

AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED CASES OF ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS
IN TURKEY THROUGH AN ECOFEMINIST APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED CASES OF ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS IN TURKEY THROUGH AN ECOFEMINIST APPROACH

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The main aim of this study is to understand how women activists make room for themselves in environmental movements and what their discourse, concerns and motivations are in environmental problems Turkey. The main research problem of this thesis is whether there is a space for women in environmental movements in Turkey and how women position themselves in environmental movements in Turkey. In Turkey, how women activists frame their concerns to create collective identity, which repertoire and discourse they use to defend natural environment and to express their demands are questioned. Moreover, their motivations for mobilization to raise environmental concerns against top-down neo-liberal economic policies and energy investments of Turkish government are also analyzed. Women's motivations to participate in environmental movement are different in urban and rural areas. While women try to defend lifestyles in urban, they fight for their living spaces against environmental destruction. This study tries to find out how participations and initiatives of women in environmental issues affect struggle for defending nature despite the aggressive attitude of Turkish government related to environmental protection and sustainability. In this thesis, woman-nature relations and women's participation in environmental issues are analyzed with ecofeminist perspective. It is significant to analyze environmental movements in Turkey through gender lenses to

understand the impacts of leadership of women environmental movements. As in many other societies in the world, women have close relations with nature also in Turkey. In addition, they play crucial role in green consumerism and sustainability. While some movements do not emerge feminist motivations, women emphasize women-nature relations when they express their concerns about environmental degradation. Although it is difficult to claim there is an ecofeminist movement in Turkey, there is a space for women that can make their voices heard in environmental issues in Turkey. If there is no enough space, they seem to prepare to create this space for their struggle for environmental conservation. So, as being woman, their struggle for environment is valuable.

Keyword: Ecofeminism, Environmental movements, Woman, Turkey

ÖZ

TÜRKİYE’DEKİ ÇEVRE HAREKETLERİNDEN SEÇİLMİŞ ÖRNEKLERİN EKO FEMİNİST YAKLAŞIM İLE ANALİZİ

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye’de kadınların çevre hareketlerinde kendilerine nasıl yer açtıkları, çevre sorunlarına karşı nasıl bir söylem geliştirdikleri ve nasıl bir motivasyon ile çevre hareketlerine yön verdiklerini anlamak ve açıklamaktır. Bu tezin öncelikli araştırma problemi, Türkiye’de çevre hareketinde kadınlara yeri ve kadınların çevre hareketinde oluşturdukları çerçevedir. Türkiye’de kadın aktivistlerin çevre hareketlerinde kolektif kimlikleri nasıl oluşturduklarını, hangi repertuar ve söylemleri kullanarak çevreyi korumaya çalıştıklarını ve isteklerini hangi yöntemlerle ifade ettiklerini sorgulamıştır. Buna ek olarak Türkiye’de hükümetin tepeden inmece neo-liberal ekonomik politikaları ve enerji yatırımlarına karşı kadınların çevre ile ilgili ortaya çıkan problemlerde karşı bir direniş sergilerken sahip oldukları motivasyonları analiz edilmiştir. Kadınların çevre hareketlerine katılımındaki motivasyonları kırsal ve şehir alanlarda farklılık göstermektedir. Çevresel yıkıma karşı şehirde kadın yaşam biçimlerini korumaya çalışırken, kırsalda yaşam alanları için mücadele etmektedirler. Bu çalışma, doğayı savunma mücadelesinde çevre koruma ve sürdürülebilirlik konusunda kadınların aktif katılımının ve öncülüğünün hükümetin agresif politika ve tutumuna karşı nasıl bir duruş sergilediğini anlamaya çalışır. Bu tezde doğa ve kadın ilişkisi ve kadının çevre

ile ilgili konulara katılımı ekofeminist bakış açısı ile analiz edilmiştir. Çevre hareketlerini toplumsal cinsiyet açısından analiz etmek kadının çevre hareketlerindeki etkisini anlamak için önemlidir. Dünyada diğer bir çok toplumda olduğu gibi Türkiye’de de kadınların doğa ile yakın ilişkileri vardır. Bunun yanında kadınlar yeşil tüketim ve sürdürülebilirlik için önemli bir rol oynamaktadırlar. Türkiye’de bir çok çevre hareketleri feminist motivasyonlarla ortaya çıkmasa da kadınlar çevre problemleri ile ilgili endişelerini dile getirirken doğa ve kadın ilişkisini vurgular. Türkiye’de ekofeminist hareketin var olduğunu iddia etmek şu an için zor olsa da kadınların çevre konusunda seslerini duyurmak için alanları vardır. Yeterli alan yoksa bile kadınlar çevreyi koruma konusunda alan yaratmak için hazır görünmektedirler. Kadın olarak çevre için mücadeleleri değerlidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ekofeminizm, Çevre Hareketleri, Kadın, Türkiye

To all the people who resist to save our Earth...

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“We are the bird’s eggs. Bird’s eggs, flowers, butterflies, rabbits, cows, sheep; we are caterpillars; we are leaves of ivy and sprigs of wallflower. We are women. We rise from the wave. We are gazelle and doe, elephant and whale, lilies and roses and peach, we are air, we are flame, we are oyster and pearl, we are girls. We are woman and nature. And he says he cannot hear us speak.”

But we hear. (Griffin, 2000: 76)

Ecofeminism is as philosophy and social movement claims that woman has closer relationship with nature as compared with man because of her biological and social features. Biologically woman is close to nature because she is fertile as nature. Both nature and woman give birth and nurture. Socially woman is also close to nature because of gender roles in the society. She cultivates, harvests, cooks and carries water. Therefore, she understands the language of nature. Moreover, woman is oppressed by man in patriarchal societies as nature is exploited. So, woman and nature can liberate together because they are under the same domination.

In Turkey, there is no strong ecofeminist movement. However, as any other patriarchal society, women have intense relations with nature in Turkey. Especially in rural regions, women are main actors in agriculture. They have knowledge on soil and they play crucial role in transfer of knowledge and experience to future generations. In many villages, they still carry water from fountains. They are also responsible for care of livestock animals. Hence, they tried to protect rivers, trees and

other natural values by resisting government projects. In urban areas, women's relationship with nature turns into concern about healthy life and diet. Their motivations for struggle to protect nature still continue in the form of controlling what they consume.

I choose to study women's place in environmental movements in Turkey through ecofeminist perspective because there is women's empowerment in environmental movements in the last ten years of Turkey. It is significant to explore the driving forces and motivations for women's involvement in environmental movements and also to find out their perceptions of woman-nature relationship together with current environmental problems. Although some women in environmental movements do not refer openly to and internalize ecofeminist philosophy, their discourse related to protection of nature and sustainability emphasizes woman-nature relations. The intention in this study is an attempt to understand and explain women's actions and initiations related to nature from the ecofeminist point of view, instead of questioning whether there is an ecofeminist movement in Turkey. As in other parts of the world, in Turkey, women have close relations with nature in every sphere of life. In farming or agricultural activities or in housework like laundry and cooking, women are intertwined with nature. At this point, socially constructed gender roles come into question. As a patriarchal society, in Turkey, many social, economic and domestic tasks are regarded as a characteristics or inherent part of women. So, most of the tasks associated with nature are under the responsibility of women. It is clear that women have close relations with soil, water and non-human animals mainly because of attributed gender roles of women in Turkey. This closeness of women and nature is in the social, economic and domestic realm of life but it can be clearly observed in environmental social movements because in these social movements, women's visibility increases through their discourse and actions. Therefore, it is important to look at women's place in environmental protection through the eyes of ecofeminism in Turkey.

The main aim of this study is to understand how women activists make environmental issues visible, how they react to environmental problems and what

their concerns and demands are. In this thesis it is asked whether there is a space for women in environmental movements in Turkey and if there is not, how they frame environmental movements in Turkey. Thus, how women activists frame their concerns to create collective identity, which repertoire and discourse they use to defend the natural environment and to express their demands are questioned. Moreover, their motivations for mobilization to raise environmental concerns against top-down liberal economic policies and energy investments of Turkish government are also analyzed. Furthermore, this study attempts to find out how women's participation and initiatives in environmental issues influence the struggle for defending nature, despite the attitude of the Turkish government towards environmental protection and sustainability.

In this thesis, social movements are not focus point rather only ecofeminist movement is the main issue. So, women as activists in environmental movements are the primary research aims. Woman-nature relations and women's participation in environmental issues are analyzed from social ecofeminist perspective. However, in some parts, especially in the discourse analysis –the analysis of expressions to understand intention behind these expressions-, cultural ecofeminist perspective is also used in order to understand and explain women's motivation when they participate in environmental movements. Cultural ecofeminist approach is differentiated from social ecofeminist approach by being essentialist. However, cultural ecofeminists also accept that women's essence is constructed in a social context while they emphasize essential gender features of women. Thus, it is important to analyze environmental movements in Turkey through gender lenses because women's leadership in environmental protection, especially in local environmental movements draws the attention. As in many other societies in the world, women have close relations with nature also in Turkey. In addition, they play crucial role in green consumerism and sustainability. While some movements do not originate from feminist motivations, women emphasize women-nature relations when they express their concerns about environmental degradation. Although it is difficult to claim that there is a well-established ecofeminist movement in Turkey,

women's motives in environmental movements generally come from gender roles according to their discourses.

Women's motivations to involve in environmental movement are different in rural and urban areas. In urban areas, women fight for environmental issues in order to prevent intervention to their lifestyles. For instance, vegan or organic eating habits are as a part of their way of living. So, any negative influence in dietary patterns like genetically modified foods, they try to defend their rights. In rural areas, they try to defend their living space because they live in nature. Furthermore, in these areas, their husbands or sons generally go to other cities in order to earn money. So, works related to agriculture and animal husbandry is on the shoulders of women. This situation makes them more aware of environmental degradation because they know the effects of these degradations to their living space. Women's involvement to environmental movements, their tactics and network types are also different in rural and urban. While women prefer to use social media accounts and blogs to organize in urban areas, they come together through local environmental initiatives, forums and associations in rural areas. As tactics, they keep vigil and sit in front of bulldozers in rural areas while they try to raise awareness through campaigns and protests. Thus, their involvement in environmental movement is more spontaneous in rural and it is more continuous in urban areas.

This thesis includes five chapters. The first is the introduction, which defines the aim and the main focus of the study and it also clarifies the research question and the main argument of the thesis. Moreover, the first chapter provides an overall perspective towards ecofeminism, women's participation into environmental movements and their relation with nature in Turkey. The second chapter presents the theoretical background about ecofeminist philosophy and ecofeminism as a social movement. In the first part of the second chapter, ecofeminist philosophy is examined over woman-nature relations and how ecofeminist philosophy associates nature and woman. The value of nature in ecofeminist philosophy and Gaia hypothesis is discussed. Then, dualisms that form the basis of ecofeminist thought and how these dualisms get along with the core idea of ecofeminism is presented.

After discussing criticisms against ecofeminist philosophy and responses from ecofeminists, how ecofeminist philosophy perceives veganism and agricultural issue is examined. In the second part of the second chapter, ecofeminism is discussed as a social movement. Ecofeminist movement is analyzed on the basis of nature, feminism and patriarchy relations. Link and communality between vegan movement, animal rights movement and food movement is also discussed in the patriarchal society. Then, framing of ecofeminist movement is examined through collective identity and networking issues. In the second chapter, my intention is to form a conceptual framework related to ecofeminist philosophy and social movements. In order to understand ecofeminist thought and women's participation in environmental movements, it is crucial to analyze how ecofeminist philosophy is based on dualisms and how it perceives nature and woman relations. Furthermore, to understand how ecofeminists form networks through collective behavior and identity, how they frame their discourses and tactics through environmental activists is important to figure out women's movement in environmental issues in Turkey.

In the third chapter, my purpose is to analyze woman nature relations and woman's motives to become a part of environmental movements in Turkey. Especially in rural regions of Turkey, regardless of their preferences, women have close relations with soil because the majority of farmers are women in agriculture. They also have cultural roles like keeping seeds or prepare healing mixtures from therapeutic plants. Their knowledge on soil and agriculture is valuable. Besides, they are controller of domestic consumption of food and water. In most of the villages, women carry water from fountains and they use water in many fields as compared to other family members. They wash the dishes and do the laundries, clean the house, irrigate crops and give water to livestock animals by using the water they carry from long distances in rural Turkey (Kantar, Kıymaz & Özekici, 2004). So, they know the value of water and soil because they know our dependency on nature. Moreover, their knowledge on nature passes from generation to generation through their networks. Therefore, they play a key role in our relations with nature. In urban areas, women are food provider and nurturer of the family. Because women are responsible for some gender

roles like food shopping and cooking, again they are more interested in nature indirectly when they think about what they eat. As a result of their relations with nature, their reactions and resistance against cutting down of trees for constructing roads or building dams over rivers near their village is visible in Turkey. They are also organized against genetically modified foods or to protect the local seeds. Although there is not a strong ecofeminist stance of women as defined in theory, they emphasize femininity in their environmental concerns.

In the fourth chapter, my intention is to understand how women's participation in environmental movements is framed. In the first part of the fourth chapter, I focus on relations between women and animal rights, vegan and food movements in Turkey. When analyzing women's discourse, concerns and networks in animal rights and vegan movement, I try to analyze these issues from the ecofeminist point of view. There are few vegan and animal right movements in which women define themselves as feminist in Turkey. They also accept commonalities between oppression of woman and exploitation of nature. So, majority of them are urban women and they refuse to eat meat in order not to contribute to animal cruelty. In Turkey, there is not any feminist food movement but in slow food movement in Turkey, women are active and interested in food issues. The pioneers of slow food movement and balcony gardening convivium are women and their discourse is generally based on motherhood, next generations and sustainability. In the second part of the fourth chapter, rural women's participation in environmental movements generally to stop government's projects and investments in their living space are analyzed. Women's role in resistance against the Green Road Project and in Yırca cases is discussed. How they frame their movement in order to create solidarity and how they create collective identity for mobilization is evaluated. Their discourse, tactics and other repertoires give clues about their stance in these movements. Fifth chapter is the conclusion where main findings of the research on women's motivations and participation in environmental movements in Turkey are discussed.

As regards the methodology of the research, secondary sources like; books, articles, interviews of journalists, newspapers, magazines on environmental issues,

documentaries, thesis, blogs and websites were used in this thesis. Field study is not conducted so, the primary sources are not used in this study. Secondary sources are also limited especially books and academic articles related to woman-nature issue in Turkey. Therefore, newspapers, journals, blogs and websites are used more. In literature review, key words like ecofeminism, woman, nature, environmental social movements and philosophy were searched in printed sources for theoretical background of this thesis. So, in the second chapter, printed books and articles of scholars on ecofeminist philosophy and sociology were reviewed and used. In the third chapter, types of secondary sources are various and include journals, newspapers, thesis, books and articles on woman and nature relation and women's position in environmental movements in Turkey. In the fourth chapter, discourses, network structures and tactics of women who involve in vegan, animal rights and food movement were analyzed. In this study, women's discourses on environmental issues are analyzed on the basis of social and cultural ecofeminist perspective.

Sources for these analyses are mainly interviews in journals, thesis, green magazines, a few leftist newspapers, blogs and websites of movements. One of this green magazines is Yeşilist which is an active online magazine consisting of issues about nature and sustainable environment and it has nearly 23.000 followers in social media accounts. Another one is Gaia Dergi which is both an online and printed magazine on nature, ecology, urban life and gender issues and it has almost 43.000 online followers. Amargi Dergi which is a quarterly feminist magazine also includes issues on nature woman relations were also used as a source in this thesis. Articles in Evrensel Gazetesi and Birikim Dergi which describe themselves as leftist newspaper and journals are also frequently used. OdaTv and Bianet (acronym of Independent Communication Network) are news websites defining themselves as secularist and left wing nationalist. In the fifth chapter, to analyze women's position in environmental protests against the Green Road Project in Çamlıhemşin, Rize and cut down of olive trees for establishment of power plant in Yırca, Manisa the same newspapers and journals were used as secondary resources. In addition to these sources, visual sources like a documentary named, Ölmez Ağaç: Yırca Direnişi

Belgeseli prepared by Kazım Kızıl was also used as source to interpret women's place in environmental movements in Turkey. To reach online, printed and visual sources for this thesis, some key words like environmental social movements, protests, women, nature, animal rights, veganism, food movements and agriculture were used. There is a distinction between rural women's and urban movement's participation in environmental movements. Therefore, in the fourth chapter, urban women's position in environmental movements were analyzed through women's relation with veganism, animals rights and food movement while rural women's position is analyzed by discussing women's discourse, role and tactics in the Green Road and Yırca protests.

CHAPTER 2

ECOFEMINIST PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

A social movement is a network of interactions between people and spontaneously emerged reactions for a social change on the basis of a collective identity (Diani, 1992:2). It is an action generally emerging due to a social discontent and collective action which enables people to gather around common aims in order to make them visible. Social movements are also crucial instruments for people to participate into informal and unpredictable public action (Tilly, 2004: 54). Environmentalism is a broad philosophy and social movement that seeks environmental protection and restoration of the natural environment with the awareness of concerning non-human life. In environmentalist movement and philosophy, some scholars suggest that there is gender difference towards protection of natural environment.

According to Zelezny et al. (2000: 445), women are more likely to concerns of others and have a stronger ethic of care as compared with men. In many cultures, women generally tend to be socialized more cooperative, caregiving and nurturing than men. Women also tend to be more ecocentric according to gender socialization theory. These gender differences related to cooperation, empathy and altruism may give a clue about the relationship between gender and environmentalism. In the study of Goldsmith, Feygina and Jost (2013: 165), women tend to be more than men concerned about the environmental degradation in terms of both well-beings of society and also sustainability of Earth. In addition, altruism and empathy capacity of women make them more willing to attend environmental social movements in order to achieve protection and sustainability through collective action.

Another important factor is system justification which is the acceptance of existing socioeconomic and political systems by justifying the socioeconomic system as fair in order to maintain social stability. In the long term system justification makes it difficult to collective action to ask for change and correction of injustices. Social status of individuals in the society affects the motivation to justify the system and women, the poor and minorities are in disadvantageous situations. Thus, they are more willing to correct injustices while advantageous groups get benefit from the existing system (Goldsmith, Feygina & Jost, 2013: 166). Because environmental problems create unfair situations, women seem to tend more to do something for the conservation and sustainability of natural environments. At this point ecofeminism takes to the stage in order to bring together woman and nature in a single thought.

Ecofeminist philosophy suggests that women and nature are connected morally because both of them have feminine features. Women and nature ensure the continuity of life and their offerings are similarly violated by men in the patriarchal system. In the first part of this chapter, two main points of ecofeminist philosophy – interconnection between nature and women and also parallelism between men’s exploitation of women and nature – will be analyzed in the context of environmental philosophy. I will focus on the close relationship between nature and women, the ecofeminist approach to the value of nature and ecofeminist criticism of dualisms in environmental ethics. Furthermore, criticisms directed towards ecofeminist philosophy and responses of ecofeminist philosophy to these criticisms will be discussed.

In addition, environmental awareness and feminist consciousness in the patriarchal system together with destructive effects of ecological problems on woman link gender issue and environmental justice. Moreover, networking through common discourse and repertoires of ecofeminism mobilize the movements. In the second part of this chapter, the analogy between woman and nature and parallelism between man’s exploitation of woman and nature defended by ecofeminists is analyzed in the context of social movements. I will give the background information about ecofeminist concept as a social movement. Then, I will analyze the motives and

discourses behind the ecofeminist identity building process. Lastly, the forms of networking in ecofeminist movement, claims of supporters as actors and impacts of this movement in social mobilization will be evaluated.

2.1. Ecofeminist Philosophy

In general, ecofeminist philosophy blends the insights of feminism and ecology. So, while ecofeminist philosophy does not provide an integrated theoretical position, it originates from two epistemologies of feminism and ecology. It establishes its ethics on the basis of criticism of the tendency to dominate both women and nature because existing ecological science and philosophy are not enough to explain the nature of ethics. Moreover, ecofeminist approach emerged both dependently and independently from ecological philosophy and it influences various ecological thoughts. Ecofeminist philosophy has eclectic structure and its core conceptual framework is based on the strong connection between the domination of women and exploitation of nature (Bile, 2011: 8-9). Therefore, according to ecofeminist philosophy, the oppression of women and degradation of nature is parallel to each other. It claims that other ethical viewpoints in the environmental philosophy approach nature from masculinist perspective.

Ecofeminist nature valuation is mainly affected by feminist approach but unlike feminism, ecofeminist approach adds environmental philosophy in its ethical thought. So, many proponents of feminist philosophers have influence on ecofeminism. Mellor (1992: 51) in her article refers to Simon de Beauvoir's suggestion that men try to alienate women as the other as he does the same thing for nature. However, we, as women, know the unsteady feelings of men towards nature. He abuses women but she challenges him because he is born from her and dies in her. Many scholars, as defenders of ecofeminist approach, take this suggestion as a reference point of ecofeminism. However, ecofeminism refuses the idea of separation of women from nature although ecofeminist philosophy shares de Beauvoir's suggestion related to common exploitation of nature and women. Moreover, ecofeminist approach argues that women and nature are subject to the

disruptive actions of men like militarism, war, armament, industrialization and capitalism. Therefore, it seeks the emancipation of nature from male domination by emphasizing shared values of nature and women like nourishment and reproduction.

At that point, I agree with the ecofeminist approach which tries to emphasize the common traits of women and nature. For instance, giving birth is a feminine phenomenon both in human and non-human nature. From the beginning of this process, it is sensible to think that women feel close themselves to nature. All living things in nature reproduce thanks to fertility of females. Therefore, women in human world can be said to be more sensible towards non-human nature. For example, women can “put” themselves in a pregnant animal’s position and easily understand what this animal feels or experiences. In addition, women also give more importance to a tree compared to men because they experience the difficulty of raising a child.. Moreover, they can easily correlate between to supply water to a tree to help its growth and to breastfeed their child to grow. However, it seems difficult to expect men to understand these issues because they never have this kind of experiences.

