with features such as doubt, polyphony, return to the old tradition, metafiction, and intertextuality. Referring to other texts, inherent in every text, is especially used in postmodern literature. The term established in literature as intertextuality means the traces of other texts in a literary text (Torusdağ, 2019, p. 397-409). Intertextuality draws attention in terms of establishing a direct relationship with the dynamics of postmodern texts and confirming the systematic structure of the text (Bulut, 2018, p. 211-219). While it adds depth and richness to the text, it is important for both the writer and the reader. It is possible to say that intertextuality, which imposes more responsibilities on the author, text, and reader than other texts, requires a comprehensive reading background. For this reason, there has been a situation to make the text and the reader more equipped.

According to Korkmaz, the success of the short story, which is an artistic text, is to transfer the unwritten ones to the reader with the symbolic infrastructures found in the deep structure of the text (Korkmaz, 2013, p.158). Within these infrastructures, some secrets that need to be solved by the reader and that create a series of questions in his mind are hidden. While answering these questions, the reader is the author's co-creator and an active participant who helps to reveal the meanings of the story (Torusdağ & Aydın, 2021).

Literary discourses in which an extraordinary language is used carry traces of the socio-cultural world, although they represent a fictional world. They are discourses that cannot be analyzed in the first reading and require a good reading from the visible surface structure to the invisible deep structure. While analyzing a short story in a discourse-centered manner, meanings in its deep structure can be reached through the lexical and grammatical elements in its surface structure. For this purpose, this study has tried to analyze Robert Russell Sassor's short story *First Light* through an ecocritical approach, in the frame of the Discourse Analysis. As Sassor (2015, ssir.org) expressed, art is more than a one-way communication tool and that art is one of the effective ways for people to shape their understanding of environmental awareness.

First Light in Creating Ecological Awareness

Written by Robert Russell Sassor, the winner of the writing contest, *First Light* is a short story in *Winds of Change,* a short story collection about our climate. It aims to bring the issue of climate change, which has begun to affect the whole world, to the agenda with a postmodern narrative. Considering the plot of the story, free associations form the basis of the fiction. Since it is not possible for us to know everything about the event and the characters, there is a narrative that awakens the imagination and the resulting uncertainties. In this text, intertextual features and transecology concepts are among the most striking. The multiplicity of allusions inferred from implicit expressions draws attention. Allusions appropriate to the nature of the story are the stylistic features of the author. They contain information to be obtained through semantic or logical reasoning. Thus, the reader is prompted to make a deep reading.

First Light consisting of 689 sentences is a short story written with ecological concerns and is about the regrets, longing for the son, and the feeling of loneliness of a mother who has an internal reckoning after the death of her husband and son. After the death of her beloved son, the grieving mother, devastated by his death, goes and comes between the past (memories with her son) and the present of the fictional time of the story. When his son is about to die and after his death, she speaks to him in an internal monologue. Knowing that her son is depressed and bullied at school, the mother blames herself for her son's suicide. She is in an internal reckoning since she thinks that she is not taking enough care of her son.

The first paragraph of the introductory part of the story, which is dominated by internal monologue, is full of imaginary implications. Through the internal monologue, the mother, who is the main story person, goes to her memories just before she loses her son, with a flashback in the fictional time of the story. As understood inferentially, the mother is an academician, and she has deep scientific conversations with her son. While doing all this, the boy's father finds these conversations too exaggerated, but his son loves it. Although she is a mother who is more interested in her child's academic education, it is understood that after her son committed suicide, she had deep regrets for not realizing the extent of her child's depressive mood. It is no longer possible to turn back time. The regret of the mother, who cannot get rid of the psychology of guilt, is inferred from the beginning to the end of the text. The story starts with the sentences as follows:

"*The medical machine whirs. Machines of love and grace you called them when your father was here. I remember you sketching in the corner. I thought you were doing portraits of your father, but no; it was the machines you were after. You didn't want to share your work with me then, either.*" (Sassor, 2015, p.15).

It is understood from the above sentences that the mother is in a hospital room. One of the remarkable features of the introduction part of the story is the presence of flashbacks. It is inferred that the father was also connected to these medical machines before.

As expressed in these sentences, his child draws a picture but does not want to show it to his mother is the first implication of the emotional gap between mother and son. The transition from the past tense to the present tense reveals the pessimistic tone of the text as the main character starts to show internal reckoning and regret in the introductory part of the story. One of the points that the story wants to make readers realize is that in the modern world, the common denominator of parents with their children is to raise them academically well but overlook many crucial points

in terms of the child's emotional development due to the emotional gap between the child and the parent. In the introductory part of the text, the word "either" suggests the emotional gap between the mother and son that may be overlooked by the mother.