According to Warren (2000: 57), ecofeminist philosophy, in general, agrees on three main claims. The first one is that there are connections between domination of women and nonhuman nature. The second one is that it is crucial for ecofeminism to raise awareness in environmental philosophy about these interconnections between women and nature. The last one is that ecofeminism tries to replace unfair domination over women and nature with justified structure in the environmental philosophy. Thus, ecofeminism tries to make visible this unfair dualism by proposing interconnections between women and nature. Ecofeminism defines nature by the interconnectedness with women. This approach which underlines the domination of men over nature and women may be reasonable to some extent because men see themselves both socially and physically capable of doing what they want to do. In many societies, although women and men are equal according to constitutions, there is a patriarchal hierarchy in practice. Men ignore women’s connections with nature and behave according to requirements of economic system and they do not stop themselves from damaging nature.

Moreover, Warren (1990) suggests that the logic of domination is the explanatory basis of ecofeminist philosophy. She claims that the logic of domination is functional within patriarchal thought in terms of justifying domination of woman and nature. She explains it as follows:

- “Humans can “consciously and radically” alter the environment in which they live, whereas plants and rocks cannot.
- Whatever can “consciously and radically” alter the environment in which it lives is “morally superior” to whatever cannot.
- Therefore, “humans are morally superior to plants and rocks.”
- “For any X and Y, if X is morally superior to Y, then X is morally justified in subordinating Y.”
- Therefore, “humans are morally justified in subordinating plants and rocks.” (p.123).

This argument is related to domination of nature and she argues that ecofeminist philosophy should combine this argument with the following one:

- Women are identified with nature and the physical realm, while men are identified with the “human” and mental realm.
- Whatever is identified with nature and the physical is inferior to whatever is identified with the “human” and the mental.
- Therefore, women are inferior to men; or, reversely, men are superior to women.
- For any X and Y, if X is superior to Y, then X is justified in subordinating Y.
- Therefore, “men are justified in subordinating women (p.124).

She argues that as the logic of domination justifies the domination of humans by race, class, religion and gender, it is also used to justify the domination of nature. Eliminating the logic of domination should be viewed as an integral part of ecofeminist philosophy in order to end sexist and speciesist domination. In these arguments, woman and nature are under the same oppression.

2.1.1. Women and Nature Relations

Carolyn Merchant (2006: 515) claims that nature is a lively organism, in other words it is “Mother Earth” but it is attempted to change to a dead machine by men in order to control and to dominate it. For example, there is an organic perception of nature

that perceives women as provider of humanity's needs in less untouched nature before cultural and scientific changes. However, mechanistic conception of the world led to the death of nature and nature-women relations enter the patriarchal hegemony. Merchant also emphasizes that nature begins to be used as a machine in which investigations and analysis are made for the sake of humans. These experiments and analyses include animal torturing and people behave as nature is not alive. Furthermore, she also draws attention to the need for alternative environmental ethics in order to remove gender, class and race based dichotomies as an obstacle for constructing fully equipped environmental philosophy. Only in this way, the mainstream understanding of nature can be replaced with extensive environmental ethics. Therefore, she tries to explain the loss of spirit of nature due to scientific and also technological developments. I think that Merchant's points are acceptable to some extent because economic system and science are under the control of men. So, even if these experiments are crucial for human beings, some scientific experiments use animals as test subjects. These animal experiments are an indicator of men's damage to living beings as they dominate women in all fields of life.

Susan Griffin (2000: 87) in her book, *Woman and Nature*, argues that patriarchal man feels that he must dominate everything in nature including wild animals like wildness inside him which can be observed in relation with woman. Therefore, man should dominate woman before woman controls him. So, Griffin likens an animal in a zoo and woman in a domestic cage jailed by a man. Furthermore, she also compared destroyed nature with woman subjected to physical and physiological domination by a man. Hence, domestic responsibilities of women generally given to them by men lead to keep women away from social and economic life. This situation is similar to catch animals for entertainment purpose and then imprison them into man-made artificial places. So, both women and living beings are removed from their natural environments by men.

Although men attempt to separate women from nature, there is a strong relationship with women and nature. For example, carrying water, planting, irrigating plants, collecting foods are feminine issues because these are seen as main responsibility of

women in a society. Environmental devastation and degradation are also feminine issues because women and children are affected firstly from any environmental disaster. Therefore, understanding exploitation of nature contributes to understanding the domination over women. For instance, deforestation is a female issue because especially in rural areas forest means household livelihood. Moreover, any damage on nature will directly and firstly affect women because of their biological structure (Schmidtz & Willot, 2002: 235-236).

Women have primary role as mother and nurturers of life so, ties between women and nature are closely related. Moreover, biological features of female body and its functions like pregnancy, childbirth and breast-feeding bring them closer to nature. Women have also a different natural vision from men because of socially determined responsibilities like the caring of a family and raising children. Therefore, closeness of women and nature gives women a distinctive feelings and knowledge that will encourage them to preserve nature. However, this direct relationship between women and nature makes women a victim in every environmental disaster because they are more vulnerable than men by the negative effects of change in nature (Rico, 1998: 22-23). Thus, one of the distinguishing features of ecofeminism is the perception of relationship of women with nature by emphasizing the strong link between the two and supporting the femininity of nature with harmony. Therefore, women have particular relations with nature and women are thought as an indispensable part of nature.

2.1.2. Value of Nature in Ecofeminist Philosophy

Ecofeminist philosophy suggests restructuring male based environmental ethics by saving the ethical implementations which are good for human and non-human organisms. Moreover, ecofeminist philosophy is not concerned with the value of nature to much because their focus is male domination of nature and woman. It accepts that nature has intrinsic value that thing has “in itself,” or “for its own sake but it does not say anything else on this issue. So, the origin of ecofeminist ethics is the rejection of exploitation and oppression of nature because nature has value in

itself and it does not need any control of man. Ecofeminist philosophy argues that nature is valuable and it has non-instrumental value which needs to be proven. Thus, nature has its own value and if we purify nature from man-based degradation, it will continue without unharmed. The ecofeminist ethics is interested in submission and destruction of nature rather than focusing on the value of nature (Cuomo, 1998: 49-51).

Gruen (1997: 358) suggests that the principal aim of ecofeminist philosophy is to find answer to a basic question: is it possible to legitimize moral claims of men about their relations with nature? She argues that ecofeminist approach tries to answer this question by accepting nature having intrinsic value rather than instrumental value. If ecofeminist theory claims nature has instrumental value, it would be in contradiction with itself. Women, as nature, have their own value rather than being valuable for others. Warren (2000: 75) points out that ecofeminist philosophy is reluctant to discuss the intrinsic value of nature because to talk about the value of nature is related to making nature morally considerable. So, ecofeminist approach is skeptical about this issue because it indisputably accepts that nature has intrinsic value. In other words, any set of description for value of nature seems problematic because it does not need to make nature morally considerable, it already deserves respect. Thus, no additional proof for respecting nature is required.

In the women and nature connection, Gaia hypothesis approach has gained importance in the ecofeminist philosophy. Gaia hypothesis claims that the Earth is a living organism and it is valuable in itself without any intervention of human beings. Humans are only guests and should be respectful for hospitality of nature. Otherwise, it will become unable to sustain us. Ecofeminist approach interprets the Gaia hypothesis by suggesting that women are good examples as guests of the Earth but this is not enough to save it from destructive moves of men. Ecofeminist philosophy likens women and Mother Earth for their common features. Moreover, Gaia hypothesis indicates sensibility and productivity of nature. These qualifications are also shared by women. Therefore, degradation of nature may lead the Earth

incapable of surviving of both nature and human beings (Anderlini-D'Onofrio, 2004: 68).

For ecofeminists, Gaia hypothesis approach promises liberation from any kind of exploitations related to patriarchal identification of femaleness and nature. A growing number of ecofeminist points capitalist patriarchy as a dominated system and both deep ecologist and ecofeminist struggle against dehumanizing commodity understanding. However, deep ecologists' viewpoint is linked to anthropocentrism and ecofeminist viewpoint refers to an androcentric perspective (Salleh, 1984: 342).

Gaia hypothesis is an ecological theory which main argument is that the Earth is a living organism so, Gaia has a consciousness and will of its own. The Gaia, or the Earth, is hospitable environment for us so, we need to respect and share it. Otherwise, it will become unable to sustain us. Ecological feminism broadens the value of Gaia hypothesis and indicates its sensibleness and effectiveness. Therefore, depletion of natural resources and degradation of environment may lead the Earth incapable of hosting human life and ecofeminists provide a framework for sustainability problems based on patriarchal relations in the natural system (Anderlini-D'Onofrio, 2004: 343).

2.1.3. Dualisms and Ecofeminist Philosophy

There is a sharp dualism between male/female and human/nature that ecofeminist philosophy opposes and in order to solve these dualisms, it provides two arguments; deconstructing and revaluing these dualisms. Firstly, all humans are part of nature so, they are natural organisms like nonhuman organisms in nature. However, we live in a culture in which domination of nature is predominant and there are artificial lines drawn by humans to separate humans and nature as other. From the ecofeminist perspective, humans especially women should not forget their ties with nature because they have extra duties to raise awareness of men about these dualisms. Nonhuman environment is a complementary part of humans rather than being a separate field. Therefore, deconstructing human/nature dualism includes determination of human's location in the ecological system, perception of mutually

interdependence of all organisms in nature, underlining the value and function of each part in the ecosystem and fostering humans for reconnecting nonhuman world (Bile, 2011: 15). I agree with ecofeminist opposition to these dualisms because they create dichotomies between nature and human as in division between men and women in the patriarchal system. Humans are inherently valuable as a part of nature if they can live in a way compatible with nature. To prevent any additional destruction of nature and separation of human from nature, it is needed to escape these dualisms.

Secondly, in the revaluing issue, there are two different approaches to overcome dualisms. The first one sees women and nature relation in the intrinsic biological features and the second one focuses on women and nature's closeness as a socialized viewpoint. The second one tries to create connection between women and nature against male domination over nature and also women. So, revaluing this problem without de-linking women from nature, ecofeminist philosophy attempts to change direction of male domination over nature. Hence, submission of nonhuman nature could be abandoned by the efforts of dominated human females to revalue nature (Bile, 2011: 17). In the revaluing issue, women try to change destruction of men towards nature. Women aim to convince men that nature has intrinsic value and existing dualisms create separation between women and men and also nature and human. Moreover, gender power relations are also part of these dualism which put women in secondary position. Because dualisms are socially constructed, it can be corrected by women.

Ecofeminist philosophy criticizes dualisms in ethical thought. For this philosophy, dualistic discourses are used to subordinate women and nature and make them less valuable. Not all ecofeminist thoughts criticize the dualistic structure of ethical approach but it points to the issue of hierarchical ranking in dualistic thinking. Because dualistic thinking separates women from nature, it makes it difficult to preserve and prevent nature from destruction by men. In addition, Western ethical thought is mainly based on hierarchical dualisms. This means that masculinity, rationality, exploitation and imitation are superior to femininity, emotions, protection

and nature. At that point, ecofeminist philosophy does not insist on the discriminative side of dualistic thought on the contrary, it argues for integration of dichotomies for environmental preservation and conservation (Cuomo, 1998: 138).

According to Val Plumwood (1986: 127), ecofeminist philosophy emphasizes the subordination of nature and women in order to neutralize hierarchy of man over women so, they can draw attention to the intertwined structure of dualism in Western understanding of environmental ethics, of human/nature, male/female and mind/body. At this point, she refers to Plato's dualism in which the first is difference between the world of ideas and the world of sense and the second is distinction between reason and perception. So, she suggests that the hybrid version of this dualism plays a decisive role in humans' domination over nature. Moreover, the hierarchical dualism is determined by social hierarchy in the patriarchal system. So, the language of dualistic perception destroys the harmony of nature and women togetherness. Because ideas are seen higher and more praiseworthy, reason is accepted as a hero throughout the history of civilization to fight for the hegemony over nature. Then, nature becomes a senseless and soulless mechanism in the dualistic universe. In conclusion, because Western social thought reflects dualistic concepts, the solution is to displace dualistic concepts with non-hierarchical concepts (Cudworth, 2005: 121).

Warren (1997) argues that the patriarchal framework includes value-hierarchical thinking, logic of domination and normative dualisms. In value-hierarchical thinking, the greater value is associated with what is the higher. This thinking puts women down and men up while it puts nature down and human up. Therefore, there is not any difference in value-hierarchical thinking in feminist and environmentalist views of patriarchy. Normative dualism is exclusive and oppositional like woman and man, human and non-human. The logic domination justifies the subordination of an inferior by a superior.

Related to dualism, scholars have different views. Some of them believe that women and men work together in this process. According to King (1995: 152), the liberation

of women is in nature so, without damaging the connection between women and nature, it is possible to breakdown dualism in environmental ethics. Glazebrook (2000: 20) insists that ecofeminist philosophy does not claim that women have no concession on caring nature and men combative or damaging. Nevertheless, because men are at the center of patriarchal system, it is difficult to see clearly and fairly the destruction of nature. Birkeland (1993: 23) also stresses that men can choose another path and set of values and also contribute to ecofeminist philosophy, besides their subscription is needed for saving nature.

Ecofeminist philosophy interprets the environmental philosophy in general in three main approaches. The first one is androcentric approach. According to ecofeminist philosophy, environmental ethics do not include nature – women linkage and itend to focus on male based approaches to nature. Generally, men determine the value of nature, health of nature and so on. The second one is hierarchical understanding. Environmental ethics tend to put men above or over nature, moreover, sometimes make them more crucial than nature. Hence, there is a hierarchical thinking in the determination of nature and men. The third one is dualistic approach. Environmental philosophy is also prone to create distinction between human (rational, having intrinsic value and right over nature) and non-human (irrational, having instrumental value and lacking of any right over nature) as men’s attempt to create dichotomy in the gender issue (Zimmerman, 1994: 241). A general criticism of environmental ethics by ecofeminist philosophy is reasonable in order to reinterpret the androcentric approach because environmental ethics focus on biodiversity, conservation, preservation or the value of nature by overlooking women and nature issue. Concerns in environmental ethics do not include relations with nature and gender issues although there is a problematic hierarchical understanding. Generally, environmental issues are discussed from male-dominated perspective.

2.1.4. Criticisms towards Ecofeminist Philosophy and Its Responses

Margarita Levin (1994: 137) criticizes ecofeminist proposals for lacking a theory. The focus of ecofeminist philosophy is not nature; it has an anthropogenic viewpoint

because it is just related to love of nature. So, ecofeminism is more likely a political and social movement rather than a philosophical one. Moreover, according to Fox (1989: 10), the idea of androcentrism as the cause of ecological destruction and replacing this situation with unilateral gynocentrism is simplistic. Thus, Fox looks for more inclusive and egalitarian formulations of environmental ethics rather than one-sided and female oriented ethics. Ivone Gebara (2003: 168) as an ecofeminist theologian prefers a middle way by saying that she agrees with critiques of ecofeminist philosophy's claim on women and nature in which women are seen as closer to nature than men. According to Gebara, this claim also creates dualism and we must give up thinking humans are not part of nature or to see humans as superior species to dominate over nature and nonhumans.

Callicott (1993: 325) argues that ecofeminist approach has not any specific moral philosophy related to environmental ethics so, it does not say anything about intrinsic value, rights for nature or any other moral concern associated with ethics. This is because these issues are so-called masculinist in substance. Moreover, ecofeminist approach is a mixture of incompatible and inconsistent views and it is far away from constructing a theory. So, he believes that ecofeminist approach has not any place in the environmental philosophy. He criticizes ecofeminism by saying that men construct theories, while women tell stories. I think Callicott's criticism of ecofeminism seems harsh and also includes some male-based biased towards ecofeminist approach. It is true that it has not a structural theory about environmental ethics because it is an eclectic version of thought. Ecofeminist philosophy provides alternative viewpoints for existing environmental approaches.

Ecofeminism provides a different interpretation of environmental ethics which is based on an ignored and excluded female approach. Ecofeminism gives chance to feel sensitivity to perceive nature in relationship with others, namely nonhumans. Thus, ecofeminist philosophy is like a process rather than a theory in order to replace domination of male based environmental philosophy with a more egalitarian viewpoint (Pojman, 2000: 182). Moreover, for McFague (1993: 117), nature is a metaphor as a subject and it is also a process that includes power relationship. So,

ecofeminist philosophy does not blame men for destruction of nature, it just tries to make visible the destruction of nature and connections with men by demonstrating the closeness of women to nature. In addition, in the issue of value of nature ecofeminist ethics do not engage in whether nature has intrinsic or instrumental value because it presupposes that nature has intrinsic value. Furthermore, ecofeminist approach to environmental philosophy is about creating anti-theory because building a theory is masculine. Ecofeminism tries to stand against all male based theories that define environmental issues in a philosophical approach. Thus, it does not try to find a theoretical approach to explain popular problems in environmental ethics, it analyzes and criticizes the powers that oppress both women and nature (Kronlid, 2003: 86).

Ariel Kay Salleh (1984: 342) criticizes deep ecologists for being unaware of their male based bias. So, according to Salleh, they ignore the effects of patriarchy in destruction and exploitation of nature. In addition, women have consciousness and knowledge about nature and its destroyed situation due to their biological and spiritual closeness to nature. She gives as example that women eat foods containing pesticide or genetically modified foods so this harmful substances transfers to their babies through breastfeeding. This example demonstrates that changes in nature are generally directly related to women not because women's connection to nature or their superiority over men, but because they are first affected from any change in nature. Deep ecologists overlook this situation. Conversely, some deep ecologists suggest that ecofeminism much more focuses on social issues and use environmental ethics and philosophy for their socio-political aims. In this discussion, Fox (1989: 9) also suggests that both men and women are responsible for the destruction of nature so, accusation of masculinist bias is not fair. Moreover, according to him, ecofeminist philosophy overlooks the point that deep ecology is against any anthropocentrism in environmental ethics and this also includes androcentrism.

In conclusion, ecofeminist philosophy deals with dualisms in ethical thought and domination of men over nature rather than focusing on some concerns of environmental philosophy like intrinsic/instrumental value, health of nature,

preservation or wilderness. So that it is criticized being more of a sociological and political approach than environmental philosophy. Moreover, it may be accepted that it has no strong philosophical structure compared with other positions in environmental philosophy. However, ecofeminist philosophy is successful to elaborate the female features like nurturing, nonviolent, cooperative and sensual ones which are appropriate for explaining nature in an ethical framework by demonstrating male based approaches in environmental ethics. The connections between exploitation of nature and oppression of women could be useful to provide an alternative approach to issues of environmental philosophy. It is also important to be critical about concerns in environmental ethics and to evaluate them from a skeptical point of view can open new doors for discussion in environmental philosophy.

2.1.5. Ecofeminist Philosophy, Veganism and Agriculture

Meat eating is historically and traditionally associated with man. Because meat belongs to 'king in food world' and kings are men in human world, then man should eat meat as a king. Gender roles and dietary patterns are shaped in the early ages through fairy tales. So, men are associated with meat eating while women are associated with vegetables. From this moment, both woman and vegetarian diet are seen as inferior. Meat eating is a complementary part of patriarchal society and male dominance and vegetarianism and veganism is seen as abnormality of patriarchy. At this point, there is dualism between woman/man and meat/vegetables and man with meat are seen as superior than woman and vegetables. This message seems clear vegetable that is servant should be contented and never dare to dethrone the king meat (Adams, 2004: 78).

Some ecofeminists think that moral vegetarianism or veganism is one of the premise conditions to be an ecofeminist. In animal welfare arguments of universal vegetarian and vegan philosophy, there are two main types of arguments. They are consequentialist argument of Peter Singer and right-based argument of Tom Regan. The first one is related to being sentient which is based on to be against pain and

suffering of animals due to factory farming or hunting. The second one is related to being the subject of life of non-human animals and defends animal rights. According to Warren (2000: 78), ecofeminist arguments on animal welfare are based on oppression of non-human animals. Their arguments are also based on women-animal connections like rape against woman and animal, sexist-naturist male dominated language, pornographization of women as meat and representation of woman and animal as consumable objects. Therefore, they see unfair commodification of woman and non-human animals as inseparable from each other. They add gender issues in animal ethics.

According to Gaard (2002: 119), roots of vegetarian or vegan feminists are based on the power of empathy, animal liberation and oppression of both woman and non-human animals. Cultural feminists (especially second-wave radical cultural feminists) point to animal welfare issue by demonstrating similarities between the oppression of woman and non-human animals. They are against all kinds of discrimination and they believe that sexism, racism and speciesism are interrelated. Patriarchal thought sees woman and non-human animals in secondary position and this reflects in the language. Humiliating terms are used for woman by likening woman to animals in the patriarchal frame of mind. Vegetarian and vegan feminism argue that ethical treatment of non-human animals on the basis of empathy can be formed only by accepting flesh-eating as a form of patriarchal domination. Hunting and fighting are associated with man. Man threatens, bombs, owning guns, hunts, harms and kills both human and non-human animals. So, man are more likely to meat eating because man and violence are correlated by ecofeminists.

Kheel (2004: 330) also emphasizes that meat is generally associated with masculinity, aggression and power. Moreover, it is also associated with sexual potential. People establish a connection with meat eating and muscle building. Muscle is the symbol of strength and strength intensifies sexual potential. Thus, meat eating indicates the level of sexual potential in patriarchal society. Man who does not eat meat is generally seen as feminine. The association between meat eating and gender can be seen in some practices and rituals like animal sacrifice and hunting.

Although hunting is not a particular male activity, it is associated with masculinity. Many cultures expected a young boy to hunt an animal in order to prove his virility. This ritual disconnects man from nature and ensures his power by exterminating others. Animal sacrifice, like hunting, is associated with man and it is also related to meat eating. The motivations behind animal sacrifice can be different but it is like the arena of man to show his strength. It is also related to meat eating because in some public festivals, sacrificed animal is eaten. Man's sacrifice perform is also seen as imitation of birth from a mother. Rebirth through immolation is realized by man.

Animal husbandry is another sign of relations between meat eating and masculinity. According to Kheel (2004: 334), animal husbandry indicates relations between ownership of non-human animal and woman. In patriarchal society, a husband has a wife and as producer of animal flesh also thinks he owns the animals in his farm. Moreover, a husband symbolically destructs woman identity with wedding ceremony because they unite as one in one body. So, too, animal in his farm is also destructed by consuming their flesh. As livestock are owned by man engaged in animal husbandry as woman are owned by husbands through marriage. Woman's freedom is limited by keeping her in the house just as keeping livestock in the barn. Furthermore, reproductive process of nonhuman animals is controlled by animal husbandry in order to continue female animals' products such as milk and egg. If an animal is not appropriate for reproduction, they send it to slaughter. Patriarchy promotes to have babies and the number of babies and the time for having baby is usually decided by man. As slaughtered non-productive animals, infertile woman is not preferred by man to marry. In addition, man consumes woman body through pornography, prostitution and sex shows as he consumes animal flesh to satisfy his desires. For instance, marriage is the institutionalization of commodification of woman body. Through marriage, woman body is transferred from her father to her husband and man is authorized to access woman's body to fulfill his hunger by consuming his wife's body. Therefore, both woman and nonhuman animal's body is exploited by man.

Nature and woman have been the main providers in organic agriculture. In the food system, woman has place in every step from planting seed to processing crops. Close relation between woman and agriculture is based on feminine principles of food production which depends on maintaining their relations with soil. Woman's participation in agricultural production has traditionally and historically been self-producing and sustainable. While woman's integration with nature is an organic relation in which recycled resources are provided for seeds and soil, masculinist food production is intended to break the primary links with nature. Through "scientific agriculture" man replaces renewable inputs of agriculture with non-renewable ones. For instance, genetically modified foods or hazardous agricultural chemicals are produced and used in agriculture by displacing woman from maintaining natural agriculture (Shiva, 1988: 41).

With the change in agricultural production – from organic agriculture to a scientific one- the actors of agriculture have changed. Nature and woman were no longer primary producers of food because of production of agricultural commodities for profit. Chemical fertilizers, pesticides and hybrid seeds led to displacement of soil experts, plant breeders and water managers – women. This displacement is the destruction of feminine knowledge of agriculture because codes of organic agriculture are carried and kept by women. Moreover, they prevent the loss of this knowledge by transferring them to next generations. Woman is still primary food producer in the world and protector of sustainable soil integrity. Woman has productive role from feeding animals to composting plants. Woman's responsibilities are crucial in maintaining ecological cycles and woman is the partner of land, trees and animals because of her role in conservation of nature and food production (Shiva, 1988: 45).

According to Beauvoir (1989: 95-96), all nature is like a mother means that land is woman and agriculture is matriarchal in character. However, man is seen as woman's master as he is the lord of the fertile earth because power (especially political one) is in the hands of man. So, woman's 'magical' fertility is also exploited like land's fertility. Agriculture is one of the most fundamental forms of exploitation and it

cannot symbolically and traditionally be separated from the exploitation of woman. Agriculture is the sign of cultural development and woman is on the side of nature.

Seed is the first step in the food production and the beginning of agriculture. According to ecofeminist philosophy woman's knowledge on seed and soil is ignored. Woman has historically and traditionally been the seed collector. She saves and stores seeds for food production and also she provides biological diversity for preventing the extinction of some plant seeds. Based on her knowledge, she as a plant breeder selects seeds from healthy crops and saves them to maintain them without spoiling. Although man tries to devalue seed-knowledge of woman through genetically modified seeds and chemicals, seeds and seed-knowledge continues to be transferred to next generations by woman (Sachs, 1992: 6).

In animal welfare and veganism perspectives ecofeminist philosophy criticizes meat eating ritual as a problem of patriarchal thought. Ecofeminist philosophy associates meat eating with hunting, violence and brutality and these characteristics are attributed to man. Ecofeminist thought claims that vegetarianism and veganism is seen as insufficient and secondary diet. Man's oppression over woman is not different from his violence against non-human animals. Man has humiliating approach to woman and non-human animals and he puts them into secondary position. So, his behavior like as he had right to kill and eat non-human animals and also exploit woman's body. Moreover, ecofeminist philosophy argues that woman has close relation with soil and seed but again men try to break their link with organic foods. In order to get as much efficiency from soil, he resorts chemical pesticides and genetic modification of seeds. These methods cause both exploitation of soil and ignoring woman's knowledge on soil.

2.2. Ecofeminism as a Social Movement

Ecofeminism is a social movement which creates common platform for environmentalism and feminism. It takes some parts of deep ecology but it also criticizes and adds feminism. According to ecofeminism, the oppression of women and degradation of nature is parallel to each other and it is based on power relations

like man over woman or money over nature. Patriarchal system like capitalist system harms to both nature and women. Therefore, the power concept should be restructured. Degradation of nature contributes to the degradation of women because in an environmental catastrophe primarily those affected are women.

Ecofeminism combines both social and ecological concerns and provides relations between oppression of woman and degradation of environment. Ecofeminism is a new social movement that emerged in the 1980's as an intersection of both the women's and environmental movements. It can be said that ecofeminist movement emerged within the environmental movements rather than the women's movement. It means that feminists within the environmental movements began to draw attention to women's issue in environmental problems. The lack of attention to women's issues in the environmental movements tried to be completed by recognizing the connection between the domination of nature and the oppression of woman. As a result of this effort, ecofeminism emerged as a diverse movement ranging from socialist, cultural and Marxist ecofeminism. However, their common target is to find solutions to environmental problems which are tied to gender transformation. Therefore, recognition of connection between woman and nature is the main focus of ecofeminism. Although some ecofeminists do not argue that women are closer than men, they accept that human-environment relations are gendered (Sachs, 1992: 7).

Ecofeminism claims that there is similarity between the domination of women and the domination of the natural environment so, hegemony over nature is also part of male domination. Therefore, ecofeminism combines women's liberation and environmental protection because woman's moralities are closer to nature as compared with man's closeness. Hence, according to ecofeminist concept, this problematic relation between men and nature causes ecological degradation (Kirk, 1997: 12). In this part, whether or not ecofeminist theory is a social movement, relations between nature and women in the patriarchal system and also concerns and aims of ecofeminism will be analyzed.

Ecofeminism is a theory improved from various areas of feminist quest and activism such as peace movement, labor movement, environmental and anti-nuclear movements. Therefore, ecofeminist theory calls to end any kind of oppression and domination by emphasizing that this attempt may be achieved with the liberation of nature. Another connection between ecology and feminism is that any negative results of environmental degradation on the lives of women indirectly also has an impact on children. For instance, radiations, chemical wastes and other pollutants have unfavorable effects on women's reproductive system. Hence, preserve nature means preserve women and next generations. Nevertheless, ecofeminist theory also includes the idea that women cannot save the earth by herself so, they need men's efforts as well. In addition, anthropocentrism is one indicator of androcentrism. Therefore, primarily patriarchal order should be changed for natural preservation and also for women liberation (Gaard, 1993, 9-12).

The term ecofeminism - emerged from third wave of feminism - first introduced by French feminist Francoise d'Eaubonne in her book namely, *Feminism or Death in 1974*. Ecofeminist movement increased during the 1980's and 1990's among women as a critical perspective in feminism with the rise of anti-nuclear movement, peace movement and social justice movement. Feminists began to interest in these movements by analyzing links between oppressions through gender, race, class and ecology. Some text like Susan Griffin's *Women and Nature* (1978) and Carolyn Merchant's *The Death of Nature* (1980) linked ideas of ecology and woman. These ideas challenge against nuclear testing, militarism, environmental classism and racism. Post structural and third wave feminists equated women with nature in their analysis. In 1980's, feminist activism offered combination of feminist and ecological perspective to militarism, anti-nuclear and peace movement. However, in 1990's ecofeminism was criticizes due to being essentialist. So, ecofeminism is as a third wave of feminism which serves as an environmental critique of feminism. It tries to include ecology in feminism because it criticizes feminism being lack of environmental issues. According to ecofeminism, non-human world and naturism are feminist issues. It is challenge to feminism in its revaluation of non-human world.

Hence, it enhances feminist critiques of discriminative –isms. Nevertheless, ecofeminism (especially cultural ecofeminism) faces with criticisms because feminization of nature may cause underestimate the role of men in environmental activism and also alienating them by promoting dichotomies (Gaard, 2011: 28). In Turkey, gender studies generally focus on liberal, socialist and Marxist feminist perspectives. These are close to issue of status of women in the frame of power relations, urban-rural development rather than woman-nature relations. So, the reflection of the emergence of ecofeminism as a reaction to feminism is not influential in Turkey (Çetin, 2005: 75).

In the ecofeminist movement, there are some fractions related to perception of nature, nature and human relations and feminist critiques of environmentalism. Liberal ecofeminism for instance, environmental problems come from rapid development of natural resources and uncontrolled use of chemical pesticides and pollutants. Through conservation policies and environmental laws together with better science, women can join men to conserve nature. Warren (1987: 8) argues that the liberal approach to ecofeminism is inadequate because its individualistic nature refuses interconnectedness of nature and human. So, liberal ecofeminism searches for redistributive change instead of a restructured one (Berman, 1993: 15).

Cultural ecofeminists support the idea of association between woman and nature. They accept differences between woman and man. However, they are criticized because they foster sexism by emphasizing that women have intimate relations with nature because of their biological features (menstruation, pregnancy, child birth) and gender roles (provider of food and nurturer of family). The Earth is female and there is a spiritual part of cultural ecofeminism. For instance, women bring life to the world and experience pregnancy process so, they feel the growing of a tree from a seed. Some cultural ecofeminists argue that veganism and organic farming is essential for ecofeminist principles (Merchant, 1992). Origin of cultural ecofeminism is radical feminism and it attempts to protect and restore devaluated qualities of women by men. Therefore, cultural ecofeminists seek to revalue some cultural and historical features of women like nurture, emotions, care and fertility by developing

women-based spirituality. They emphasize the interconnectedness of women and nature and they also perceive earth as a living organism (Gaia) in which humans is part of it. They also struggle against patriarchal cultural norms in the cause of protection of Earth and also egalitarian and ecological transformation of culture (Carlassare, 2000: 94).

Social ecofeminists suggest that ecological problems come from social and cultural problems. Therefore, a social change for more egalitarian society fosters the ecologically healthy society. Moreover, to intervene in formation of power circulation in language, history, traditions and culture is important to create egalitarian society which contributes to decrease environmental degradation. So, they seek social and cultural transformation. Social ecofeminists insist that women's link with nature is largely social so, liberation of both women and nature can be achieved only through social change. They generally focus on dominated role of economic, social and political institutions over women and nature (Carlassare, 2000: 97). Hence, social ecofeminists have constructionist position while cultural ecofeminists are essentialist. However, they argue that although gender is socially constructed, biological sex has also impact on gender roles. At this point, essentialism of cultural ecofeminists has place in constructionist position of social ecofeminism. They are also accused cultural feminists to be apolitical because they do not take social or political action, rather they focus on spiritual transformation for liberation of women and nature. So, social ecofeminists are critical about social, economic and political institutions and they aim to deconstruct dominant social, economic and political systems in order to reconstruct egalitarian ones (Nhanenge, 2011: 127).

Socialist ecofeminists believe that there is a link between oppression of women and nature and the capitalist and patriarchal society. They seek restructuring society for the liberation of woman and nature from the capitalist and patriarchal system. Socialist ecofeminism desires empowering of women to break down dualistic approaches which devalue both woman and nature in the patriarchal capitalist order. Nature is an active subject rather than a passive one to be exploited so that, humans should have sustainable relations with nature. At the same time, patriarchal and

capitalist system should not ignore the value of nature and also women's knowledge on nature as producers and reproducers of life (Merchant, 1992). Although there are some differences in ecofeminism, common to all ecofeminists is that there is systematic domination over both nature and woman and also dualisms like nature/human or woman/man fosters this oppression.

Ecofeminism is criticized for being essentialists, sexist and incoherent. It glorifies womanhood but excludes man and also promotes sexism by insisting on biological and socially constructed differences between man and woman. According to Biehl (1991: 4), in ecofeminist approach some features like sensibility, caring and nurturing are attributed to women and their unique abilities connect them to natural world. So, ecofeminism is far from being diverse and inclusive perspective for ecological problems. Moreover, they generalize and romanticize femininity by attributing some biological and social features to women, rather than being critical observer towards environmental issues. Their effort to emphasize on some characteristics that patriarchal society assigns to women undermines feminists' fight to emancipate women. Ecofeminists expect that every woman who is ecological activist has sympathy towards ecofeminism. This idea is as a result of generalization tendency of ecofeminism. However, in reality, in these movements, some women activists do not identify themselves as ecofeminist. Biehl (1991: 5) insists that women's concerns could be integrated into social ecology so, more coherent and rational alternative to ecofeminism could be constructed. She believes that it is difficult to build a movement based on woman-nature metaphors. In order to get rid of discriminative ideologies like sexism, racism, homophobia and capitalism, primarily people should give up emphasizing discriminative and exclusive features of a particular segment of people. Social ecology is sufficient perspective to fight against forms of dominations over women related to environmental issues. Thus, adopting metaphors to show link between women with nature is far from being ecological. On the contrary, ecofeminism's mystification of repressive and exploitative patriarchal stereotypes fosters sexism.

2.2.1. Patriarchy, Vegan, Animal Liberation and Food Activism

In her book namely the *Sexual Politics of Meat*, Adams (2004: 95) mentions there is a close link between meat eating and being a man. Being a man in meat eating societies generally is gained by man's choice of food. Meat has always been associated with powerful brave man in patriarchal societies. In some cultures, there is restriction of meat consumption of women. Because meat eating is seen as a prestigious action in patriarchal society, to prevent women to eat meat shows power of men in the society.

Some ecofeminists argues that their choice of being vegetarian based on their sympathy for non-human animals. Animal suffering because of experiment for pharmaceutical and cosmetic industry and animal slaughter for food is common in today's world. Moreover, milk animals are subjected to regular rape for impregnate in order to give milk to humans in factory farming. They are separated from their offspring and when they could not give milk they are sent to slaughterhouse. Chickens also have to live in small cages and their eggs are stolen by humans. Woman as a living creature with giving birth feature as other mammals can empathize with them. As animals experienced, women are kept in home, they are subjected to rape, they are expected to give birth, and if they are infertile they are generally not preferred as wife in patriarchal society. Patriarchy exploits both woman and animal body so, vegan feminist activists combine non-human animals' bad experiences and violence against woman. Then, they reflect their sympathy for suffering nonhuman animals to their diets (Gaard, 2002: 119).

Luke (2007) suggests that gender-role socialization influences emotional responses in the issue of caretakers of animals. Masculinity is associated with strength and this situation promotes emotional distance towards animals. This does not mean that men cannot sympathize with animals rather it is related to men's affection to animals is seen as weakness in the patriarchal society. Hence, animal exploitation is not seen as negative behavior pattern but animal advocacy erodes masculinity. All this reactions

of patriarchal thought cause unwillingness to participation of animal activism of men. Activism on behalf of animal rights is seen as non-masculine.

As social movement actors, women are major participations of animal liberation movement. Societal expectations gendered social learning and biological features close women to animal rights issue because of shared inequalities between women and animals. Women tend to perceive common roots and methods of oppression of women and animals. Gaarder (2011) argues that some woman activists see animal rights movement as a way of defending their own personal fight with exploitation, violence and oppression.

Another issue is related to promoting sexism by using femininity in animal rights movements. Although animal rights movement is focused on animals, majority of activists of this movement are subjected to gendered expectations. Moreover, these actors of this movement operate within the patriarchal and sexist societies. At this point, their tactics and discourse is crucial because in some protests women promote sexism while they try to stop speciesism. Sometimes, sexualized campaigns to defend animal rights issue commodify women's body with the logic of "sex sells" in the patriarchal society.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), as one of the known animal rights organization is criticized by feminists and ecofeminists because of its sexualized protest tactics. In some campaigns, PETA emphasizes desperation of activists in the movement when they try to show how animals are exploited. In such campaigns and protests, women activists place themselves in similar position of abused animals and men are in place as audience of these scenes (Luke, 2007). According to research of Gaarder (2011), 44 percent of women oppose the ads, 30 percent of them support the ads and 26 percent has mixed feelings towards PETA's sexualized advertising campaigns. PETA's sexualized campaigns are directly related to framing issue of gender in the animal rights movement. Some people who disagree with PETA's sexualized campaigns think these protests are sexist and hostile to

women activists. So, these are ineffective, inconsistent and alienating to the public because it causes gender inequality in animal right movement by fostering sexism.

Another intersection of feminism and nature is agriculture. In agriculture, women's contribution cannot be underestimated because they are engaged in all steps of food chain. Although they are generally not the owners of land, their relations with soil and seed cannot be ignored. Women plant, harvest, process crops and then they keep seeds to re-plant them. Masculinization of agriculture – production of hybrid seeds, using chemicals and the mechanization of agriculture – devalues women's knowledge on agriculture. Seed knowledge which is the first step of agricultural cycle, had been passed from generation to generation has been replaced with genetically modified organism. Local seeds has disappeared so, women's link with soil is disconnected (Mallory, 2012).

Women also play important role in the transformation of agricultural products into foods in their households. So, they are included in nutritional security issue because as a gender role, women are generally responsible for feeding family members through selecting foods and cooking (Quisimbing and Meizen –Dick, 2001). In relations with soil, women have crucial role and they transform their concerns about inorganic agricultural methods in food movements. They prefer to sustainable agricultural methods for the benefit of soil and human's health. Furthermore, women usually participate in food movements (organic food movement, local food movements and slow food movements) in order to prevent poisoning of their children and nature through chemical pesticides and genetically modified foods (Tyrrell, 2016).

Ecofeminist movement also concerns about deforestation and biodiversity loss. Women in environmental movements do protect trees, soil and seed are influential and they have made their voices heard through grassroots activism. For instance, rural women have gained an important place in Via Campesina movement which supports sustainable agriculture and food sovereignty (Desmarais, 2003). In Navdanya movement which is a women centered movement to save local seeds and

criticize genetic modification of seeds, women protect biological diversity (Shiva, Pande, & Singh, 2004).

2.2.2. Ecofeminist Identity and Collective Behavior

Building and reproducing identities is a significant process in which individuals give meaning to their own world view and experience. In fact, construction of identity is not simply a psychological mechanism, it is a social process. However, identity construction is not a precondition for collective action but collective action enables continuous redefinitions of identity. Therefore, identity is produced as an output from the process of self-identification and external recognition. Social movements are a kind of challenge for the recognition of their identity. Symbols, practices and rituals fulfill a significant role in collective action and these represent symbolic expression in a social movement. Hence, symbols and rituals are inseparable part of the collective behavior with their impact of reminding their common aim and revitalizing their identity (Della Porta & Diani, 2006).

Another important factor in identity construction and collective behavior is political struggle in social movements as Tilly (1997: 2-3) suggests. Every regime needs some kind of political action to promote others, to tolerate others and to repress the remaining part. According to Tilly, in social movements, sustaining challenge by claim making rests on hard-won democratic rights and social movement participants direct their arguments to governmental bodies. At this point, identity construction and emergence of collective behavior through political and social activism is crucial for ecofeminist movement like other social movements. In this part, the process of ecofeminist identity building and in what extend these identities turns into collective actions and also ecofeminist discourse and repertoires will be analyzed.

Many feminists among deep ecologists and environmentalists developed a different version of criticism towards environmental degradation and natural resources management along with strong stress on women identification with nature and improper practices in male-dominated system. With this perspective, many rural women come together in different places and raise their voices to protect forests and

water resources. Feeling togetherness for common aim, women get together and become visible for maintaining the nature. There are mainly five points in the common concerns of ecofeminists to form collective behavior to move action. Firstly, women's multiple roles like producer, reproducer and consumer make them to develop integrative abilities to deal with various tasks of household and community. Therefore, this situation gives them an opportunity to specialize conflict resolution and they cope with environmental problems at the same time challenge to men's domination at the same time. Secondly, women are generally responsible for managing basic requirements of daily life such as food, water, clothing and they are also charged with healthcare, cooking, childcare and cleaning. These responsibilities make women more aware of any threats to health and life. Moreover, they view environmental issues and natural resources usage from the perspective of home and family health. Thirdly, both health issues and ecological changes are directly related women and these are main targets of ecofeminist because women are domestically accountable for family care. Fourthly, many women emphasize the importance of integration and a more holistic view to environmental issues with the idea of "our first environment is our bodies". Finally, abuse and misuse of natural resource and environment and also exploitation of women gather them in common point (Rocheleau, Thomas-Slayter & Wangari, 1996 :8-9).

Hence, these shared features of women keep them together and being a common voice to any exploitation of nature and also women. Through these roles and common concerns ecofeminists move collectively in a social movement related to environment.

2.2.3. Ecofeminist Discourse and Repertoires

Ecofeminism suggests an extensive critique of male domination over female and exploitation of nature. In the question of how ecofeminists can transform the patriarchal perspective that subordinate women and nature into ecofeminist awareness, they use some symbols in rituals. Symbols are influential transformers and analyzing repertoires that ecofeminist used for moving out of the patriarchal

system into an ecofeminist consciousness. Since the beginning of the feminist movement in the 1970's, feminist criticized the exclusive and discriminative use of masculine symbols and rhetoric in social life. Because internalization of symbols and their function is crucial for communication and transformation of consciousness, ecofeminism uses them visibly (Willoughby, 1993:135-137). Ecofeminists try to concrete their rhetoric in symbols and rituals. For example, women body is equalized with nature. Nature's sacredness is symbolized in women body. Products of nature are also identified with fertility of women body. Moreover, theological and spiritual rituals and symbols like the Mother Earth, Gaia. Ecofeminist perform natural lifestyle as an alternative to exploited understanding of life. For instance, they try to eat seasonally and cultivate organically, recycle and quit smoking (Cudworth, 2005:105-107).

In the discourse of ecofeminism, they emphasize the crossover repression on feminine and also nature. Therefore, oppression of women and exploitation of nature is interrelated, not coincidental. Ecofeminists form their rhetoric mainly on patriarchal system and use language related to domination, repression, oppression and exploitation words to define the position of women and nature. The main discourse of ecofeminism is that the subordination of women and the degradation of the environment are connected especially in patriarchal societies (Bile, 2011:6-8).