In the second paragraph, the narration goes back to the present of the story. Constantly going to the memories of the mother, who is in the internal reckoning, increases the number of flashbacks used in the text. The story is shaped in the fictional time between the flashbacks and the returns to the present of the story. The fact that the mother remembers a part of the conversation she had with her son in all this emotional confusion reveals how interested the child is in the environment:

> "*Like how, as a young boy, you'd insist on going to the university with me when I had to work late; and you'd ask me profound questions, the way young people do. You'd ask where all the ice came from, and I'd tell you about how water came to the earth from ice asteroid and just the right amount for our planet to have the water and climate needed for life*." (Sassor, 2015, p.15).

On the other hand, from the sentences in which the reader is informed, attention is drawn to the ecosystem. In this system, water as a source of life is of great importance for all creatures. As Stierwalt expresses, about 70% of the surface of our planet Earth is covered with water. We are nestled in our solar system at just the right distance from the Sun for this liquid water to exist. Any farther, that water would be frozen in ice. Any closer, temperatures would rise, and we would be at risk for a runaway greenhouse effect similar to what's happening on the scorching surface of Venus. Our not-too-cold, not-too-hot position in the so-called "Goldilocks zone" is a pretty good thing because, of course, water is necessary for life (Stierwalt, 2019, scientificamerican.com).

In the text, using the enrichment effect created by intertextuality, the author directs the reader to the poem *The Wasteland* by T.S. Eliot. The mother remembers reading the poem of T. S. Eliot for homework of his son and that is expressed in the following lines: *"The Wasteland. I remember reading this with you for your homework. I will show you fear in a handful of dust."* (Sassor, 2015, p.15) *The Wasteland* is a five-part poem published in 1922 by T. S. Eliot. In this poem, Eliot's statement "every birth is the beginning of death" implies the burden that we have to carry on us and experience the life that we are doomed to.

The Wasteland does not mean just any piece of land that is barren. It is our compressed lives and the silence of things a human being cannot make sense of. Eliot focuses on the barrenness of our steadfast beliefs and experiences. He implies that life does not have a promising feature and that there is no creative belief that will add value to people's daily lives. With this thought, Eliot tries to get rid of all kinds of productive actions and feelings while claiming that the resurrection will bring extinction to humanity. It shows the nothingness of life, the depth of absence at the source of life. It reveals a state of being in which nothingness extends into nothingness. Besides, the message that Eliot wants to convey is that *Wasteland* always tells us the story of a failure as it progresses as a process where nothingness flows into nothingness or continues in a fragmented way; this fragmentation is a process that passes through the failure of love, fertility, and sexuality. *Wasteland* has hope too. This hope is a feeling that will put an end to the spiritual barrenness of humanity; a feeling that develops in a mood that is doomed to bloom. *Wasteland* can be defined as a poem or cry of anxiety, fear, and despair from head to toe (Yıldırım, 2012, p. 89-101).

By placing the example of *Wasteland* in his story through intertextuality, the author tries to both describe the emotional state of a mother who lost her son and to describe the balance of nature, which was disrupted as a result of human behavior. The emptiness and darkening feature of life is the result of the mother's being stuck, especially in the shadow of her own misery. The feeling that she might have neglected his son by working under very intense conditions and could not see anything but herself is like a debt she has to pay as a deep and painful atonement for her son's death. Because the mother does nothing but deepen her fear and misery by always trying to live in her darkness and having to carry it with her.

In the *First Light,* another intertextual example can be understood from the following lines *"I will show you fear in a handful of dust. Stardust. We are all stardust - Joni Mitchell*." (Sassor, 2015, p.15). These lines belong to Joni Mitchell's one of the most recognizable songs about the 1969 festival, *Woodstock*. The song *Woodstock* represents the event not as it happened but as it could have been as an idealized depiction of nostalgia for the festival and the era's utopian potential. The song's true strength comes from its timelessness – Mitchell's essential sense of "*back to the garden*" is a universal desire, especially for those who work for change. For thousands of young people, Mitchell's chance to be "*the cog in something spinning*" was an effort to rebuild the spirit of the country, or at least mark a turning point in its cultural history. The desire to return to the symbolically expressed garden is associated with nature. However, nothing is the same as before, and nature has been corrupted and destroyed. Suppose it is accepted that life is a cycle, in that case, it can be concluded that nature, which has deteriorated as a result of human actions, can no longer maintain this cycle. People do the worst harm to themselves by corrupting nature. (Kintner, 2016, p.1-22)