In general, ecofeminism has five main discourses related to their vision of nature and women relations. Firstly, if women are exploited, nature will be exploited. Where women are not oppressed and produce, nature will also fertile infinitely. Secondly, women are equated to nature so challenge for freedom of nature is also subject of women. Thirdly, environmental problems and pollution are more rapidly recognize by women because they have close relations with nature in their determined roles both in household and production process. Fourthly, women are biologically close to nature with their reproductive features so, they keep in touch with natural cycles. Finally, women also spiritually connect to nature because many religions historically contain female images (Sturgeon, 1997: 263-264).

2.2.4. Ecofeminist Networking and Actors

Social network analysis enables to understand which actors in the network affect the collective action and the dynamics occurring in the ties of social actors in a network. In addition, network location and interrelation between social movements are also important to evaluate a social movement because network connection shapes individuals decision and also behavior. Furthermore, social network analysis can demonstrate the way of creating new linkages between social movement actors. The position of an individual in a movement network and influence of network over actors are reciprocally significant for social movements. Social cohesion which ties between actors and network is useful when collaboration and communication occurs within a movement network. Therefore, some social movements are more influential than others and at this point, network connection in these movements is crucial (Diani, 2002: 175-179).

Ecofeminism, under some sociological conditions, has a significant local and global location at the intersection of environmentalism and feminism. Both environmentalism and feminism have networking space for demand to save nature. At this point, ecofeminists have also opportunity to establish networks to be heard their voices and demands. For instance, internationalist ecofeminist movement sees repressed and discriminated women as the initial victims of the interaction between environmental degradation and sexism. Hence, other individuals who have similar concerns with ecofeminist take actions at least where they are. The link between women and environment is supposed as formula to mobilize women for conservation of nature. Moreover, ecofeminism contains “women” as a unitary category which cannot be differentiated among women by class, race, religion or ethnicity because problems are common for all. Therefore, this indivisibility among women also makes them to mobilize in a social movement by networking. Most importantly, women and environmental issues bring coherent processes for negotiation over the production of knowledge and establishment of network both in the local and international arena (Sturgeon, 1997: 93-96).

Another perspective for ecofeminist networking is the changing economic conditions and transition to neoliberal economy made nature more devastated with the development of technology and increase in consumption. This economic system also made women modern slaves so that these destructive results of economic condition both on women and nature make easier ecofeminist movement more visible and connect actors of this network on a common ground (Merchant, 1996: 79-81).

As networking forms, ecofeminists do increase awareness related to women and nature, they organize festivals like Mama Earth Ecofeminist Festival or establish grassroots and local networks as in Chipko event¹. Moreover, cross-issue networking includes finding allies that will support ecofeminist movement. Thus, local and international networking is crucial to stand strong against obstacles and it facilitates to explain ecofeminist approaches to like-minded people (Schmah, 1998: 59).

Men's domination over women is systematic throughout the history and this situation is seen as natural that something cannot be changed. In the same way, nature is also exploited and it is accepted as usual. Therefore, in ecofeminist movement, women are the main actors of networking processes. Ecofeminist women also work together with men on issues like ecological problems or environmental crisis but they emphasize women's repression as a central concern. The important point is that men do not take women's repression as seriously as women do. To become an actor of ecofeminist movement, they primarily give up their concessions in the patriarchal system. As a most important actor of ecofeminist movement, women are committed to challenge the big wars like patriarchal order and destruction of nature and they welcome all co-supporters in their prosecution. Many ecofeminists have been inspired by passive male activists like Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King. Moreover, nonviolent women like Dorothy Day and Rosa Parks also contribute to the ecofeminist movement as in other social movements. However, public and media

¹ Chipko (means hugging in Hindi) movement is a women's forest conservation movement in India in 1973. In Mandal village of India, a group of women hugged trees to prevent them from being cut down for industrial usage. Then, women's involvement in this movement inspired women in other parts of the world.

give less merit to nonviolent women than that of men because of patriarchal system (Kelly, 1997: 113-115).

A movement is not a thing, it is a process. Movements emerge with actions and actions be fed by motions and emotions. In this context, role of women in environmental movements makes sense to preserve and conserve the biosphere. Women are the key actors in ecofeminist movement because they cannot take part in the decision making process although they are more vulnerable to environmental problems. Men ignore the position of power that makes women suffer from the results of government and industrial decisions by neglecting women. Women's participation to public sphere and political organization is crucial for ecofeminism (Salman, 2007: 869).

2.2.5. Globalization of Ecofeminist Movement

Globalization is removing barriers and intersecting of cultures, values, ideas and communication in social sphere and it has also political and economic dimensions. In ecofeminism and globalization relationship, women move forward in terms of conceptual connections among women in the world, related to natural and environmental issues. The impact of globalized development has become crucial to criticize development thinking in 1970's and the early 1980's despite the fact that the link between women and environmental impacts on them is better understood in the late of 1980's. The first reaction to the unsuccessful integration of women into the development process was Women in Development (WID) which demanded the equal economic opportunities with men. Nevertheless, as the ecological and social consequences on women in development process become more visible. The WID campaign turns to a Women, Environment and Development position. At this point, women's involvement in grassroots campaigns related to environment demonstrates the struggle to act against the patriarchal system. In addition, these grassroots and local ecofeminists' acts gain international recognition in time and influence other parts of the world by raising the awareness of women in different regions (Mellor, 2003: 14-16).

Chipko movement 1 originates from Himalayan region of India where women in villages hug to trees in order to save them from government supported loggers. This movement becomes the symbol of the ecofeminist movement. Women, who live there, call the forest as their mother's home and they defend forests with all their power and their only power is hugging trees together. Position of women as an environmental activist is struggle with subordinate interest of male dominant system and ecofeminist efforts to emphasize women's concerns into international arena and this is a chain to reach all women in the world. Another sample is from Kenya, Green Belt Movement. Unlike Chipko, it was not spontaneous action. Professor Wangari Maathai who was the recipient of Nobel Peace prize 2004, initiated to launch a rural tree planting action. The aim of this action is to solve fuel problem in rural areas and also stop desertification with soil erosion. This movement is important because deforestation reduces and women get together in a forum in which they become leaders to change their environment and to make their decision independently. This movement is also an image of women achievement in public awareness related to environmental issues and become an inspiration for ecofeminist globally (Salman, 2007: 870-872).

Although ecofeminist movement emerged from West and it has been practiced in East, ecofeminist approach globalized. In different part of the world, women think and take action related to environmental issues no matter in theory or in action. So, ecofeminism is a common voice and a language of women to resist environmental problems. It comes from different sources which can be theory or activism. However, women activists in ecofeminist movement who fight for protecting trees, soil or animals share same goal and feelings with ecofeminist theoretician who try to explain the value of nature and human nature relations to find solutions environmental degradation through gender lenses.

Ecofeminism as a social movement sets its discourse on patriarchal system, oppression, repression, subordination and degradation to identify itself. With these concepts, ecofeminists both explain themselves and also link women who are sensitive to environmental exploitation. This network provides them to increase

environmental awareness and make them more powerful in their actions globally. The Green Belt, Chipko movement and other activism of ecofeminists all have in common which are strong position and awareness of women. Women want to have to say on environmental problems because of their social roles, they have to live close to nature. Since economy, government and social sphere are occupied by men, there is no place to women in which they express their ideas and being a part of any decision making process. Therefore, they live in a system where men decided on behalf of them. Under these conditions, through awareness and networking, ecofeminism gain power and become one of the influential social movements in male dominated global environmental problems.

CHAPTER 3

WOMEN AS ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISTS IN TURKEY

In Turkey, environmental issues were first mentioned in 1973 in third Five-Year Development Plan. In 1983, a passage of the Environmental Law was introduced and the Ministry of Environment was found in 1991. Late industrialization in Turkey, 1980's liberalized economy the construction of highways, urban transformation and also infrastructural investments together with energy and tourism investments environmental issues became public concern because of their negative impacts on environment in Turkey. Well-educated urban elites, academicians and middle class were influential to the emergence of environmental awareness after the 1980's. Moreover, some left-wing activists began to discuss green politics (Şahin, 2015: 451).

In the 1970's small mobilizations to protect nature emerged in Turkey. With the connection with rise of student and working class movement, there were only occasional groupings for environmental movement. None of them was capable for influencing political decision making process. The situation has changed with coup d'état in 1980 because almost all political movements were banned. Thus, any kind of mobilization a social change stopped or went underground. After junta period, environmental movement had become popular and also influential among radical activists and official political circle. Public space was opened for the first time and environmental movements became important. In addition, bilateral and multilateral environmental agreements made Turkey mandatory to obey international rules. These movements were generally local and focused in specific environmental problems. Moreover, the contention was between the local people who are mobilized by the associations of professionals like lawyers,

doctors and engineers and multi-national corporations to use of natural resources. According to Öncü and Kocan (2011:17), through such local resistance, environmental movements increased and broadened their realm in Turkey. Moreover, connections with transnational environmental movements have also increased. These movements are grouped under five categories in terms of issues for Öncü and Kocan. There are mobilizations against coal-fired thermal power plants, hydro-power plants, nuclear power plants, gold mining and protecting commons.

Duru (2013: 5) argues that history of the environment in Turkey in the period of the AKP (Justice and Development Party) natural sources was irreversibly destroyed. In Turkey, ecology is dominated by economy; it means that natural balance has been sacrificed for the sake of economic development. Environmental movement is limited with a small number of environmentalists. One of the reasons for this situation is lack of economic and social structure to support green movement. The lack of a strong green movement is related to Turkey's continuous process related to economic and social progress. Environmentalism is seen as luxury in these progresses so, problems like climate change, chemical waste or air pollution are relatively new terms in Turkey. The first notable environmental mobilization was in Silifke in 1977 which was against the rumors about the nuclear power plant in Mersin. In 1984, a local resistance against coal power plant in Gökova, campaign to protect sea turtles (*Caretta Caretta*) in Dalyan, local protests against gold mining in Bergama were some examples of landmark movements (Şahin, 2015: 452).

In 1988, the first "Green Party" of Turkey (Yeşiller Partisi) was established. Thus, environmentalist movement has almost thirty-four years in Turkey. Its political life ended in 1994 and it was re-established in 2008 and continued its existence under the name of "Yeşiller ve Sol Gelecek Partisi" (Greens and Left Future Party. Duru (2013:6) emphasizes that there is a general belief that living in better conditions can be only realized through damaging the environment within the existing economic and social system in Turkey. Hence, the Green

Party's principles and expectations for a better life within this neo-liberal system have clashed.

In 2000's, the most prominent feature of environmentalism is deepening between local and global level. The expansion of local environmental movement is related to extension of environmental organizations' circles to global level. The discourse which correlates the local identity in the local struggles with global environmental movement is remarkable. In the issue of expansion of local environmental mobilization, the impacts of the foreign investment in natural resources, privatization and industrialization on local people's living space and their livelihood are important factors. Thus, within the framework of neoliberal economic policies on foreign investment, use of natural resources, infrastructure investments, urbanization and tourism directly increase people's reactions against environmental degradation as a result of these policies. Furthermore, local resistance against mining, energy and agricultural investments are as an indicator of this globalization and foreign capital inflows into Turkey. Increasing number of struggle against hydropower plants, mining and genetically modified foods are examples of strong social reactions. Environmental organizations interact with international environmental mobilization. Local movements develop international connections with social ecology groups and institutionalized organizations. Moreover, implementations of obligations arising from bilateral and multilateral international agreements on environmental issues also link local movements to international ones (Mazlum, 2011: 218).

In recent years, visibility of environmental social movement has increased in Turkey. Especially with the liberal economic policies of AKP (Justice and Development Party) government, the number of top-down energy and construction investments has increased. In Turkey, 213 hydroelectric power plants are on rivers as of 2011. 145 of them are in construction and 300 of them were approved by government and will be constructed. Almost half of them are planned to be constructed in Black Sea Region. Only in Rize, there was 1 hydroelectric power plant in 2002 but there are 31 hydroelectric power plants as

of 2011. Moreover, 40% percent of these power plants are on the rivers in the Black Sea region of Turkey (Uluatam, 2011: 70). As of 2013, 467 hydroelectric power plants were constructed and as of 2014, 478 hydroelectric power plants were constructed in 69 cities of Turkey and 534 of them are planned to construct (Kural, 2014).

There are 2 nuclear power plant constructions in Sinop and Mersin and there are 38 coal thermal power plants, 7 of them are under construction and 7 of them are planned to be constructed as of 2014 (“Kömür ve Linyit Santraller”, n.d.). Two of these coal thermal power plants which are planned to be constructed in Gerze and Soma were cancelled thanks to resistance of locals. In the two cases, women have played an active role in protests, for instance, they kept vigil and sat in front of bulldozers.

These statistics demonstrate that in the AKP government period energy investments and environmental concerns have clashed. As a result of this clash cutting trees, drying rivers and air pollution indicates that economic concerns outweigh in Turkey. With the increase of environmental concerns and protests, women’s visibility in these environmental movements has also increased. The majority of women work in agriculture and livestock sector in Turkey. They know the importance of soil and water because they live in nature. They foresee the results of any degradation in nature so that they are at the forefront of protests and campaigns. Moreover, urban women try to stop production of genetically modified foods while they try to provide alternative agricultural solutions like slow food movement in Turkey. They also try to organize as vegan and feminist women in order to stop all kinds of discrimination including speciesism and sexism.

Related to AKP’s energy policy in general, natural resources are opened for use of economy. For instance, areas need to be protected are opened to tourism especially coastal areas. Allocation of lands and loans facilitate and accelerate the destruction of natural and historical sites. So, in order to develop tourism, these

sites are sacrificed. Forests are also seen as a source of income. Loss of agricultural land because of businesses that serve non-agricultural purposes is also tolerated. In 2004, amendment to relevant law henceforth areas used as meadows and pastures can be used for mining and petroleum activities, settlement and tourism investments. Furthermore, there is a change in Environmental Law and petroleum, geothermal and mineral exploration activities are excluded from the environmental impact assessment (EIA) scope. Therefore, all of these implementations and changes in Environmental Law are part of government's energy and environment policy (Duru, 2006: 305).

In this chapter, woman and nature relations in Turkey will be analyzed. In this analysis, social ecofeminist approach is used in order to find out and explain women's link with nature in Turkey. Social ecofeminist approach is suitable to analyze woman-nature relations because it questions power relations. Socially constructed gender roles of women in Turkey intensify woman-nature relations. Moreover, social and cultural practices and perceptions related to gender issue are also reflected as woman-nature link in Turkey. So, in this chapter, I will attempt to analyze woman and nature relations in Turkey, in the light of social ecofeminist perspective but cultural ecofeminist perspective is also used in the discourse analysis. The aim of this chapter does not claim to existence of ecofeminist thought or movement in Turkey, rather the aim is to interpret woman and nature relations from both social and cultural ecofeminist approaches. In this chapter, women's participation in environmental social movement in recent years will also be examined. The motivations of women to participate in environmental social movements, their discourses and tactics during resistances will be investigated. This chapter presents the general picture of women-nature relations and women's role in environmental movement in Turkey from social ecofeminist approach. In this chapter, books, articles and journals are mainly used as sources to draw general frame of women, nature and environmental movement relations in Turkey from social and cultural ecofeminist approach.

3.1. Woman and Nature Relations in Turkey

Woman relation with nature is undeniable reality in Turkey as in other parts of the world. Especially in rural region of Turkey, women are crucial for agriculture. Women keep seeds, cultivate them, collect and process crops. They are close to soil because in agricultural cycle. Besides their closeness to soil, women are also carrier of water. Their relations of water cannot be underestimated because they irrigate crops, clean house, wash dishes and clothes and ensure hygiene of family members. So, women do not use water only for drinking. They also take responsibility of livestock animal care in villages and they are sensitive in protection of street animals. However, except from a few women groups in urban area, veganism is not common in Turkey.

According to 2013 data of Turkish Statistical Institute, in agricultural sector, the number of female workers is nearly equal to number of male workers' as per official figures. A significant portion of women in Turkey, nearly 40 percent, still works in agriculture sector. Because agriculture sector is dominated by small-scale family business, the vast majority of the female labor force work as unpaid family workers in rural Turkey. So, almost 70 percent of all women are unpaid family workers (Candan & Özalp Günal, 2013: 97-98). This data shows that regardless of their preferences, women have close relations with soil in Turkey. Their relation with nature and plants does not end after they work all day in field. When they turn back home after work, they prepare food for dinner. It is the responsibility of women as a gender role especially in rural patriarchal regions in Turkey.

Moreover, there is a patriarchal control over women's agricultural output and this situation makes female labor invisible and invaluable in Turkey. Prevalence of women's lack of assets in agriculture is another issue in Turkey. In the lifecycle of woman, she cannot own land. She gives up her rights on land inherited from father and her brothers share it and land inherited from her husband is shared by her sons. Therefore, women have not desire or right to commodification of land

(Ecevit, 1994: 98). From cultural ecofeminist approach, women come closer to nature in this patriarchal order because the land is not their property. They do not try to provide a benefit from the land so, what soil gives, women settle for it. From social feminist perspective, although inherited land sharing is determined in law, social relations and traditions take away women from her soil and make them as paid workers.

In Turkey, patriarchal domination over women's relation with nature is obvious. As a gender role, generally men come with a bulldozer to cut down the trees as in the Green Road case in Rize (this issue will be examined in Chapter 5) and men do not let protesters to stop environmental destruction as a security force as in the Yırca case in Manisa (this issue will be examined in Chapter 5). Then, hydroelectric and coal thermal power plants are constructed by men and they start to work here. If a family member gets sick because of air pollution or unhealthy environmental conditions, women take care of them. This story seems a generalization but it is easily inferred from the environmentalist women protestors' statements.

As a basic need for all living creatures, feeding is identified with woman. Cultivation of soil, collection of products and food processing is usually under responsibility of women. Social relations and patriarchal society shape gender role of women related to production and post-production process of food. This situation deepens the relation of exploitation and makes women's labor invisible in rural areas in Turkey (Esin & Günal, 2013: 96). These gender roles are same for urban women. Although urban women do not engage in production process, duties related to feeding like access to food, shopping for kitchen and cooking at home are under their responsibility. Some stereotypes like "mother meal" or "cookbooks with pictures of a female cook on it" are embedded in gender roles of women related to selecting and serving food in Turkish culture.

In addition, there is a division of labor based on traditional gender role in families engaged in agriculture in Turkey. In this division of labor, men are usually only a

part of the agricultural work while women are engaged in keeping seeds, production, collection and reproduction. So, women are in the all phase of agricultural process from seed to cooking while they perform other actions for maintenance of family life. According to Aysu (2009), women are protecting, developing and accumulating center of agricultural production because they cultivate, produce, choose and prepare food and also contribute to prevention of extinction of biodiversity by keeping seeds in Turkey.

Local seeds are protected by women in rural areas and their knowledge and experience about this issue more than men have. Women believe that local seeds are more healthy diet for their family so, they contribute to prevention of any corruption of seeds. This value system is supported by traditions like sharing local seeds with other farmers in villages. Moreover, women decide plant selections will be separated for new seeds in the field. They put marks these plants by binding cloths to distinguish them and inform other family members to pay attention to these plants. Mostly women and elderly people keep seeds in small cloth bags, baskets or boxes (Çelik, 2013: 64). Division of labor in agriculture is socially constructed as social ecofeminists argue but this division brings women closer to nature. Because they becoming practical in agriculture by cultivating soil continuously, they specialize in agriculture.

Women farmers who grow plants from local seeds are generally at least in middle age. In particular, women who are older than middle age have important role in continuation of local seeds. Communication network among women is strong in rural areas because they work collectively. Middle age and older women usually continue to cultivate the seeds that they took from their mothers and mothers-in-law when they married. If they live in village, they give these seeds to their daughters and brides. Moreover, they also teach all traditional methods and application from seed selection to seed storage to their daughters and brides (Çelik, 2013: 64). Therefore, this tradition allows the transfer of information among women and make them information center in terms of seed issue.

Another closeness area of women and nature is therapeutic and curative features of plants and women's knowledge of these plants. Women and health relationship cannot be ignored woman's healing ability and role has an important place in history of Anatolian woman. In Anatolia, women still apply traditional medicine to heal patients. In definition of traditional medicine treatment practices passed from generation to generation are based on experience and closeness to nature. Women undertake the duty of exploration and transfer from generation to generation the information of therapeutic plants in Anatolia. They have an identity as a wise woman of herbs. In order to use the therapeutic effect of plants, women should recognize and differentiate harmful and useful plants. These features bring woman closer to nature (Kaplan, 2015). Again, women are attributed to healing ability as a gender role so, they specialize in alternative medicine by using therapeutic plants. As social ecofeminist insists, this specialization of women in this area is also socially constructed.

Woman has the information of nature and soil. Ownership and transfer of traditional knowledge preservation and reproduction of seeds, agricultural production, care of livestock animals and healing, hygiene issues belongs to women. Woman has crucial role not only in production process but also in transfer of experience and knowledge related to nature to next generations. Woman keeps alive tales and traditions of nature, for instance, they bequeath recipes to their daughters and brides. In this way, they contribute the continuation of the life cycle. Woman also has significant impact on consumption behaviors. Because housework like cleaning, child care and cooking are generally under their responsibility, their consumption behavior affects the amount of waste, for instance, in environmental sustainability.

Ecological crisis is directly related to the system that hates everything including feminine and natural (Berktaş, 2010: 48). Today, in our country majority of women's ties with soil still continue. They play significant role in every stage of the agricultural chain. Woman plants, cultivates, collects, cooks and re-sows seeds. Because they actively participate in all processes of food production,

women know nature better. Seeds thus biodiversity are entrusted to woman. Soil means life for rural women engaged in agriculture in Anatolia. Food security is women's task and they help to sustain the biological diversity through organic agriculture. Their lives depend on their relationship with nature so, they know nature. Because of their close relations with nature, it is the women who are first affected by environmental problems. They are quicker to realize the danger that will affect all humankind. They are aware that soil, water and other living creatures will be directly affected by environmental degradation.

Water is another natural resource that is directly related to women because women find, carry and store water. Moreover, water is source of life for all living creatures from plants to animals, and women have close relations with nature, any pollution or scarcity of water firstly affects women. Woman labor force in the care of livestock animals and agriculture is high in Turkey and both animal care and agriculture need water, women know the value and importance of water. One women protestor from Fındıklı hydroelectric power plant says that her animals have to drink water from rivers near their village and she irrigates her crops by using river water when rainfall is not enough for crops (Yavuz & Şendeniz, 2013: 47). So, women know the importance of water because their relation with water is more intense than men's relation. Because women use water for their animals, crops, children and house works rather than just drinking water.