With the line "*We are all fear*" (Sassor, 2015, p.16), it is implied that we are the source of fear. It means that any seemingly insignificant action in this universe has the potential to trigger a chain reaction that will change the entire ecosystem. Considering that man has taken control over nature, it is understood that this control is a result of human development to date and his unique role in nature. Since we have come to the stage of bringing our demise with this power we have in our hands, we become both the source of fear and the one who is afraid.

In the song, the following lines are mentioned: "*We are stardust. We are golden, we are billion-year-old carbon, and we got to get ourselves back to the garden*." It is understood from these lines that as Carl Sagan states, one part of our being knows where we came from and where we will return. Because the cosmos is also within us. We're made of star stuff. We are a way for the cosmos to know itself. (Melina, 2023, livescience.com) Albert Einstein states, "A human being is a part of the whole called by us "Universe", a part limited in time-space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness." (Sullivan, 1972, nytimes.com). The human-nature and even human-universe relationship is for all people who are curious about the explanation of existence, our place in the universe, our meaning, and our role in the universe. Thinking about our responsibility in the whole universe is an inevitable existential need and even a duty. Stephen Hawking states in his book *A Brief History of Time:* From Big Bang to Black Holes that "To understand how a black hole could form, we first need to understand the life cycle of a star. A star forms when large amounts of gas (mostly hydrogen) begin to collapse on itself due to gravity. As it contracts, the hydrogen atoms collide with each other to form helium. The heat released in this reaction, which resembles a con-

trolled hydrogen bomb explosion, is what makes the star shine. Stars stay stable in this way for a long time, with heat from nuclear reactions balancing the gravitational pull. Eventually, however, the star's hydrogen and other nuclear fuels run out, and the star begins to cool and contract." (Hawking, 1988, p. 9). From these lines, it could be understood that these stars have converted some of the initial hydrogen and helium into our main materials, such as carbon and oxygen. Then the stars exploded in supernovae, and their debris formed other stars and planets, including our solar system, which is now about five billion years old (Hawking, 2017, p. 11). Carl Sagan states in his 1980 documentary series *Cosmos* that "The nitrogen in our DNA, the calcium in our teeth, the iron in our blood, the carbon in our apple pies were made in the interiors of collapsing stars. We are made of star stuff." (Major, J. 2015, universetoday.com)

From the above lines is understood that almost all elements except hydrogen and helium are formed by fusion reactions in stars, and the heaviest elements are formed during supernova explosions. In other words, the carbon in the bread eaten, the oxygen in the water drunk, the gold in the necklace, and the iron in the key come from the same origin, we are all stardust. The carbon in our DNA, the calcium in our teeth, the iron in our blood, and the oxygen in the water we drink were all made in a collapsed star, which makes us stardust. As understood from the following sentences: "Stardust is a matter that largely did not coalesce into planets or other celestial bodies during the formation of the solar system. A typical grain of stardust has a rock-like core and one or more outer layers of icy water, methane, or ammonia. Individual dust particles can be as small as a red blood cell or a meter wide. At least some of this dust has a carbon core, and all this fallout undoubtedly integrates into the dirt, where it feeds the plants and therefore us. We are at least partially carbon. All plant and animal life on Earth are largely carbon-based." (Coffey, 2021, forbes.com).

The theorist Stacy Alaimo supports what is mentioned above with her concept of interbody as a zone of contact between humans and the environment that focuses on moments of interaction between people and their environment. It highlights the areas of contact in our lives as humans between our own bodies and non-humans-animals, plants, microbes, and everything else in our environment. With Alaimo's expression, trans corporeality is extremely useful as a way of understanding ourselves. It is a concept that shows how our bodies interact, rather than separating people from the outside world. The moment of eating is one of the moments when trans corporeality is seen most effectively. Everyone eats food, from humans to the smallest microbes. And as we eat, we take the non-human into our body and there it becomes a part of us (Alaimo, 2008, p. 237-264). All the elements that make up nature have a value not by the use of value they provide to the human species but by their mere existence. Therefore, nature has value in itself. However, the fact that nature is seen as a machine rather than an organism has also affected people's attitudes toward the natural environment, causing people to see themselves as superior to nature.