In most villages of Turkey, bringing water from fountain to home is still under responsibility of women. Moreover, they regulate the consumption of water in house. They have to know where they find water and when water is scarce in order to store it. They have to plan the use of water in the family because lack of water firstly affects women and children. Their direct relations with water and use of water in their work and domestic life make women "water keeper". In addition to use of water for agriculture and animal care, water is vital for house works. As village houses still have not water allocation system in rural areas of Turkey, women have to carry water from fountains. Rural women still wash

clothes of all family members, sometimes carpets and quilts, in the river in Turkey. Furthermore, they wash the dishes and clean their houses so, they need water (Kocabıçak, 2010: 122). Because women shoulder responsibility for house works, besides agricultural works and animal care, they need to access more water than men's need. This need comes from their responsibilities given by the society. Because tasks to care of child and family and also housework associated with women's gender role by patriarchal society, they try to fulfill their responsibilities.



Figure 1: Women who carry water from fountain in rural area in Turkey

Source: Köylü Kadınların Temiz Su Zaferi. (2013). Retrieved June, 10, 2016, from <http://www.bursadabugun.com/haber/koylu-kadinlarin-temiz-su-zaferi-306679.html>

According to report by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies of Turkey, women spent nearly 2-3 hours for carrying water from fountains or rivers in Turkey (Asan et al., n.d.). So, women spend a lot time for finding and carrying water. In addition, it needs physical effort. The average weight of the water

women carry home is nearly 40 kilograms. As a result of moving this heavy burden on the head or shoulders, some diseases are observed. It is common in rural regions of Turkey; if a mother cannot go to carry water then her daughters carry water to home. In some villages, girls cannot attend schools or they are late because they go and return almost 20 to 30 kilometers to carry water. In Eastern part of Turkey, winters are very cold and water resources generally freeze. Because there are no alternative water resources in villages, women have to break ice to reach fresh water (Kocabıçak, 2010: 120).

Women have also close relations with animals. In big cities, women are very active in protection of street animals. Unfortunately, animal rights issue cannot go beyond feeding and protection of street animals in Turkey. Veganism is relatively new diet and it is not so common. Moreover, there is not any statistical data that shows the sex distribution of vegans but as a patriarchal society, men are fond of eating meat in Turkey. However, some vegan women have begun to come together to share their experiences in their meetings in recently in Turkey (discussed in Chapter 5). It can be said that traditionally women are responsible for care of livestock animal in rural areas of Turkey. They milk cows and then they make cheese, butter and yoghurt so, milk, dairy products and meat holds important place in their diet.

In conclusion, traditionally and historically women in Turkey have close relations with nature. Their experience and knowledge on agriculture is an indicator of their link through soil. In most rural regions, women keep seeds, cultivate and collect. In Anatolia, women use the curative qualities of plants as an alternative medicine. So, they recognize and distinguish plants according to their therapeutic features. Women's network provides transfer of experiences and knowledge about nature to next generations so they are like memory of nature. Moreover, the only link of women with nature is not soil; they still find and carry water from fountains or rivers because there is no water allocation system in most of village house in Turkey. They use water for cleaning, washing the dishes and clothes,

cooking and irrigating. Hence, women know the value of nature and try to protect it.

3.2.Woman Involvement in Environmental Movements in Turkey

In recent years, visibility of women in environmental issues has increased at least as far as we can observe in social media and in press in Turkey. As in any other patriarchal society, women in Turkey also take part in the front lines in the struggle for a better life related to any environmental threat. Especially in rural areas, women defend nature in which they live against top-down energy project of the government. Women sitting in front of bulldozers or occupying the area they try to protect is common in environmental protests in rural areas where the government plans to construct nuclear, hydroelectric and coal thermal power plants and highways.

According to Çetin (2005: 73), human-nature relation is generally analyzed in the frame of development paradigm and urban problems in Turkey. Moreover, different environmental approaches are not common in Turkey because environmental approaches within the Radical Ecology ² criticize modernity, Enlightenment and Western-style economic development. From the perspective of Turkey, these three concepts show three basic principles that Turkey's depended on. So that, the only approach can be environmentalism claims nature as a resource for human needs without using these three concepts in the analysis of the human-nature relationship. In order to study on the subject of 'ecofeminism in Turkey' to have idea about Deep Ecology, Social Ecology ³ and Environmental Ethics and nature can be seen as concrete structure that women have close relations rather than an object in the Second Feminist Wave.

² Radical ecology refers approach that attempt to move away from antropocentric concerns to ecocentric concerns for environmental protection. It empahsizes connectedness of all living things in ecosystems (Sutton, 2000:4).

³ Social ecology is a critical social theory founded by Murray Bookchin. It is a critique of social, political and ecological approach to society. It suggests reconstructive and transformative approach on social and environmental issues. Hierarchical social organization is seen as source of ecological and social problems. The importance of mutualistic social structure is promoted for healthy environment (Bookchin, 2006).

Moreover, in gender studies in Turkey, liberal, socialist and Marxist Feminist approaches prioritize human needs so, these approaches justify the exploitation and domination of nature. Therefore, it is expected that these feminist approaches take issue of status of women in the frame of urban-rural or development problems without ignoring woman-nature relations.

There is not any institutional ecofeminist formation but some non-governmental environmental organizations support women's struggle for environmental issues. Women's participation in environmental social movements is generally grassroots in Turkey. With the increase in awareness of environmental issues which is formed as a reaction of government's energy investments, women's visibility is also increase in environmental protection. Moreover, some women groups organize through social media. Blogs are influential parts of social media. Particularly in cities, women campaign protests and meet by using internet channels in Turkey.

Slow food movement, organic food supporters, and genetically modified food opponents, for instance, get together by organizing through internet. Their pioneers are generally women and they use gender inclusive language and address to women in Turkey. In animal rights and veganism issues, women again lead these movements. Besides defending the right of life of street animals, they are active as vegan feminists. Vegan Feministler and Abolisyonist Vegan Kadınlar are active defenders of both animal rights and veganism in Turkey. They organize seminars and meetings to share their experience and sometimes make their voices heard in the streets. Both animal rights/vegan and slow food movements target group is generally women in Turkey. Their manifesto and announcement call women, in particular mothers (Şenyuva, 2012).

In this respect, animal rights, vegan and food activists' actions seem more perpetual as compared with rural environmental movements. They are more institutional in campaigning and communication channels have possibility to reach more people. In rural women's environmental movements generally

spontaneously emerge and disappear when they succeed or fail. However, some platforms and initiatives related to environmental issues in rural regions of Turkey have vital role to support these resisting women. Thus, these platforms and initiatives such as Yeşil Gerze Çevre Platformu (Green Gerze Environmental Platform), Derelerin Kardeşliği Platformu (<http://www.derelerinkardesligi.org/web/>) (Brotherhood of the Rivers Platform) and Fırtına İnsiyatifi (<http://firtinainisiyatifi.com/hakkimizda>) (the Storm Initiative) contribute to sustainability of the environmental social movements and raising public awareness.

Another issue is the motivation of women to participate in environmental movements. Lifestyle of women seems to affect their preferences to be part of a protest related to environmental issue. For example, women in slow food movement or Buğday Movement⁴ concern about chemicals in food while women in Black Sea Region concerns about rivers that faced with the threat of drying up because of hydroelectric power plants on it. As in the two cases, in Çamlıhemşin and Yırca examined in the Chapter 5, women first concern is conservation of nature and its resources and also they do not want to break their ties with nature. Because rural women live closer to nature as compared with urban women, they internalize nature easily.

Women's discourse in animal rights movement, veganism, food movement or opposition against environmental destruction of government's energy project addresses the mothers and next generations. They use non-violent language in their protests and actions. In addition, they often emphasize the women and nature relationship. No matter urban or rural environmental movements, women emphasize on environmental degradation, conservation of natural resources and bequeathing nature to next generations.

⁴ Buğday movement is an environmental movement aims to create ecological awareness, to support harmonious life with nature and to provide solutions to environmental problems that emerged because of the destruction of ecological balance. For more information: <http://www.bugday.org/portal/hakkimizda.php>

With the increase in liberal economic policies and projects of AKP Government after 2000's, the contradiction between energy projects and preservation of nature have become remarkable. In this process, there has been increase in environmental awareness regardless of gender and social status. However, women's visibility and leadership in these movements also seem to increase. According to Balta (2012: 44), in Gerze, women are in front of armored vehicles and in Yumurtalık or Çanakkale women are again at the front of the barricade. Attitudes of women in these environmental movements are more than a coincidence in Turkey. At the same time, radicalization of woman in environmental movements perceives liberation of women who lost their nature and liberation of nature as synonyms.

Balta (2012:44) emphasizes that visibility of women in environmental movements increased with the necessity of liberation of women and nature together. If it is needed to go back to an earlier date, the pioneers of the Bergama movement, civil disobedience against the first gold mine of Turkey in İzmir, were not men. Women started to voice their children, their womanhood and their soil. They started to go to coffeehouses where they do not come to there before. However, to mobilize men they broke the taboos. Moreover, in Reinart's book, *Biz Toprağı Bilirik! Bergama Köylüleri Anlatıyor*, resistance against gold mine transformed the social lives of village women in Bergama. Their place in the struggle also changed the gender relations. For example, Rahime Özyaylalı, one of the resisting women in Bergama movement, says that they can go alone to Bergama. The most obvious change for women to give up wearing *kıvrak*, the traditional dress which covers all body of women used in public sphere (Reinart, 2003).

In addition, Balta (2012: 45) claims from the socialist ecofeminist approach that as any other countries, women are the first victims of natural disasters and men are landowners but women are wise of the soil in Turkey. In families whose economy depended on soil, protection of soil means the part of protection of life for women. So that, it is not interesting that most of food movement or

movements related to soil, women's are at the forefront of the struggle. In Turkey, against industrial agriculture, nuclear, hydroelectric and coal thermal power plants and mining which are have possibility to damage environment; women are in the forefront to conserve nature. One of the most important factors in women's quick and radical action in environmental issues is their communication networks especially in rural areas. Moreover, the fear of displacement is also an important factor for women's participation in environmental movements in rural region of Turkey. Indeed, because of their domestic position, concepts related to be settled such as home, cemetery and neighborhood is crucial for women surrounded by more traditional networks in Turkey. Another motivation of women in participation in environmental movements is related to economic freedom. Historically, women were forced to work in unskilled jobs, for women, ecological destructions means deprivation of right to work and their income.

Those who are against the cutting down of trees in Turkey, walk miles looking for water in Africa and cook vegetables collected from the forest in indigenous tribes of Australia are women. So, their link to nature is stronger than man. They are aware that if trees are gone, they may lose their lifeline. So, that they prefer to hug trees and protect soil and water. The only thing is to defend nature in which they live to struggle against environmental destruction. In Turkey, women who are generally in the secondary position in economic and social life, particularly in rural regions, are at the forefront to protection of nature. Women, productive and fertile as nature, are aware of same kind of thinking tries to be dominated female body and nature. Thus, they have taken place at the forefront of ecological struggle in Turkey as in all over the world. In Gerze, during the five years struggle against the construction of a coal thermal power plant, women left their children alone at home and went to keep guard in the construction zone. In Yırca, women who had fought to maintain olive trees expressed that they had taken care of these trees as their children. These examples from Turkey show that the spirit

of Chipko movement, a forest conservation movement led by women in India in 1970's, still continues (Şahin, 2015: 453).



Figure 2: Women in resistance against thermal power plant in Gerze

Gerze'de Efes Pilsen'e Karşı Zafere Bir Adım Daha. (2012). Retrieved June, 10, 2016, from <http://www.greenpeace.org/turkey/tr/news/gerzede-efes-pilsene-karsi-zafere-bir-adim-daha-010512/>

According to Değirmenci (2014), women in different parts of the world resist against cutting of trees and deforestation. They hug the trees in Palestine, India and Africa. They scream by saying “If you cut trees, you destroy us. Humanity cannot exist without them.” This is a kind of integration with trees. In Chipko Movement, the son of one of the activists said that the motivation to mobilize them in that movement was the determination of his mother. In Yırca or Çamlıhemşin, the motivation to stop government's projects and inclusion of men into movement was women's stance in their struggle to protect nature. Women earn their bread from soil so that they know deforestation causes desertification and soil erosion. Women are aware of that trees are not only a source of oxygen and nutrients but also the reason of continuation of ecosystem and existence of themselves. Therefore, no matter what their age, religion, language or race

experience of women and nature is common under industrialist patriarchal system. Urban women resisted in Validebağ grove⁵ in Istanbul with the spirit of Gezi Movement⁶. In order to protest mosque construction in the Validebağ grove and police violence, they brought dust clothes and brooms in protest and they said “what does your mother says if she knew what you are doing here?” to polices.

Women’s resistance and awareness related to environmental issues are important both in rural and urban areas in Turkey. Their visibility mobilizes men in the movement but sometimes it is not enough the sustainability of this movement. In Turkey, environmental movements generally disappear when people succeed or fail to reach their aims. At this point, initiatives, platforms and collectives are vital for conservation of nature especially in rural areas in Turkey. Thus, formation of permanent women collectives in the areas resistance emerge is significant to continuation of resistance. Through these collectives, women may form solidarity networks to defend nature. Because environmental conservation is continuous effort rather than spontaneous one, these collectives would have embraced each other.

Women are also active in protests against hydroelectric power plant in Turkey. Especially in the Black Sea region, government built many hydroelectric power plants and caused rivers to run dry. So that, women do not want another power plants on rivers in near their living area. For instance, Yavuz and Şendeniz (2013: 48) analyze the resistance stories of women against construction of hydroelectric power plant in Fındıklı district of Rize. One of the women residents of Fındıklı says “we defend the right of animals that live in the near village, in the sky and underground while we defend our own rights to use water. We defend the right of

⁵ In Validebağ grove in İstanbul, Üsküdar Municipality planned to construct mosque in a natural site. Before construction of mosque in 2015, residents protested and in these protests women were at forefront.

⁶ On May 30 2013, a wave of demonstrations and sit-in protests in Turkey began as a reaction against the urban development plan for Taksim Gezi Park, one of the last green spaces, in İstanbul.

thousands of creatures, flowers and insects.”⁷(Yavuz & Şendeniz, 2013: 50) In this area, women’s have close relationship with water because they engage in agriculture and livestock farming. Both plants and animals need water as human needs to survive. So, in protests women were at the forefront and they experience solidarity among women and they saw that this solidarity strength resistance. In this study, women explain their link with rivers by saying that to build hydroelectric power plant on this river causes it to dry and it is like to separate a child from the mother. In Fındıklı, women achieve to cancel this project and they believe that resistance gives confidence to women. One of the women from Fındıklı says “I have learned to say no to my husband when he wants from me a bowl of soup while I resist against hydroelectric power plant.” (Yavuz & Şendeniz, 2013: 52).

⁷ “Yeraltında yer üstünde, gökyüzünde binlerce hayvanının hakkını savunuyoruz. Binlerce canlının, bitkinin, çiçeğin, böceğin hakkını savunuyoruz.”



Figure 3: Women in resistance against hydropower plant in Fındıklı, Rize

Source: Şen, Ömer. (2015). HES'e Geçit Yok: Derelerimizi Vadilerimizi Rahat Bırakın! Retrieved June 12, 2016, from <http://www.kuzeyormanlari.org/2015/07/23/arhavide-de-hese-gecit-yok-derelerimizi-vadilerimizi-rahat-birakin/>

Another example related to women's resistance against a hydroelectric power plant emerged in Loç Valley in Kastamonu. Women in the village mounted on the bulldozers that had come for constructing the hydroelectric power plant in order to stop them. Moreover, they tied a yellow scarf, the symbol of Kastamonu, to a bulldozer. Then, they began to read sections from Rıfat Ilgaz's Sarı Yazma (Yellow Scarf) book which tells childhood memories of him in Cide, Kastamonu (Kardeş & Ayhan, 2010). In Kamilet Valley of Arhavi district in Artvin, women formed a group, namely Kadın Atmacalar (Female Hawks) within the Arhavi Doğa Koruma Platformu (Arhavi Nature Protection Platform). Women wear hawk masks and sing folk songs while they keep guard near the river. Lyrics of their song written by women in the region for their river are as follows;

“Black Sea is rebellion; our river is not for sale.

Do not handcuff rivers so, they can reach to sea.

Without water, plants, animals and people cannot live.

Do not handcuff to rivers so, they can reach to sea.”⁸ (“Artvin

Arhavili Kadın...”, 2015)

“This river is our childhood. In this river, we wash clothes, we refresh after collecting tea and we learn to swim. I felt like my child was killed.”⁹ says Nuran Pişmişoğlu from Kadın Atmacalar group. Şükran Özçakmak states that they did not know how to fight but they learned as an elementary school and realized the importance of solidarity. They insist on resisting until the end because river means life in this region (“Karadenizli Kadınlar Doğa Talanına Direniyor”, n.d.).

⁸ "İsyandadır Karadeniz, satılık değil deremiz, vurmayın kelepçeler özgür aksın dereler denizi görebilsinler, su olmadan yaşayamaz bitki, hayvan ve insanlar, vurmayın kelepçeler özgür aksın dereler denizi görebilsinler"

⁹ "Orası bizim çocukluğumuzdu, çamaşır yıkadığımız, çay topladıktan sona girip serinlediğimiz, yüzmeyi öğrendiğimiz derelerimizdi. Evladına kıyılmış gibi hissettim."



Figure 4: Women activists in protests against hydropower plants in Cide, Kastamonu

Source: Toprak, Orman ve Su için İsyân. (2010). Retrieved June 11, 2016, from <http://sendika10.org/2010/04/toprak-orman-ve-su-icin-isyân/>

The resistance of urban women is generally short-term movements because they generally make their voice heard on the streets or organize marches in squares of big cities. Besides such protests, they organize meetings and seminars related to their environmental concerns. They actively use social media accounts and blogs. Sometimes their practice of protests on streets turns into regularly organized meetings as in example of Yoğurtçu Kadın Forumu.

Yoğurtçu Kadın Forumu (Yoğurtçu Women's Forum) started in June 2013 by a group of women who actively took part in Gezi Protests 6. They started to meet with the spirit of Gezi and they continued to meet every Wednesday to discuss and share their ideas on being women. Although they did not define themselves as ecofeminist or feminist, their reasons to join the Gezi protests were mainly the policies of AKP government on female body and also their environmental concerns. Filiz Karakuş from Yoğurtçu Kadın Forumu says that the trees were

cut down in Gezi Parkı so, her first reason to participate in the protests was plundering of nature and disruption of her living space. She also was there for female demands like stop AKP's intrusive policies on female body and life (Kaya, 2014: 32). One of the meetings of women in Yoğurtçu Kadın Forumu, they discussed on ecofeminism. They discussed the problem of putting women in secondary position almost in every field of life but perceiving ecological problems is concern of only women. Moreover, in this meeting the nature and women link might be a product of patriarchal system and might reinforce gender roles in the society was debated (Şahinler, 2013).



Figure 5: Yoğurtçu Kadın Forumu in Gezi Protests

Source: Yoğurtçu Kadın Forumu ile Bağımsız Kadın Örgütlenmesi ve Forumlar Üzerine (2014). Retrieved June 9, 2016, from <http://meseledergisi.com/2014/07/yoğurtcu-kadin-forumu-ile-bagimsiz-kadin-orgutlenmesi-ve-forumlar-uzerine/>

These discussions on ecofeminism and nature-women relationship are important to question gender roles and natural degradation in Turkey. Especially in Gezi Protests which began with environmental and urban transformation concerns, women's discussions on environment and female body politics are valuable. Although they are not ecofeminist, exchange ideas on this issue open new ways to stance of women in environmental politics and projects in Turkey. Hence, this awareness contributes the creation of sympathy and solidarity among women.

Against nuclear power plant projects in Mersin and Sinop, women are again in resistance but Nükleere Karşı Anneler İnisiyatifi (Mothers against Nuclear Initiative) is an important formation of women in Turkey. The initiative began with the leadership of eight women from different ages and professions. The main concern of this initiative is impacts of nuclear energy and next generations and their aim is to create nuclear-free future and respect for the right to life of next generations as women and mothers. They plan to carry out awareness raising activities across Turkey and will form alliances to influence decision-makers to achieve this goal. Among these eight leading women, there are environmental activists, doctor of medicine and journalists. They say that the choice of the way that will charge next generation to painful costs is like a state of unconsciousness. So, they do not want children suffer from dirty technologies such as nuclear energy. Besides, according to the public survey of Greenpeace, 67.5% of women in Turkey do not want nuclear power (Aksoğan, 2011).

Women's environmental movements do not need to be collective. In Turkey, women are also a part of environmental movements as individuals. Elif Arıĝ, for example, has lived with her 4 year-old daughter for 3 years in Alakır Valley of Antalya. There are four completed hydroelectric power plants on Alakır River and one of them is in construction. So, Alakır is also one of the places under the threat of environmental destruction (Alaylı, 2015). Elif Arıĝ has lived in Çuva (is the combination of the first two letters of the word Çuval –sack in English- and the last two letters of the word Yuva –home in English-) which is an earth house. Earth houses are made of natural materials and embrace animals, soil, woman,

water, human in other words the whole struggle for existence. She was born in a city and graduated from a university but Elif and her daughter settled in Alakır to live the way they defended. As a woman, Elif had no difficulty to adapt to natural conditions but some villagers who support construction of hydroelectric power plants did not want her there. However, her stance as a single mother living in nature demonstrates the insignificance of gender identities. Therefore, her life style is an indicator of a woman who wants to live with her daughter in harmony with nature in protest of environmental destruction (Kızılcık, 2016).



Figure 6: Woman environmental activist built and lived in eco-friendly house in Alakır

Source: Avşar, Burak. (2015). Doğa Savunucusu Elif Arıç... Retrieved June 10, 2016, from <https://gaiadergi.com/alakirdaki-tacizler-giderek-artiyor-doga-savunucusu-elif-arig-yargilanmaya-calisiliyor/>

Therefore, women play a leading role in environmental movements in leading position, if there is a struggle for protecting nature. They struggle for genetically modified food for organic ones or resist against coal thermal power plants for protecting nature and health of their children. Women take care of sick family members, they cultivate soil and they find and carry water. So, they feel more

responsibility towards nature. As they stated, they defend the right of life of all living creatures. Moreover, they fight against any destruction of their living space. They do not want to lose their soil and water because it also means the exclusion of women from social sphere particularly in rural areas. In Turkey also, for not being trapped in the house, they try to make their voice on the streets. Therefore, their struggle is valuable in terms of nature and also gender identity in Turkey.

CHAPTER 4

ECOFEMINIST APPROACH TO WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT IN VEGAN, ANIMAL LIBERATION AND FOOD MOVEMENT IN TURKEY

Environmental activism becomes visible through increase in environmental awareness in Turkey. Destruction of environment has been consistent with neoliberal economic policies pursued by government. In order to provide more capital accumulation, natural assets have been used for economic benefits (Duru, 2013: 6). These interventions into nature directly affect people's daily life in rural regions because rivers have been dried by constructing dams on them and trees have been cut for roads. People have begun to protest these environmental degradations because their water, soil and air have been contaminated due to government's energy projects.

In this opposition, women make a claim to protect nature in which they live. Women's participation and leadership in these environmental movements are crucial because they keep seeds, cultivate, harvest crops and take care of livestock animals when their husbands and sons go to other cities to earn money in Turkey. Therefore, they have close relations with nature and they foresee the possible results of environmental degradation in rural areas of Turkey. In urban areas, women's concerns are related to animal rights issue, veganism and food security. In this chapter, women's repertoires and discourse on environmental issues together with their networking tactics will be analyzed through ecofeminist lenses. In this chapter, women's discourse and articles related to women, veganism and animal rights issue is analyzed based on cultural ecofeminist perspective.

Veganism and vegetarianism as forms of diet have not a long history in Turkey. The first vegetarian associations were established in 1847 in England (Vegetarian Society), in 1860 in the United States (American Vegetarian Society) and in 1867 in Germany (German Vegetarian Society). In Turkey, the first and only vegan and vegetarian association, the Vegan and Vegetarian Association of Turkey, was established in 2012. World Vegetarian Day was celebrated for the first time in 1977, while it was celebrated in 2010 for the first time in Turkey. Moreover, the first vegan festival was organized in May 2015 in Turkey (Tunçay Son & Bulut, 2016: 833). Hence, visibility of veganism and vegetarianism as a social movement is new for Turkey. Especially, as compared with examples in other countries Turkey is late to meet this movement.

With the establishment of vegan and vegetarian associations in Turkey and increase awareness of this issue, women's leadership in vegan and vegetarian movement become visible. As mentioned in this part, vegan women are active in this movement and their discourse is generally based on woman-nature relations. They define themselves as activists who fight against exploitation of animals and women. Vegan Feministler and Abolisyonist Vegan Kadınlar are two active ecofeminist activist groups which generally prefer to reach people through their websites and organizations. Besides these groups, a few journals like Birikim and Evrensel Newspaper and also alternative social media channels like Bianet (Bağımsız İletişim Ağı – Independent Communication Network) publish articles on ecofeminism, veganism, animal rights issue and also women in environmental movements in Turkey. Most of contributors of these articles are women. These articles are related to theoretical debates on ecofeminism and woman–nature relations and also adaptation of these issues in Turkey.

Animal rights movement is also related to ecofeminist movement. In animal rights movement, Turkey stays behind global animal rights movement. The first animal rights association was established in 1825 in England and the first animal protection association in the United States, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was founded in 1866 (Singer, 1985). In Turkey,

the first association, Animal Protection Association of Turkey, was established in 1924 (Melikoğlu, 2009: 41). In Turkey, animal rights movement has failed to go beyond protection of street animals. For instance, there is not an effective campaign or protests to defend rights of wild animals in Turkey. Nevertheless, in the recent years, animal rights organizations and grassroots movements protest bad conditions of farm animals besides street animals. In these protests, women are at the forefront but in media they are generally portrayed as hysteric animal lovers.

In Turkey, Fikir Sahibi Damaklar which is the representative of global slow food movement in Turkey is led by a woman food activist, Defne Korkyürek. Their campaigns and manifesto against genetically modified foods and inorganic farming address at women and mothers. Although they do not define themselves as ecofeminist, their target group and majority of activists are women. The leader of Türkiye Balkon Bahçeleri Konviviümü (Balcony Gardening Convivium of Turkey) is also a woman. They organize meetings to prepare organic foods like soups and natural vinegars with women. Some food movements like Buğday Movement also organize women's meeting for sharing experience and discussing women's place in environmental issues and sustainability. Some woman bloggers, for instance Mercan Uluengin's Zehirsiz Ev and Gizem Altın Nance's Ekolojik Anne Doğal Bebek, also write and share related to being an 'organic mother'. Moreover, some local initiatives and associations related to agriculture and environment organize seed exchange festivals. As in other parts of the world, women have close relations with soil in Turkey. Women have seed knowledge which is crucial for organic farming. They are protector of local seeds and biodiversity in rural regions in Turkey.

In this chapter, veganism, animal rights, agriculture and food movements as a part of environmental movement and women in Turkey are analyzed through ecofeminist perspective. Generally, social and cultural ecofeminist approaches is used in this analysis. It can be said that women's discourse on veganism, animal rights and food movement parallels with cultural ecofeminist discourse. Both

women in Turkey and cultural ecofeminist approach share common concerns like woman-nature closeness, saving future generations, empathy with non-human animals and pioneering protecting nature in action and spirituality. Hence, it can be said that actions of women in Turkey related to environmental issues like being part of a movement, leading a movement and discussing and writing on being women and protecting nature may be evaluated in the social ecofeminist framework. However, their discourses and motivations to join a movement or to write blogs and articles on women and nature is coincidence with cultural ecofeminist concerns. In this chapter, especially blogs and websites on women's vegan, animal rights and food activism, articles in some newspapers and also interviews with leading women figures of these movements in journals are used as sources.

4.1.Ecofeminist Interpretation of Animal Liberation and Vegan Movements in Turkey

In Turkey, feminist vegan and animal rights activism is generally campaigning via blogs and websites. Activists prefer to use social media channels in order to make their voices heard and they publish their manifesto and principles. Moreover, they organize and announce their protests and actions on their websites and blogs. Among these vegan blogs and websites, Vegan Feministler seems to be most active one because except from effective usage of internet, they have organized vegan feminist camps once a year since 2014. As activists, they also actively attend protests related to women and also animal right movements in Turkey.

Vegan Feministler identify themselves as activists who struggle for animal liberation and fight against all kind of exploitation and oppression related to gender because domination over non-human animals and women are interrelated. In their manifesto ("Biz Kimiz", 2014), they declare that they do not see non-human animals as objects of exploitation for eating, clothing or entertaining. So, they organize their daily life according to this principle and come together for

their understanding of feminism with veganism. In their blog, their motto is “For liberation of women, animals and nature!” and they call “Come to eat rice and believe in women!”¹⁰ They share articles related to vegan feminism and also recommend movies and books related to their focus area (“Biz Kimiz”, 2014).

In the first vegan feminist camp organized in 2014 in Muğla, they were 24 women and participants came from big cities of Turkey. Topics related to ecology, gender, love, animal liberation, veganism, patriarchy, anti-militarism, motherhood and homophobia was discussed during the three days in the camp. This camp is important in terms of creating ecofeminist interpretation of vegan feminism in Turkey. During the camp, vegan feminists share their experience and to feel they are not alone make them more powerful in their struggle. According to manifesto of their camp, vegan feminists argue that eating is very basic need in our daily life. However, it is not only a biological need but also it is our routine practice to feed our desires and pleasures. At this point eating is important part of consumption so, eating patterns of people are important determinant of our consumption level. Moreover, in this camp, vegan feminists suggest that capitalism has created a vegan market which is sexist and elitist. Thus, they have also socio-economic concerns besides spiritual and cultural concerns related to animals and nature. They think that industrial market makes us depending on consumption, individualistic and selfish about food. They try to fight against non-local and genetically modified foods which are imposed by vegan food sector (“I. Vegan Feminist Kamp Sonuç Bildirgesi”, 2014).

¹⁰ “Kadınların, hayvanların doğanın özgürlüğü için.” “Gelin pilav yiyelim ve kadınlara inanalım.”



Figure 7: Vegan Feminist Camp in Akkuyu, Mersin

Source: Vegan Feminist Kamptan Notlar. (2014). Retrieved June 10, 2016, from <http://www.kaosgl.com/sayfa.php?id=17305>

As a result of their gender and sexuality workshop, they argue that gender roles are directly under effect of the patriarchal system and male dominated society shapes our language and culture. Both non-human animals and also women are subjected to sexist and speciesist violence of male dominated society. While anthropocentrism exploits nature, androcentrism suppresses women. They believe that the language we use includes lots of discriminative expressions against women and also non-human animals. The worst thing related to this discriminatory language is using words related to animals for humiliating women. Anthropocentric usage of language puts non-human animals into secondary position against human at the same time, it puts men superior position to women. According to Vegan Feminists, anthropocentric male domination in language demonstrates their link to eating meat. Some speciesist and sexist expressions like “woman like a horse”, “chick” put women and animals in

inferior position against men. (“I. Vegan Feminist Kamp Sonuç Bildirgesi”, 2014).

Vegan Feministler also do not see motherhood as an essential part of a woman’s identity. Therefore, not every woman has to give birth and takes responsibility of a child unlike what society expects. They believe that polygamous or homosexual couples can also produce different kind of motherhood definitions. So, sexless motherhood is possible if women get rid of the maternal role. Moreover, they are also anti-militarist vegan feminists due to death of living things and also ecological damage. They emphasize that people do not know how many animals were killed during the war because news related to war focus on the number of people who are killed or injured. Hence, people generally ignore the extent of ecological damages of war. Furthermore, they think that war reinforced relationship between eating meat and masculinity. Although men destroy and poison farmlands and habitat of women and children, they are rewarded with meat. It means that if they killed “enemy” as a soldier, they win war. Thus, their “success” is dependent on killing living things and they are praised in return corpses as a result of war. During the war, lands are feminizing and both women and also nature are raped (“I. Vegan Feminist Kamp Sonuç Bildirgesi”, 2014).

Vegan Feminist group are also active on the streets. Especially special days related to animal rights, veganism and women like International Women’s Day, International Animal Rights Day and World Vegan Day, they try to make their voices heard in the streets. They draw attention to that patriarchal violence is based on exploitation of women and nature. They emphasize on patriarchy in their fight against speciesism by attending 8 March Feminist Night Walk. Their slogans are “freedom for women, animal and nature”, “vegan feminists are here”, “not worth to eat meat to be a girl”, “eat broccoli and believe in women”, “male violence are rising from slaughterhouses”, “animal milk is rape”, “behind exploitation of nature and animals, there is patriarchal system” and “do not eat animals, eat vegetables” (“8 Mart’ta Vegan Feministler...”, 2015).

Second Vegan Feminist Camp was organized in Mersin Akkuyu in July 2015. It is not coincidence, they specifically chose the campsite in Akkuyu where a nuclear power plant is planned. Call for the camp is “Let build an alternative and communal life against masculine carnist domination.” Heterosexual, transgender and lesbian women who define themselves as feminist and vegan come together in this camp to discuss and share their experiences and daily practices. Moreover, they aim to develop struggle methods against speciesist and sexist way of life and also make exploitation visible in order to raise awareness. Thus, they come together for determining solutions whose center is nature instead of human being. They say “we are as women with nature deal with all forms of exploitation and oppression against women and nature” (“Akkuyu’da Vegan Feminist...”, 2015).

Except from their camps Vegan Feministler use their blog actively to communicate and share their experience and also viewpoints. They claim that they have created their blog to write their vegan feminist history in Turkey. Therefore, they actually desire to create a movement in which feminism and veganism are combined. In their Vegan Feminist Winter Meeting of 2015, women, transgender men, queers and intersex people attended from Muğla, Antalya, Ankara and Istanbul. Relations between veganism and feminism and vegan feminist organizations and activities were discussed. All participants in the meeting shared their experience on how they link veganism and feminism. Then, based on these experiences, they discuss on why they are here and how they want to proceed. They plan to organize workshops on vegan foods like vegan cheese and sausage making or a vegan market. Moreover, another subject is to create a feminist vegan discourse which is not exclusive others and questioning forms of exploitation and also oppression. They meet at a point that their priority is not encouraging people to be vegan rather producing a vegan feminist discourse (Kılınç, 2015).

Another group of activists are determined themselves as “Abolisyonist Vegan Kadınlar” who defends that the first step of being an animal activist needs to be a vegan. Besides being vegan and promoting veganism, they refuse any campaigns

on reform of animals' conditions because people continue to consume animals and their products as a result of these reforms. Therefore, any reform related to animals' conditions legitimize actions of companies in meat and animal products sector. They also defend that patriarchal society's commodification of non-human animals is directly related to women's secondary position in male-dominated society. Speciesist male-dominated system legitimize putting people in a superior position in terms of species and also putting women in a secondary position in terms of gender issue in the society. Therefore, male-dominated mentality in the society exploits both women and non-human animals due to its speciesist and sexists attitudes ("Hayvan Hareketindeki Cinsiyetçiliğe...", 2014).

"Abolisyonist Vegan Kadınlar" may seem as radical defenders of animal rights because they also criticize a protest in Ankara in the Feast of Sacrifice in 2014. In International Animal Rights Day, two of animal liberation activists made a theatrical protest in order to protest against animal massacre in the Feast of Sacrifice. In this protest, woman activist plays victim role and her hands and feet were tied and also her eyes were tied with a black cloth. Man activist plays butcher role and put knife to her neck. Activists aim was to show that killing a non-human animal is similar to killing a human ("ISID'den Farkı Yok...", 2014). In their declaration to criticize this protest, "Abolisyonist Vegan Kadınlar" defends that protest to stop animal massacre normalize male-dominated norms in the society. Instead of defending animal rights, this protest reproduces misogyny and speciesism because victim role was played by a woman. They believe that message that protesters want to give led to legitimization of the killing of women by men as violence against women were kept equal to violence against animals. Therefore, according to "Abolisyonist Vegan Kadınlar", this action represents the mindset of patriarchal society while activists defend animal rights and these women scream that "we rebel against sexism and misogyny in the animal rights movement."¹¹ (Hayvan Hareketindeki Cinsiyetçiliğe...", 2014). This example in Turkey demonstrates that even if women are more close to nature and they feel

¹¹ "Cinsiyetçilik ve kadın düşmanlığına karşı hayvan hakları hareketinde isyan ediyoruz."

more responsible to protect nature from overuse, their actions to resist ecological degradation may feed sexist attitudes towards women in the society.



Figure 8: Sexist Animal Rights Protest in Ankara

Source: ISID'den Farkı Yok. (2014). Retrieved June 11, 2016, from <http://odatv.com/isidden-farki-yok-0410141200.html>

Abolisionist Vegan Kadınlar opposes to any kind of protest in which women are shown as inferior for the sake of empathy with animals. For instance, in protests women who drink cow's milk from her breast or a woman who wear a fox fur create and promote this sexist attitude in the society. These protests support to

establishment of other forms of discrimination. In other words, these women-driven protests normalize any kind of violence against women and sexist perception of patriarchal society, while they intend to resist speciesism. Women put themselves in place of animals in order to raise public awareness by empathizing with animals in animal rights protests but women legitimate male domination and also speciesism in the society by taking role of animal in these protests (Aslan, 2014).

Abolitionist Vegan Kadınlar also criticizes actions of some animal rights groups like PETA because they think activists commodify female body. For example, PETA put a female body inside the package by asking that what if you were either sold in the supermarket package as a meat (Mackey, 2010). Although they try to avoid people eating meat and promote veganism, they prefer to a female body for this protest most probably because of the attractiveness of the female body. However, Abolitionist Vegan Kadınlar believes that under the name of empathy, commodification of animal body for people and commodification of female body are equalized. Women with images of bloody meat packages in the street is not an innovative protest as society is witness to the portrayal of women in blood as a result of media fetishization of women murders. Another type of animal rights protest put women target to prevent fur trade and animal testing in the cosmetic sector. Abolitionist Vegan Kadınlar argues that throwing a blood-red paint to a fur wearing woman does not make anyone a vegan. Becoming women target because of their gender rather than their speciesist mindset related to fur trade is an indicator of sexist and misogynist views of the society. Hence, they think that if empathy makes someone focus of violence because of someone's gender, these actions are not effective to prevent speciesism (Aslan, 2014).



Figure 9: Sexualized images of women activists in animal-rights campaigns of PETA

Source: PETA Women-as-Meat Demonstration. (2008). Retrieved June 12, 2016, from <https://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2008/06/14/peta-women-as-meat-demonstration/>

Abolitionist Vegan Kadınlar is not considered unfair because there are other actions and protests in which women play victim role in order to empathize with animals. For instance, they also oppose to a protest organized by Jacqueline Traide, a performance artist, organize an action to protest animal cruelty in 2012 in London. She was subjected to some painful tests that animals also subjected to them for cosmetic industry (Omond, 2012). Eventough this protest was a part of fighting animal testing campaign, the images were brutal and woman is again in the middle of violence. Therefore, Abolitionist Vegan Kadınlar is against this kind of action because these actions legitimate violence and suppression just for women's are women (Aslan, 2014).



Figure 10: Performance artists protest to stop animal cruelty in London

Source: Lush Animal Testing Protest. (2012). Retrieved June 11, 2016, from <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2134555/Lush-animal-testing-protest-Woman-subjected-experiments-horrified-shoppers.html>

They are also against use of women's nudity to promote veganism and to stop animal cruelty. For example, in a vegan banner, a woman is displayed as a cow and man milks from her breast and takes her new born child. Abolitionist Vegan Kadınlar defends that the main point in vegan protest is the style of presentation of animal cruelty. In other words, it is important to how empathy is represented in environmental protests. If women are used as a pornographic icon in this protests, women are also exploited by patriarchal system. Fertility feature of women are also used in these protest in order to show that to separate mother and her baby animals in the early stages to get benefit from mother animal. However, Abolitionist Vegan Kadınlar argue that fertility feature of women is not a general and absolute situation for them. To emphasize fertility of women in vegan propaganda in order to show animal cruelty is caused by one type of female perception of patriarchal order in the society. Identifying female animals' body with female human body may be the easiest way to explain to people the exploitation of female animals' body. Nevertheless, it may bring stereotyping of women in the society and normalize pornography.

Abolitionist Vegan Kadınlar declare that veganism is a demand for justice for all living things so, while fighting against speciesism to implement and carry on other forms of discrimination like sexism is extremely contradictory

understanding of veganism. In order to draw attention to animal rights movement, some activists use women who are seen as another marginalized group like non-human animals. Such kind of animal rights activism for better understanding of discrimination and exploitation of non-human animals make women targets of violence as they are responsible speciesism. In animal rights movements, to put female body in animals' body by fetishization of female bodies and their sexualities increases hostility towards women and support male dominated social system (Aslan, 2014).

Abolitionist Vegan Kadınlar can be seen as a part of ecofeminist movement because they give importance to abolishment of both speciesism and also sexism. Unlike animal rights and vegan movement, they are critical about representation of women in protests. They accept that women are close to nature so that they can more easily empathize with animals. However, they think that for the sake of empathy women some activist groups get benefit from attraction of women body, nudity and sometimes they legitimate discriminative attitudes and violence against women in their protests. They are both against speciesism and also sexism. They accept close link between woman and nature but they do not accept any kind of protest in which woman take submissive and secondary role even if they try to prevent animal cruelty. Hence, they fight against any kind of discriminative action like sexism in animal rights movement because they defend that animal rights movement requires to look at all forms of discrimination as a whole. Benefiting from one kind of discrimination to eliminate another one does not take us to a more just world.

At this point, Abolitionist Vegan Kadınlar offers different perspective to veganism by emphasizing that it is not effective way to defend animal rights by promoting sexism and misogyny in the society. Commodification of woman in animal rights movement is unethical and it is not change the mentality of people who see animals as their commodity. They believe that as people continue to see woman as "meat", people will never understand that the reason why they use animals is the same with the reason to see woman as meat. Although they are a

fraction in the group of Abolisionist Veganlar, their stance against sexism contributes to ecofeminist perspective to animal rights movement and also veganism. They have published journals two times in a year since 2014 and also their web site is updated regularly by sharing articles on veganism, animal rights, gender and any kind of discrimination in animal rights movement. They also prefer to campaign on streets to tell about veganism by answering questions of people instead of using human body, especially female body, in their actions to make their voices heard by people.

It seems that Vegan Feministler, Abolisionist Vegan Kadınlar and activists who define themselves as vegan in Turkey meet the idea that in veganism propaganda, use of patriarchal mindset and use of women body for empathy with animals is against ecofeminist idea. Furthermore, they accept that there is a close link between women and nature but to animalize women for humiliating them is not acceptable. Besides cruelty that animals are subject to it, they are continuously raped to get benefit from their milk and egg.

Besides Vegan Feminists and Abolisionist Vegan Kadınlar, articles related to ecofeminism, animal rights and veganism are published in social media channel Bianet, Birikim Journal and Evrensel Newspaper. For instance, in Bianet, in their article on veganism and feminism, Kortun (2014) claims that cows are raped in dairy industry for milk we drink. What happen to the chickens or the queen bee does not contain less violence so, we are talking about female violence. Chickens are kept in tiny cages in a position to not even move, their eggs are stolen, when they cannot lay eggs, their throats are cut. Moreover, their beaks are cut to avoid pecking each other for more room. All of these treatments are violence against female animals. People believe that animals are created for themselves so that they exploit non-human animals. This society also animalizes women and non-human animals also feminized and they are also sexually abused. Kortun argues that there is exploitation of both women and animals that women need to get rid of it. Since women were born, they are exposed to this pressure and exploitation. Animals also subject to similar treatments and they are objectified. As women

know this physical and sexual exploitation system, they can feel more easily what animals experience.