In the later part of the story, the mother's internal reckoning continues. She experiences flashbacks and remembers conversations she had with her child. When looking at the content of the conversation, it should be considered that it is purely scientific conversation. The story takes shape between the present of the story and the flashbacks, constantly going back in time. As she recalls her conversation with her son about electric currents, she makes a connection between past and present via flashbacks. The mother understands what the doctor means when he talks about the electrification in the brain stem of her son, who is now in the hospital room. The mother considers it a miracle that she knows that a part of Jacob is still with her and that he can hear his mother's

voice, as understood from the following sentences. *"The doctor says that an electrical current continues to run along your brainstem. It's how I know there is still a fragment of you with me, that you can hear me."* (Sassor, 2015, p.16). From the statements of the nurse and the use of past tense, "*I remember him. He was so handsome*.", it is inferred that the death of the child is approaching. From the mother's unwillingness to respond to the nurse's statements, it can be deduced that the mother does not want to face her son's death and wants to stay in her memories and the past. The fact that the child's hair is shaved and his face is partially wrapped in bandages causes the mother's deep sadness. She wants to hear her son's breathing because she knows that this is what she loves most in life, but it is too late.

Ecological self means the full synthesis of mind and body. These two concepts insist that we must continually analyze the concept of nature to construct an inclusive and complete human identity (Macy, 2009, p. 430-432). We need to learn to think with our emotions to live on better terms with each other. The mourning after the death of a loved one is one of the best examples of this. Because while a part of us feels pain, the other part experiences social consequences that foster cohesion and solidarity. An example of this could be seen within the story when friends who want to share the sadness of the mother after the loss of her son show the notes they prepared for Jacob. That Jacob was a beloved friend is mentioned in the following lines of the story:

> "*I start to ascend the staircase. Paper bags with candles lead the way to the sky bridge, which is lined with candles and cards, stuffed teddy bears, a few roses… "People have been posting a lot of things online, too," Lucy says… There are students at the end of the passageway reading some of the notes… There is a poster that appears to have been put together by an art class. A large picture of you is in the middle with notes written all around it*." (Sassor, 2015, p. 19)

In this short story, failure to protect nature, ecological deterioration, consequently transecology and failure to protect individual, sexual identity distortion consequently transgenderness, emerge as the themes of the short story. Unlike more established approaches related to the environment in social and human sciences, transecology is a new research field that is emerging in importance and scope (Bedford, 2020, p.1-16). Transecology explores human relationships with nature and the environment through transgender experience and identity. The change experienced by Jacob, one of the main story people, and the depression he felt afterward can be given as an example of transgenderness. He enters a struggle because he has to live with the sex given to him at birth, but the fear of not being accepted by the pressure of society prevents him from revealing this situation. The following lines illustrate this situation:

> "*I had a son who was suffering from depression, who was bullied at school… I see Val look over at the large self-portrait you'd painted nearby. I don't think it registers with her, but I recognize the image as being of you, or rather, how you might look if you were blond if you were female. "She's pretty. Who is she?" I shrug. But I recognize the eyes. "Val, I don't know how to say this … and I don't know why I'm telling you, other than that I have to talk to someone. I never thought I was a perfect mother, but it's so easy for me to see now just how much I failed Jacob. There were things he needed me to understand, without having to ask me to, that I never really got. That I'm still processing, still making sense of…*" (Sassor, 2015, p. 24)

Another important point from the excerpt "*…if you were blond, if you were female...*" (Sassor, 2015, p. 24) is that the mother is confronted with the evidence of her child's multiple identities.

That Jacob portrays himself as a woman shows his transgender identity. The author's rationale for this subtlety gives clues about a reality that shows the mother holding this revelation at arm's length. She was not yet ready to fully come to terms with the reality of her child's identity, and what it meant about the ways that she may have failed her child.