Kortun (2014) also criticizes PETA for its advertisements which exploit and objectify women body because they distribute information and try to create awareness by using women body. Naked women whose sexual parts of body are closed with vegetables or a woman who is tortured as animals experience similar cruelties may seem as a good idea to visualize animals' exploitation but this method intensify secondary position of women in the society. To show link between women and tortured animals is important but continuous use of the female body in these protests are sexist if there is not any visualization of male body. For Kortun, liberation of animals will liberate humans and also liberation of women will liberate men. Thus, if a vegan is not feminist, he or she is not a real vegan. A life not raped on behalf of people is possible if people are vegan.

In Bianet, which defines itself as independent network for news, Dokur and Inceoglu (2012) also criticize PETA's animal rights campaign on the grounds that exploit women's body. Especially, PETA's advertisement for Valentine's Day namely boyfriend went vegan is criticized because of its sexism promotion. The main of campaign is to encourage young men to become vegan but it turns into an arena in which men show their sexual power. The video begins with a naked woman with wearing a coat and walking alone in the streets. This woman is in pain because of collar on her neck and at the same time she carries a bag. This visualization of woman gives the impression that woman suffered from domestic violence and rape. However, a voice from outside says "This is Jessica. She suffers from BWVAKTBOOM, 'Boyfriend Went Vegan and Knocked the Bottom Out of Me,' a painful condition that occurs when boyfriends go vegan and can suddenly bring it like a tantric porn star." So, when Jessica arrived home, gives bags filled with vegetables to her boyfriend and smiles again to express her wish to have sex (Roberts, 2012). According to Dokur and Inceoglu, this campaign emphasizes that instead of animal meat, put meat of your beloved and to enslave women rather than to enslave animals. Primarily, this campaign

includes sexual violence while it tries to promote veganism. This video again focuses on sexual power of male and accepts patriarchal norms in the society. This campaign shows a man who turned into sex machine after he prefers to be a vegan. As well as, the campaign's website some tricks to help silently screaming and reducing injury during sexual relationship. Therefore, Dokur and Inceoglu claims that issues like being vegan and being animal rights activists are linked to sexuality and this campaign gets away from its aim.

In addition, related to PETA's vegan boyfriend campaign tries to prove that vegan men are also "masculine" as men eating meat. By doing this, not even a single stone of patriarchal norms is displaced, unlike to be a real man is equalized with to cripple his partner with his sexual power. Furthermore, physical power men have put forward by assuming that women would satisfy their power. Dokur and Inceoglu (2012) think that carnism accepts meat eating as natural and necessary comes from desire to be possessed of something. As people dominate over nature and animals, men also try to prove their supremacy over women by internalizing patriarchy and masculine power. Therefore, vegan women should be feminist and feminist women should be vegan at the same time because while veganism fights against speciesism, feminism fights against sexism. Hence, both of them are oppose to discrimination. Violence whether against a woman or a non-human animal cannot be legitimized. While people try to prevent violence against animals, to make violence against women a situation to be proud of it is a dilemma.

Another journal that gives place to ecofeminism and veganism issues is *Birikim*, a socialist culture journal. In her article, Erdoğan (2006) draws attention to animals in the entertainment industry and similarity of women in entertainment industry. In the article, Erdoğan mentions about an African woman, Sawtche, who was the member of South African tribes and also a servant of a farmer had big buttocks and sexual organ. After she was brought to London by a surgery in 1810, she was begun to be exhibited. Sawtche was repeatedly bought and sold as an exhibition object in show world. In circuses, fairs and music halls, she was

exhibited as sex object and people look at her genitalia while they touched, tweaked and pricking her buttocks. In this case, attitudes towards Sawtche demonstrate greedy and insatiable interest towards inferior race even an animal from the European viewpoint. After people satisfy their curiosity, Sawtche become an object of scientific studies. Today, this example seems unethical and inhumane but still women work in nightclubs and brothels. Likewise women, animals are also used for entertainment. People go to circus and zoo for fun. Moreover, animals fight and race are also popular. People are generally away from questioning what they really do while they bet on horse and dog racing, bullfights and cockfights. Erdoğan emphasizes that the same behavior towards Sawtche case shows towards animals. While in the Sawtche case a woman was turned into sexual object for entertainment, animals are also turned into objects for food, clothing and entertainment. Patriarchal mindset perceives both women and animals as objects getting from benefit.

In another article related to ecofeminism and animal rights issue published in *Birikim Journal*, Gen (2005) mentions that when people think about animal rights issue in Turkey, some stereotyped images come to our minds. In these images, there is an animal (generally a cat or a dog) tortured (by mostly men) and a woman who come to end this persecution but in the end she realizes that she cannot do anything else except from shouting. Behind these images, a hysterical, unemployed female images ready to cause a bedlam remain people's mind. Violence towards animals is either forgotten without questioning or thinking about the causes and solutions. Hence, woman who defends animal rights is blamed for her rebellion. "Hysterical bourgeois behavior" of this woman is discussed but violence that an animal is subjected to it does not discussed (even nobody support violence against animals in theory).

Gen (2005) also emphasizes that today, woman activists are eighty percent of the worldwide animal rights movement. In Turkey, animal rights movement continues in the form of a struggle between municipal officials and legislators, almost without exception all of them are men. Women identification with animal

rights and the feel of compassion is whether based on a biological basis or results of role given to women by male-dominated society, situation of animals could not be ignored. Gen claims that especially in Turkey, struggle for animal rights is mostly women's fight against men or their fights despite of men. Thus, women activists firstly struggle with underestimation of men in order to defend animal rights in Turkey. On the one hand, mainstream feminist movement or any other opposition movement does not see animal rights as fundamental issue because they either does not take this issue seriously or are not curious about motives that bring women together in this challenge. On the other hand, these women who are struggle with men in every day in all areas of life do not think hard about why they have to deal with them while they try to stop animal cruelty. Female animal rights activists ignore the reality that their struggle is based on a general problem which is patriarchal order. If they do not address the roots of this problem, they have to rescue animals one by one and will always have to get tired.

In addition, Gen (2005) believes that in order to form a strong ecofeminist approach to animal rights issue in Turkey, firstly people should think, write and read about the issue. For instance, Peter Singer's book *Animal Liberation* was published in 1975, basically says that Animal Liberation is like Black Freedom Movement or Women Liberation Movement. So, speciesism is not different than race and sex discrimination. This book has become the main source of inspiration in animal rights movement from that time until today and encouraged people to become veganism and vegetarianism. Nevertheless, Turkish translation of *Animal Liberation* was published in 2005, 30 years after its original was published. Another example is Carol Adam's *The Sexual Politics of Meat* which is influential book on patriarchy and meat eating culture published in 1990. This book is also translated in 2013 in Turkish. Animal rights movement in the West is getting stronger, in universities' law and philosophy faculties, animal rights courses are given or veterinary students who do not want to experiment on animals sue or vegetarian dining options of prisoners are discussed. Hence, this 30 year history of animal rights movement which is taken seriously by authorities

and imposes their demands is based on theoretical infrastructure. In Turkey, Birikim Journal published Carol Adams', Vandana Shiva's and Gary Francione's studies in Turkish in the July 2005 issue. In Sunday paper of Birgün newspaper, there is a page devoted to animals. So, animal rights issue slowly moves away from the perception of the fight between hysterical women and murderer in Turkey.

Yılmaz (2008) emphasizes that there is no real sense of an animal rights movement in Turkey. When called animal rights issues, it means persecution of street animals and animal lovers struggle for these animals mostly dogs and cats. Because torture and violence against street animals is very obvious and common in Turkey, it has not been able to uncover a greater number of animals that suffer from cruelty in entertainment, food and clothing industry. It should not be ignored that majority of animal rights activism is carried out by women. Yılmaz believes that the focus of the struggle of women in animal rights activism is men who tortured animals and men who make and implement law related to animals. Therefore, animal rights issue is an area of women and it lacks men's authority. Animal rights movement is meaningful for many women who are animal rights activist or not. However, except from a number of feminist groups in Turkey, violence and cruelty against animals does not take place in their criticism on domination and violence. In Turkey, as any other patriarchal society, under the male dominated frame of mind which is also internalized by many women, animal rights issue takes place at the bottom of the list of priorities. Moreover, the image of hysteria and irrationality attributed to female activists of animal rights issue in the patriarchal system overshadows their struggle. Hence, women try to be individuals in political debate and have disadvantageous position in Turkey so that animal rights movement could not be articulated with other social movements in Turkey and it failures to develop anti-system discourse.

One of the most common methods that men use to humiliate each other is feminizing each other. One of the most common methods that human communities use to insult and to exclude others is animalizing. Conversely, to

say “the animal within him arises” for a man in terrible action is the easy way for justifying him. To demand rights like “the right to life”, “the right not to be tortured” or “the right not to be human’s good” for animal is as shameful as to demand rights like “the right not be killed in the name of honor”, “the right not to be raped”, “the right not to be beaten” or “the right not to be property of men” for women. In both cases, the patriarchal system is responsible for that shameful situation (Yılmaz, 2008).

Boyacıoğlu (2014) emphasize that one of the most important parts of vegan and feminist movement is purifying from all kind of discriminations including sexism and speciesism. Language that we speak both hosts and also reproduces the manifestation of male-dominated society. In order to construct a new ecofeminist discourse, firstly speciesist and sexist language should be replaced. If ecofeminist realizes the extent of speciesism and sexism in our language, people can see how deeply these discriminations settle down our language. For instance, “doing something like a man” is used for praising while “doing something like a woman” is used for underestimating. In addition, idioms related to “animal” are generally used for insulting despite of the fact that we are also human. For example, according to Turkish Language Association, the word of “kancık” (dog in English) means female animal, untrustworthy or the word of “mal” (good in English) means cattle and sex worker. So, all power relations and types of discriminations are nested and ecofeminist discourse should try to change our habits related to language by being aware of forms of domination that they are against them.

These articles on feminism and veganism published in *Bianet* and *Birikim Journal* are important for creating space for development of ecofeminism in Turkey. Except from *Vegan Feminist* and *Abolisyonist Vegan Kadınlar*, it is difficult to see ecofeminists on the streets or there is not powerful ecofeminist social movement related to veganism and animal rights. Even so, to discuss and to inform about ecofeminism through articles is the first steps of creating ecofeminist philosophy related to veganism and animal rights in Turkey. General

framing of ecofeminist approach to veganism and animal rights is influential for formation of unique ecofeminism belongs to a particular culture. Thus, besides translations of original studies on ecofeminist approaches to animal rights and veganism, to think and produce unique ecofeminist approach in Turkey is significant.

As in many other cultures, in Turkey also images of a hunter, a butcher, a scientist who experiments on animals or someone in the Feast of Sacrifice are generally men. So, men are more likely to be imagined in the cases of animal abuse and cruelty and according to Boyacıoğlu (2014) it is not a coincidence. He argues that as patriarchy dominates many areas of social life, it directly influence on relationship between nature and human. A dichotomy between nature and culture associated with dichotomy between woman and man. While nature is woman, culture is man in our patriarchal society. Moreover, it is more likely to see culture more superior than nature as a man more superior than a woman. In Turkey, male dominated civilization project is based on not to adopt human to nature rather to adopt nature for humans' need. In Turkey, women are encouraged to give birth to at least three children as a state policy. Chickens are expected to give eggs and cows are expected to give milk. In these two cases, the ability of reproduce and femininity of both female animals and women are exploited by male-dominated socio-economic system. Therefore, patriarchy sees women as incubators because degrade womanhood to fertility that means woman who cannot give good sons for this nation is not valuable. The same logic is applied to animals, if they do not give milk or egg, then they do not need to live. In Turkey also women are abused and raped as animals have to deal with the same treatment. A cow's cry because her offspring is stolen for her milk and mothers sons are also stolen for army. So, it is reasonable that to stop drinking cow's milk can be part of the struggle of mothers do not lose their children in war.

4.2.Ecofeminist Interpretation of Food Movements in Turkey

Fikir Sahibi Damaklar which is part of slow food movement is an active community in Turkey. Fikir Sahibi Damaklar aims to question about organic food, nature-friendly farming, and sustainable consumption habits of urban consumers. Moreover, they organize campaigns like Label Detectives at Work which intends to enhance consumer awareness about food. In their website, they say that what we eat is what we are so, we seek real food for a real future we will leave to our children. Moreover, we cannot find the real food in additives, preservatives and long lasting package because the real food is the food that we know its manufacturer and manufacturing process. The real food is perishable, local good, clean and fair. What makes Fikir Sahibi Damaklar linked to ecofeminism or woman-nature context is that the founder of this community is woman, Defne Koryürek (“Fikir Sahibi Damaklar...”, 2010).

Defne Koryürek describes herself as a food activist. While she tells the story of her meeting with the slow food, both as a cook and a mother who send her daughter to school she began to think about the origin of food. First of all, as a mother whose child has to eat outside, she has a concern about what kind of impacts of food on the health of her child. Then, she initiated the slow food movement in Turkey in 2006. In her interview, Koryürek mentions that the success of this movement comes from the start of the talks on woman issues. She says that they started to talk about concerns of urban women who become consumers. She also insists that Fikir Sahibi Damaklar mostly addresses to women and children because food is one of the main concerns of women. She emphasizes that almost only women’s concerns on food issues are focus point of Fikir Sahibi Damaklar. Their first manifesto on genetically modified foods addresses to mothers. In the bluefish issue, almost no men attended in their protest and there are always women in their visits and trips related to food issue (Şenyuva, 2012).

In their genetically modified food declaration, Fikir Sahibi Damaklar informs about regulations related to processing, registration, import, expert and monitoring genetically modified seeds, food and food products. This declaration begins with “Mothers!” and it warns mothers about food safety. It insists that from now on, any product that you buy from markets is not food that you ate in your childhood. It says that our right to feed our children with what we ate as a child is taken from us. As a high probability that these food will turn to more health problems related to our children, more new born autism and more newborn death. So, our chance of seeing our grandchildren will be lower than our mothers’ chances. This declaration also recommends that it needs to read the label any product that we buy and question every all contents of it. It is important to stay away from industrial and packaged foods and to prefer organic products for the health of yourself and your children. Moreover, in order to keep children away from genetically modified foods it is crucial to tell your children what she or he eat and why they should not eat unhealthy ones (“Fikir Sahibi Damaklar...”, 2009).

Fikir Sahibi Damaklar frames their discourse linked to women in Turkey. This movement’s main interest is food safety issue but they use women’s language when they frame their movement. In their genetically modified food declaration, they say “Using chemicals in order to persuade a butterfly not to alight on a corn and these chemicals cannot be removed from corn just by washing. As green as my daughter’s eyes, these chemicals settled corn’s code. I just wonder that when my daughter eats this corn, how these chemicals harm to my daughter. They say that producers can withdraw this corn from market if it damages and I say that my daughter is not test subject. We know that equal access to real food is the most basic right of our children.”¹² (“Fikir Sahibi Damaklar...”, 2009).

¹² “Dünya dünya olalı beri mısırın püskülüne konan kelebeği, artık 'konmamaya' ikna etmek üzere mısırın genetiğine işlenen bir kimyasal, yıkamakla çıkmaz, biliyorum; çünkü kızımın gözlerinin yeşili gibi, o kimyasal da, tümüyle mısırın kodlarında artık. Diyorlar ki "üreticisi, eğer, GDO'lu ürünün zarar verdiğini fark ederse,ürününü piyasadan çeker!" Diyorum ki, "benim kızım denek değil!"

The discourse of Fikir Sahibi Damaklar is important in terms of including women in the food safety issue. It is difficult to say that it an ecofeminist movement but the leader of this movement is women and their discourses are framed directly related to women. This movement's target is urban women because they think that women are the main source for continuity of healthy generations. They believe that raising awareness of women about food safety issue may create a change in production of industrial and genetically modified foods. As women are primary persons in the family who are responsible to feed their children, their food consumption habits are important for promoting agriculture without any chemicals. If they are consciousness about genetically modified foods, they can educate their family and children about "real foods".

In Şenyuva's interview (2012) with Defne Koryürek, she emphasizes that their approach is gentle towards farmers and people who work in agricultural sector. Everything is solved gently in the family so, their communication with authorities in this field is also like as in the family. She says "We talk with the fisherman with the appropriate tone and also talk with government in a respectful way. Therefore, we speak women language which is soft, tender and kind. We say that some problems related to food issue that we have seen are concerns of everyone so, solving these problems are priorities of everyone." Hence, their manner is polite and they also give responsibility to counterparty by saying that we know that you can solve these problems in the food safety issue so please not embarrassed me. Defne Koryürek also insists that as a mother they follow up children that we trust. Children refers to authorities and they prefer to involve them in the solution rather than excluding or being angry with them. They have chosen female voice because they do not want to fight with government officials and authorities in the food sector. Furthermore, they believe that mother tone or female voice is appropriate way for explaining their concerns and cooperating with their counterparts.

Defne Koryürek in her interview with Şenyuva (2012) mentioned that food consumption behavior of urban women was not different from men until they

have a child. Until the age of 5-6 of their child, urban women, especially women lived in metropolises, buy food with awareness. So, their differences in food consumption behavior generally occur when their children are very young. Except for this period, their food consumption behavior is almost same with men's consumption behavior. Instead of buying healthy and genetically unmodified foods, they may save their money for buying shoes or a mobile phone. For her, it seems that urban women leave and delegate to others the responsibilities of feeding the next generations in a healthy way. This situation may be accepted as the liberation of women from some responsibilities but it is worrying that women's knowledge on food issue that generates and maintains human beings is almost abandoned by urban women. She thinks that people do not talk about this abandonment maybe they are afraid of women have to turn back to their homes. Nevertheless, she believes that women should turn back to their homes for food safety and health of next generations and family but it certainly does not mean that imprisoning of women in their homes. She argues that women should know about what is eaten at home. Since women have left their responsibility related to food issue, our "real" food and health of our children suffer in irreversible way. Only women can stop this situation.

Defne Koryürek's in another interview with Aslan (2012) also addresses the issue of masculinization of women in contemporary patriarchal society. As an activity of this slow food movement, they try to teach making leavened bread to men worked in corporate life. They also target men in the "real" food issue because it is possible to read labels through this way. There is another important issue related to masculinization of women, a matter of slowness and speediness. Men are not tolerant to slowness but women's nature is close to slowness because they have the rhythm of nature. For instance, a baby is not able to born without completing her or his development in the mothers' womb. Thus, a woman has to wait for her baby by harmonizing the nature's rhythm. In the past, woman is companion of slowness of the nature but today, woman accelerates. As a result of this acceleration, woman is masculinized and lost the knowledge of nature by

moving away from the rhythm of the nature. She says “I am not saying that women should sit at home but they forgot the rhythm of the nature when they took the decision to not stay at home.” Therefore, she believes that woman can go outside without masculinizing or women outside of the home and women at home can come together for sharing their experiences. A women’s commune can be established for exchange of information about food safety issue.

In the background of Fikir Sahibi Damaklar movement, there is an idea of women’s existence for continuity of food production and safety. After menopause, women continue to live means that even they lose their fertility feature there is a natural order that women protect and maintain. According to this movement, protection of soil, seed and natural life and production of language that requires ensuring the continuity of the network among all living things is possible with the knowledge that women have. Moreover, the presence of other women that the oldest ones transfer and cooperate is crucial for preserving the “real” foods. Our desire to be individual removes from our mothers, grand mothers and aunts, the women around us. Now, people do not live in large numbers in the same house so, information of food owned by women cannot be allowed to circulate among women. Preparing foods is a kind of slowness and during this process, sharing knowledge about cooking with female family members is valuable to transfer this knowledge to next generations. As a result of individualism, women are stuck in the kitchen so, women should get their own network at the same time (Aslan, 2012).

In her interviews, Defne Koryürek points out that women’s capabilities related to nature is remarkable because they can keep pace with both slowness and speediness of the life. They should not stay home but they need female solidarity. For example, one of your female friends may go shopping for you and you may make bread for her. If a woman does not slow down, she cannot tell her stories on food. So, they should not give up transferring their knowledge about food from generation to generation. In this interview, interviewer asks her this question “Is Fikir Sahibi Damaklar a mixed movement?” She answers by saying

that not really, even it is strong woman solidarity. Slow food is not a woman movement but in Turkey, all of their activists are women and 89 percent of their members are women as of the year 2012 (Aslan, 2012).

Leyla Kabasakal is another women leader in organic food and farming in Turkey. She is the leader of Türkiye Balkon Bahçeleri Konviviümü which is the movement meets people who want to cultivate vegetables in their balconies. In Turkey, especially people who miss the smell and taste of vegetables as in their childhood, try to cultivate them in rooftop or balcony of their house in cities. They have to cultivate vegetables on their rooftop or balcony because many of them do not have appropriate space for it. The main aim of this movement is to gather people who want to cultivate organic foods enough for their consumption. Balkon Bahçeleri Konviviümü encourages people to talk and share their experiences about balcony gardening. Those who know share their experience with those who do not know about balcony gardening is their slogan. In short, they try to help re-establishing link between people who live in the city with organic food and soil. Moreover, they try to raise awareness about the taste, origin and production of foods that people eat and to meet consumers with producers for seed depository (Alptekin, 2013). Balkon Bahçeleri Konviviümü may not be a part of ecofeminist movement in Turkey but this movement was started by a woman who is sensitive about organic foods. Therefore, the leadership of a woman in this movement is important in Turkey.

The initiator of Balkon Bahçeleri Konviviümü, Leyla Kabasakal, organizes and attends some activities related to food issue. She is also a member of Slow Food Türkiye movement and activists for clean and fair food. For instance, she informs about an alternative way to cultivate organic foods in ecological conferences and meetings. Moreover, this movement organizes workshops to make leavened bread, tarhana (soup made from a fermented mixture of grain, vegetables and yoghurt) and vinegar in order to transform urban consumers to producers. The participations of these events are generally women but they try to reach children in order to raise awareness of next generations about clean food.

This movement does not only focus on women but as Fikir Sahibi Damaklar, they also use female language. In their call for vinegar making workshops, they say “it is possible to prepare, store and bequeath your own vinegar for your children and grandchildren.” In addition, in the Day of Terra Madre (the tenth day of each December since 2009), annual day of slow food movement to promote sustainable, clean and local food, seeds and yeasts are swapped. The Day of Terra Madre is celebrated in Turkey as Mother Earth Day. In the announcement of this event, mother and grandmother stories which include knowledge of health giving hands to our foods for thousands of years are asked bring them to all participants (Aytekin, 2012).