In terms of transecology, Jacob represents nature. Jacob, who was neglected and not cared for properly by his mother, was also damaged, just as nature was damaged as a result of man's neglect of nature and not taking good care of it. Although nature gives signals about the destruction it has experienced, human beings ignore this and continue their actions. The hard work of Jacob's mother prevents her from realizing the emotional breakdown Jacob experiences, and after the death of his son, the mother experiences devastating regret. No regrets will bring Jacob back. Unable to realize her son's collapse in front of her eyes, the mother realizes how obvious everything is when she looks back. Man is focused only on getting more efficiency from nature. The mother is focused only on her son's academic success and could not notice his mood. Just as the destroyed nature takes its revenge on people, her son, who is the only branch she can hold in life, takes revenge on his mother by destroying his mother's will to live. Although she admits that her favorite thing is to hear her son's breathing, that's impossible right now. It can be understood from the following lines: "*I want to run my hands through your hair, but they have shaved it. Your face is partially covered by bandages. I want to hear you breathe. I've realized too late that this is my favorite sound: the sound of you breathing*." (Sassor, 2015, p. 17) The fact that the mother could not recognize Jacob's true identity symbolizes that people have no idea about nature. Nature is in a transformation. This situation is illustrated in the following lines: "*The meaning is clear to me. You painted my visage as a mountain face with crosshatched lines—the types of crevices where water seeps and freezes, shattering the rock and sending it cascading below. There is one such rock scree tumbling from the side of my cheek. And at its base, you painted a tiny version of yourself along with our dog at the time, Mercury, looking up as falling pieces of me were about to devour you both*." (Sassor, 2015, p. 23) These lines suggest that the child is aware of the deterioration in nature and, contrary to his mother's opinion, he is more interested in environmental issues than social issues.

In this short story, intersections between the issues and identities occur as a new concept. The narrator portrays how human beings connect to the land and relates to the ways they connect with themselves and their ability to live their lives with authenticity and truth. As Kimberly Crenshaw, a black scholar first introducing the term intersectionality, argues, intersectionality sheds light on the fact that climate change can go hand in hand with other forms of inequality and exacerbate problems for certain communities because of the social injustices they simultaneously struggle with. On the other hand, Intersectional Environmentalism, defined by black climate activist Leah Thomas, is an inclusive version of environmentalism that advocates for both the protection of people and the planet. It identifies how injustices happening to marginalized communities and the earth are interconnected. It brings injustices done to the most vulnerable communities, and the earth, to the forefront and does not minimize or silence social inequality. Intersectional Environmentalism advocates for justice for people and the planet. It considers all aspects of someone's identity (Haddock, 2020, curious.earth).

Conclusion

Short stories on ecology focus on the long-term effects of human destruction and what steps should be taken to deal with these problems. In this study, in which an analysis of ecological fiction written from a dystopian perspective is made, the power of literary discourse in creating

ecologic awareness is emphasized, and the problems to be experienced after the measures that cannot be taken against climate change are discussed.

Stories written to create ecologic awareness, the nature, and climate are an indispensable part of the plot. *First Light* is an example of these stories. In the text, it is noteworthy that words related to natural sciences are collocated too much, particularly around the motifs of death/suicide, regret, longing for the past, nature, sexual identity confusion, and loneliness. The fact that the mother remembers the scientific conversations about nature, such as how electricity is formed in our brains, RNA, hurricanes, Pleiades, icebergs, and Mendenhall Loop she had with her son in all this emotional confusion, reveals how sensitive the child is to the environment and how interested he is in nature. All nature-related motifs show how deep the conversations between the mother and the child are. This situation is illustrated in the following lines: *"I remember talking with Jacob about climate change," I say, "about how Inuit hunters on Baffin Island are falling through the ice on their way to traditional hunting grounds. It's getting warmer there, and the ice is too thin people are dying while trying to provide for their families."* (Sassor, 2015, p. 23) These lines warn us that we must realize that we must step out of our comfort zone due to our actions and that a challenging future awaits us.

Soil is the source of life; it nourishes, sustains, and forms the basis of life. The giving birth, nurturing, and protecting aspects of nature have been likened to and paired with woman in many cultures. Human beings, the masters of nature, can not change a single law because everything works according to the laws of nature. The human being who destroys nature should not forget that he is a part of nature and should stop their attempts to become the master of nature. As a result of human actions that have been trying to manage nature for centuries, deterioration in the ecosystem has occurred. It is extremely important to recognize the disastrous effects that humanity continues to have on other species and planetary ecologies. As an ecological fiction, *First Light* is a dystopian discourse that reflects the eventual state of nature after being destroyed by human beings. Therefore, the central place in the story is not a well-described nature, but the disastered nature after human hands have corrupted it. It is thought that through dystopian works, the effect of warning people is more effective than in good nature and tolerance-centered fiction. The reflection of nature in the body of a trans character in the story and then the suicide of this person strikingly emphasizes the end that awaits us if nature continues to be destroyed by people.

It is also remarkable that the mother, who is a character with high awareness, is fictionalized as a professor in the story. It is emphasized that the professor, who is a nature-sensitive character, is too late to face the facts and take precautions. On the one hand, there is a mother who is late in observing her son, who is disappearing day by day, on the other hand, there is a depressive son who has personality balance disorders and is driven to suicide due to the dead end. The son symbolizing nature and the mother symbolizing all humanity is revealed as the protagonists of a story with post-modern features within the framework of eco-fiction. When the deep structure of the story is examined, it serves as a warning. Some expressions indicate that the end of the universe is coming. The action that Sassor wants to perform through his literary discourse is to warn human beings and to create awareness that since man is a part of nature, as nature deteriorates, man also does. Neglected humans and nature are both doomed to deteriorate.

Extended Abstract

While there is an increasing awareness of not only limiting the issues related to climate change with scientific research but also including society in this awareness, there is a need for mechanisms that present the relevant discourses to the public. Short stories are at the forefront of these mechanisms that draw attention to ecological consciousness. Because they are shorter and have become more preferred recently in the hustle and bustle of postmodern life.

In recent days, when nature is gradually disappearing into the hands of man, it has become necessary to develop a new way of communicating with nature and all natural resources. According to Marx, "nature is the inorganic body of man." It means that nature is the body of man, with which he must be in constant contact if he does not want to die. The fact that man's physical and spiritual life is connected to nature simply means that nature is connected to itself because man is a part of nature." (Capra, 1992, p. 233). F. Engels' findings on this subject also contribute to the new ecological paradigm. According to him, "the animal is content to use the nature outside itself and creates changes in it only through its existence. However, by changing nature, man makes it serve his own purposes and becomes its master." (Thompson, 1998, p. 21). Ignoring the balance existing in nature by man and instrumentalizing nature for his own purposes has brought about a transformation from mastery to slavery. As humans struggle to establish dominance over nature, they become slaves to the technology they have developed (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2010, p. 31). Moreover, they have done all this by taking the risk of nature's extinction. Man is responsible for the current structure of nature and is the most important factor in bringing nature to its current state. Man, who uses nature in every aspect of life, has instrumentalized it and fallen into the misconception that everything is a human product. However, in this creation, nature has always been at the basis of this production, but it has never received the importance it needs and deserves (Heidegger, 1998, p. 71).

Human beings who act with this anthropocentric understanding throughout history, have transformed the environment in which they live most appropriately to the extent of the possibilities offered by time and technique, interacting with their environment. This need for man to transform and change is not only the need for security and shelter. The rapid population growth, the construction of large-scale industrial facilities, and the least costly production have brought reckless destruction of the environment over time.

Nature has its own protection and balance mechanism. However, this takes many years, and nature's rate of repairing itself can not keep up with the rate of pollution. For this reason, there are very serious steps that human beings need to take to prevent nature from being seen as a commodity or an object. Realizing that we live in harmony with nature, it is necessary to see nature as a whole that can be lived with and to create the necessary arrangements for living together, leaving aside self-centered views (Kılıç, 2006, p. 119). The global environmental crisis, which threatens the world's future, has directed the attention of literature to ecological problems. In this context, an ecocritical approach has been developed to examine the relationship between man and nature from past ages to the present.

Ecocriticism, a newly developing literary theory, focuses on creating ecological awareness of environmental problems. Ecocritical theory, which examines how nature is reflected in literature, explores people's relationships with nature and encourages them to interact more closely with

nature. As an interdisciplinary field of study, ecocriticism aims to establish a scientific understanding of nature to prevent the destruction of nature. Ecocriticism emerged as a literary theory in 1978. First, William Ruekert defines ecocriticism as "the adaptation of the principles of ecology to literature" (Ruekert,1996, p. 105-123). For Ruekert, ecology is the most important element that enables humans to comprehend the outside world. Cheryll Glotfelty, who is considered one of the pioneers of ecocriticism, defined ecocriticism as "the examination of the relationship between literature and the physical environment" (Glotfelty, 1996, p. 15-18). As can be understood from both definitions, the environment is the main focus of ecocriticism in the examination of literary works and appears as a scientific and ecological concept. The main thesis of ecocriticism, which has an interdisciplinary feature, is the idea of removing the privilege of being the sole center of attention given to humans in literary works. In this study, Robert Russell Sassor's short story *First Light* was analyzed through a discourse-centered approach.

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