Buğday Movement is another example for women re-establishing their ties with soil and nature. Buğday Movement is also not an ecofeminist movement but women take active responsibility in this movement both as a leader and an activist. Buğday Movement’s primary intention is create ecological awareness and sensitivity both in individuals’ lives and also in society as a whole. They also provide solutions for irreversible ecological degradation so, they promote harmony with nature. Their main campaigns and projects are generally related to seed and soil and they support to formation of seed exchange network and also ecological markets (“Biz Kimiz”, 2002).

Buğday Movement has organized EkoKadın (Ecological Woman) programs once a year since 2013. The first EkoKadın meeting was organized in March 2013 in Istanbul and the second one was organized in Çanakkale in October of 2013. As an ecological movement, Buğday Movement is aware of women’s role in transfer and implementation of traditional and eco-friendly knowledge for ecological transformation in society. In their announcement text, they say that woman carries information of nature and soil. Ownership and transfer of traditional knowledge on nature, preservation and reproduction of seeds, agricultural production and healing belongs to women. So, women’s role is important not only in production but also in transferring traditions related cultivation and food issue as in any other issues. They carry, share and develop traditional knowledge, seeds and tales and

transform life through what they have. They make our homes hence, our world as a place to live. They have also significant role and responsibility in shaping consumption behaviors. If their demand is ecological, production and consumption will change in this direction. Therefore, Buğday Movement organizes EkoKadın program for women learn from each other, share and take part in the ecological transformation (“Buğday Derneği’nden Kadınlar...”, 2013).

In the EkoKadın meeting, some ecological problems like climate change, water and soil pollution, deforestation, extinction of species are discussed. People are not owner of nature, they just borrow sources. So that, reducing, reusing and recycling is important when people borrow sources from nature. Women’s role cannot be ignored because women are sparing in the use of resources and they can direct consumption. Alternative consumption ways are discussed and making yoghurt, bread, jam, vinegar and pickled is encouraged. Moreover, the importance of reading the contents on the packages of foods in markets is emphasized for promoting conscious consumption. Some practical information for recycling like preparing compost from inedible portions of vegetables and fruits or increasing the use of second hand goods in order to reduce consumption. Ecological methods of baby care like using cloth diapers or preparation of nutritious baby foods. In these meetings, Buğday Movement emphasizes that their aim does not reinforce traditional gender roles or imprison women in home rather to recall the strength and skills of women (Uluengin, 2013).

In addition to women’s involvement in slow food movement, in Turkey women generally use blogs to promote organic food and to show their reaction to genetically modified foods. Mercan Uluengin’s blog namely Zehirsiz Ev is one of the examples of these blogs. At the same time, she is the author of the book as the same name of her blog and she is active member of Buğday Movement. In her blogs, she generally addresses the issue of negative effects of genetically modified foods and chemicals that people are subjected. Moreover, she provides alternative chemical-free solutions to substance that people have to use at their homes or in childcare (Uluengin, 2012).

Gizem Altın Nance (2012) is another food activist, communication coordinator of Buğday Movement and blogger who write on the issue of being an ecological mother. In her blog, Ekolojik Anne Doğal Bebek, she shares her experience to be a mother and her relations to nature. Nance tells harms of package baby foods, vitamins and medicaments and suggests herbal medicines, breastfeeding and also organic foods for babies. Her blog addresses to mothers confused about infant nutrition. She also has a small garden in which she tries to cultivate organic vegetables. In 2012, she ran with her baby in stroller in Eurasian Marathon on behalf of Buğday Movement and she tried to raise money for supporting seed swap project of Buğday Movement. Nance and her baby's running race are symbolic but it is important to be here for a good purpose is valuable. She says "As women, let's try to repair our link with nature. Let's listen to what nature tells us. Let's be grateful for its generosity. Then, environmental friendly living habits are not a burden rather it becomes enjoyable rituals of everyday" ¹³(Şenyuva, 2012).

Relationship between soil and woman is another issue in ecofeminism. Like soil, woman is seen as fertile and reproductive. According to Göker (2010), woman is memory of agriculture. Traditionally, Anatolian women ensure the food security in the households. They help to sustain biodiversity and to feed their family by keeping seeds in their coffers. Because their experience and traditional knowledge on agriculture is passed from generation to generation, it is impossible to exclusion of woman in agriculture. Hence, they are like a store for agricultural knowledge. Moreover, women actively engage in all process of plant cultivation to preparing foods, they plant, collect, cook and again sow seeds in soil. By cooking which is the last step of planting, women see the results of their work. In addition, they also use aromatic plants for medical treatments in the villages of Anatolia. All in this process, men stays out of this cycle. Women

¹³ Doğayla bağlarımızı tamir etmeye çalışalım. Kulak verelim bize söylediklerine. Teşekkür edelim ve şükran duyalım verdikleri için. O zaman doğayla dost yaşam alışkanlıkları bir külfet değil, yapmaktan keyif aldığımız ritüellere dönüşecek.

teach her daughters what they know about agriculture and they sustain this cycle. Thus, link between soil and women makes them stronger.

One of the main concerns of Fikir Sahibi Damaklar is the issue of seeds. Seed is like a legacy that was given to the oldest woman in the family in the past. It was the source of life and the assurance of tomorrow. This seed was handed over the oldest woman because it was transferred from generation to generation. Today, many women lived in urban prefer to buy everything in package and even give up to make yoghurt or lemonade at home. Hence, we lost the knowledge of seed which is one of the most valuable heritages for organic foods (Şenyuva, 2012). In Turkey, women are active in exchanging and keeping seeds and they organize events for protecting genetically unmodified seeds.

In Boğatepe Villiage of Kars, for instance, women carry out a project related to ecological gardening. Boğatepe Environment and Life Association had 55 members in total and 45 of them were women in 2010. The president of the association said that firstly, we worked with men but they accept work if there is money. Women thought next generations and sustainability of nature. Furthermore, women designed and implemented permanent projects in their environments. Then, projects and association was left entirely in the hands of women. In some districts of Kars, as in any other places in Turkey, seeds are collected and kept by women. They use some methods like storing in straws or putting in wells in order to store and to keep alive endangered seeds. Seeds must be kept away from rodents so that women sew special cloth bags for these seeds to hang them high. They differentiate seeds from the numbers of nodes in bags. Then, women come together in order to pick “anaçlık tohumlar” which are not subjected to any chemicals and have high nutritional values. This process is very hard and women take responsibility of continuation of organic foods. Women also specialize in planting methods and men have respect for their knowledge and abilities. Women are engaged in seed exchange and it needs knowledge, experience and skills because choosing and keeping seeds is a vital job in agriculture (Değirmenci, 2010).

Collection, storage and reproduction of seeds by women have become widespread in Turkey in recent years. By raising awareness of women about seeds, soil and agriculture, they have begun to make a claim to in this area. Some movements like seeds exchange festivals, collection of genetically unmodified seeds from villages and teaching from older women's experiences and sharing this knowledge publicly are some examples of women activists' efforts in ecological field.

After the ban on the sale of local seeds in 2006, women groups, especially in rural areas, have begun to find solutions to protect these seeds. For instance, in Fethiye, a group of women has initiated a campaign for preventing the extinction of local seeds. Fethiye Cumhuriyet Kadınları Derneği (Republican Women's Association of Fethiye) meets farmers in local markets and collects local seeds from villages then, they again deliver these seeds to producers in order to promote cultivation and they also deliver products from local seeds to consumers. The prior aim of this campaign is to keep local seeds and another focus is to encourage local producer to planting non-hybrid seeds. At the beginning of this campaign, there were 4 or 5 producers but within three years, 40 of 90 producers have started to sell their products in the markets. However, they want to sell products grown from local seeds in the markets in order to earn their living. Furthermore, they use alternative ways like theatre to reach people. In seed exchange festivals, rural women stage a play namely Seed in order to raise awareness of both producers and consumers. Campaign coordinator Kumyol says "the target group is women because women sow seeds, cultivate plants and then reproduce seeds. We work with rural women in harmony because we know that women help to seed to meet with soil and women understand the voice of soil. We continue our tireless effort to tell the value of local seeds through campaigns and activities." (Yavuz, 2015).

Another example of seed movements initiated by women is Ovacık Köyü Kadın Tohum movement. After Fatma Denizci, a businesswoman, settled in Ovacık village of Şile in İstanbul, established an association for the purpose of promoting natural food production from local seeds in 2013. They believe that local seeds

disappear so, spread of traditional peasant farming and ecological agriculture as alternatives of industrial agriculture is vital for creating awareness in the society is the main objectives of their movement. They think that women's role is important in keeping, protecting and increasing seeds so that, rural women are their guide in this way. They also organize seed exchange festivals in Şile and support sale of Ovacık women's organic agricultural products ("Ovacık Köyü Kadın Tohum Derneği," n.d.).

CHAPTER 5

RURAL WOMEN IN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTESTS AGAINST THE GREEN ROAD PROJECT AND CUT DOWN OF OLIVE TREES IN YIRCA VILLAGE

Women's visibility in environmental movements has increased in Turkey, with the increasing energy investment of AKP government. Liberal economic policies of AKP government made energy and environment issue contradictory issues. In a country like Turkey whose urbanization, industrialization and tourism is dependent on natural assets and its economy is based on the use of ecological values, it is difficult to protect nature. Protected areas have been perceived as sources to use for economic gain by constructing roads, dams and power plants on it, legal regulations, institutions and decisions are obstacles for AKP government. Expropriation, disempowerment of institutions responsible for protection, making exceptions in law and failure to comply with the judgement are methods of AKP government to use natural resources for economic reasons (Duru, 2015).

Women have begun to actively participate in environmental movements in order to stop environmental degradation of government's projects. As a tactics, they keep vigil under trees or near river to prevent bulldozers to construct power plants by extinguishing nature. Sometimes, they sit in front of vehicles to stop them. Their discourse is mainly on protection of nature and next generations. In documentaries and interviews, they say that they know the possible results of cutting trees, drying rivers by constructing power plants and roads because they live with nature. For instance, they use water for irrigations crops, for animals, for washing the clothes and dishes so, they are in nature as a part of nature.

Especially in rural region of Turkey, women are direct and close relationship with nature. They plant seeds, grow trees and harvest crops. They suggest that they know the value of nature so that they try to protect it. They generally build networks through forming local initiatives and platforms. In this chapter, women's stance and framing of Green Road and Yırca protest will be examined. The aim of this chapter is not to discuss whole case in these protests rather to analyze women's discourse from the cultural and social ecofeminist perspective. News in newspaper like Evrensel and Birgün Gazetesi, green magazines like Yeşilist and Gaia Dergi and also online news sources like OdaTV and Bianet are used to understand and analyze women stance in Çamlıhemşin and Yırca cases. In the part related to cutting down olive trees in Yırca, interviews with village women in Kazım Kızıl's documentary namely Ölmez Ağaç, Yırca Direnişi Belgeseli is also used as a source in this chapter.

5.1. Rural Women and the Resistance against the Green Road in Çamlıhemşin, Rize

In order to understand women's struggle with governments' energy projects which do not take into account environmental impacts, it is useful to understand environmental politics in Turkey. As Duru (2006) states economy and energy projects have been more important than their environmental damages in Turkey. The ignorance of environmental impact of energy project in Turkey is as a governments' tradition. According to Duru, AKP (Justice and Development Party) has implemented energy policies in line with liberal economic policies and modern conservatism. Moreover, Environmental Impact Assessment and Environmental Law have been amended in the time of Justice and Development Party in order to usage of natural assets for economic concerns. So, negative impacts of industrial-led rapid economic growth can be seen from deforested landscapes for mining and degraded coastlines (Arsel, 2012). Especially in Justice and Development Party's period, negative impacts of environmental degradation through mining, hydroelectric and coal thermal power plant installations and road constructions has increased.

In recent years, these top-down energy projects of AKP and domination of ecology by liberal economic politics like mine exploration activities, nuclear, hydroelectric and coal thermal power plant constructions have triggered an environmental movements in Turkey (Duru, 2013: 6). Especially in rural areas of Turkey, people who live in these areas and earn money from livestock farming and agriculture have begun to resist energy investments of the government. In these resistances against environmental degradation, women have begun to take the forefront and pioneer of these movements. Their struggle with government's energy projects has been reflected more in media. In these environmental resistance pioneered by women, their primary motivation seems to be by reaction to the environmental degradation of their own habitats and worsening their life quality.

For example, the 2,600 kilometers long "Green Road" highway project which plans to connect to eight different plateaus in the Black Sea region in order to increase tourist attraction to this region. This region is known for its biodiversity and untouched green forestland. However, the Green Road Project would require cutting of many trees in the area ("Yeşil Yol Projesi Nedir?", n.d.). According to the President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, roads are indicator of modernity and prosperity so, it is impossible to talk about civilization without roads and his government could sacrifice everything for the road. When he criticizes environmental activists for their resistance to constructions, he says "uncivilized people cannot understand the value of roads. They (environmental activists) should go and live in the forest, if they do not want the construction of roads." ("Yol Geçecekse...", 2013). These statements of him show his governments' perception of value of nature.

With the increase in road constructions and energy projects in the Black Sea Region, environment activists have begun to establish local initiatives and platforms to stop the adverse impacts of such projects on natural environment. Karadeniz İsyandadır Platformu (Black Sea Rebellion Platform) and Fırtına İnsiyatifi (Storm Initiative) is one of these local initiatives based on Black Sea

Region defines itself as protector of nature. Against the ironic name of the road planned to construct in the Black Sea Region, these movements have started to a campaign namely “Turn back while the road is still green!” (Kızılcık, 2015).

In these protest and resistance against “Green Road”, Rabia Özcan, called as Havva Ana (Mother Eve) after the protests, has become the symbol of this resistance with her strong stance against bulldozers and security forces of the government. In July 2015, 63 years old elderly resident of Çamlıhemşin district of Rize began to keep watch in order to stop bulldozers and to prevent road construction. She reacted to arrival of the vehicles in the region and revolted against government’s “Green Road” project. She said “the roads of plateaus will never be connected because as the local residents we will never allow the construction of this road. Here is our home and we have lived in here since childhood. How state officials and governors dare to call us looters? Who are they? I represent the people I am here to protect nature. There are roads in this region and residents who live there use this road so we do not need new roads. Governors and state officials can put me in prison but I will continue to fight for protecting lands that I grew up, for trees and their leaves, for my grandchildren.”¹⁴ (“Rabia Özcan: Durmak Yok...”, 2015).

Rabia Özcan also criticized the statements of the governor of Rize, Ersin Yazıcı, who said “these looters cannot stop this road, we will complete it.” Rabia Özcan argues that even if he is governor, he cannot call looters to residents who struggle for protecting nature. She believes that he has to explanation his statements for clarification of this issue because he has this position with the support of people. She says “he will give me the answer about why we are looters. We are the government.”¹⁵ Her motivation to resist against the Green Road is their ancestors’ advices on protecting nature. Moreover, she wants to our

¹⁴ Sen bana nasıl çapulcu dersin? Onlar kim? Ben halkı temsil ediyorum, doğayı savunmak için buradayım. Burada bizim kullandığımız yollar zaten var, yeni yola ihtiyacımız yok. Beni hapseatabilirler ama ağaçlar için, yaprakları için ve torunların için doğup büyüdüğümüz topraklarımızı korumaya devam edeceğim.

¹⁵ Bana nasıl çapulcu olduğumun cevabını verecek. Devlet bizleriz.

grandchildren sit stone of this plateau, smell the flowers in there. She is aware of possible environmental degradation if these plateaus are connected with roads. According to Rabia Özcan, in these Green Road protests women are at the forefront because women cultivate soil and women value these plateaus. She says that since childhood, women have taken the trouble of agriculture in this area. Men cannot understand this situation because they do not make efforts for agriculture as women do (“Rabia Özcan: Durmak Yok...”, 2015).



Figure 11: A village woman as a symbol of protests against hydropower plant in Çamlıhemşin

Source: Asfalyaların Atsın... (2015). Retrieved June 10, 2016, from <http://odatv.com/asfalyalarin-atsin-be-anam-3107151200.html>

In this protest, woman has become the subject of resistance against Green Road. Women showed their reaction with their bodies by standing on vehicles came for construction of Green Road. They stood in front of vehicles to stop

environmental destruction and to protect nature in which they live. When Rabia Özcan and other women who protest government road project, they rebelled by saying a road cannot be green. Behind this resistance, their motivation is to protect naturalness of their habitat but the reason of women's active participation in protest seems to be related they have more information about the natural conditions of the region. They know that if trees are cut down for road construction, then landslides will increase in the region and women cannot do agriculture. Moreover, women worry about negative results of tourism if the road is constructed. Environmental pollution is the possible results of intensive tourism in the second stage of this road. So, women in this region informed about the possible outcome of road construction because they live in there by cultivating.

According to Rabia Özcan, plateau is for our children and next generations. In addition, cattle and sheep graze in these plateaus so, if this road is constructed, women will deprive of their economic freedom in this region. If government plans to invest this region, a dairy products factory may be established. Because women are engaged in agriculture and livestock farming, men in this region generally spend their time in coffeehouses. She claims that at the beginning of Green Road protests, women actively participated in the resistance and stood in front of vehicles and security forces because women in this region know the value of nature. Women live in harmony with nature. Furthermore, she emphasizes that those who revolt to protect nature in this region is always women because we have been grown as brave. In Çamlıhemşin, women deal with harsh natural conditions but they appease it because they understand the language of nature. She says that we are brave for struggling to protect our nature because she learned how to do agriculture and milking cows in the early ages. Thus, women are intertwined with nature and raise their children in the same way. Özcan who is the symbol of resistance with her body and femininity gives message to women by saying "Be strong, women are women. So, do not need to wait for men to

resist for protecting nature. Do not stay behind men. Do not be shy and do not be afraid.”¹⁶ (Bayram and Güler, 2015).

Özcan’s femininity discourse is important in order to understand motivation behind the issue of women’s struggle for nature protection in rural areas of Turkey. She believes that women are closer nature than men because they engaged in both cultivation of tea plants and livestock farming in this region. She is aware of negative results of constructing this road because she lives and work in the harsh natural conditions. In addition, as she states women in this region have been grow up with struggles. They feel strong to protest a project that will damage their habitat because they take this power from the soil in which they live. They do not wait for men’s support to resist because they believe that they are aware of the value of nature.

Rabia Özcan is not the only woman in this resistance. Gönül Günay and Süreyya Yücel who stood in front of vehicles to stop them, seems to be decisive of protecting green plateaus of Çamlıhemşin. They argue that if this road is constructed, there will be plastic bags and garbage instead of flowers in their habitats. Hence, they state that as the mother of next generations they want to maintain nature without any intervention will result in harm to the environment. They emphasize that locals have lived for many years without damaging nature so, they did not allow any environmental degradation for the future of these plateaus. Therefore, they are against the Green Road and they are insistent to fight till the end (Görgü, 2015).

¹⁶ Güçlü olun, kadın kadındır. Doğayı korumak için direnmek için erkekleri beklemeyin. Erkeklerin arkasında durmayın. Utanmayın, korkmayın.



Figure 12: A women stood in front of bulldozers to stop road construction in Çamlıhemşin

Source: Yeşil Yol Direnişi Sürüyor. (2015). Retrieved June 12, 2016, from <https://zete.com/yesil-yol-direnisi-suruyor/>

After their successful resistance in Çamlıhemşin, women in Green Road protests attended to the Women in Ecology session of Climate Forum Istanbul in November 2015. Zeliha Gülay, one of the activists in Çamlıhemşin, was born and raised her children in this region. The natural conditions are not easy to live but they were happy anyway before the project of Green Road. She says that they have livestock animals, tea plants and gardens, men generally work in other cities. Thus, grazing animals, tea planting and making dairy products are under responsibility of women. She emphasizes that the Green Road is not only intervention of the government into our nature. For instance, government promotes European fertilizer for tea planting but women realized its damages

then they have come back to organic agriculture for 3 years in this region. She says that no one can destroy the nature as she or he wish, we have rules and everyone keeps the rules because we set these rules. For example, women graze animals considering the conditions of the grass and they are careful in this issue. These rules are not set by government so that, we can protect our nature (Vardar, 2015).

Another women activist Gönül Gülay also explained what happened in the Green Road protest in Climate Forum in Istanbul. She says that they have happiness in their plateaus and they live in solidarity. There is no any government intervention here before the Green Road project but some there is some government incentives in this region like to the promotion of usage of milk powder. However, they did not use milk powders because they have cows and sheeps. Moreover, roads leading to the highlands were not constructed by government and their eco-friendly dirt roads are enough for residents. They do not want wide asphalt roads. According to her, earning money by destroying nature is unacceptable. In the protests, she threw herself in front of the vehicles without hesitation, when she saw they closed to road before starting to cut down trees. She thinks that there is nature massacre that needs to be stopped in their plateaus. Furthermore, she states that in Hemşin, women have power over men so, they dominate men in social life. Each house has a grandmother and she is the deputy of this house. For this reason women's reaction and resistance in the Green Road protests is not strange because women know these plateaus and dealing with the challenges of nature like the back of their hands. Thus, women dominance over men is strong in the region because they intertwined with nature more than men when they grow tea plant and graze livestock animals (Vardar, 2015).

In the recent years, rural women on the front line in local resistance to protect nature against government's projects are familiar images. To say "women's presence in environmental protests is important" might sound as sexist approach but their resistance to environmentally damaging projects of the government is crucial for mobilizing people. According to observation of Şimşek (2015), men

are shaped in the social areas of the money circulation and they work in other cities in most of the year in Çamlıhemşin. Therefore, the necessity to earn money turns them into prisoner and they feel desperate to protest any situation because they experience all kinds of oppression in working life. So that, men in Çamlıhemşin, as any other small town in Anatolia, men felt that if they oppose the order then, someone holds them responsible. Rural women in Anatolia far away from stereotyped effect of economic realm. Hence, women's visibility on environmental social protest is important to break the fear of not making enough money of men in these small towns. In addition, in these small towns and highlands of Anatolia, women have close link with nature because they care livestock animals and cultivation of plants are under the responsibility of women. Thus, women know the value of nature and they estimate the environmental consequences of government's project near their habitats.

Some people take women's participation in environmental movements issue with the feminist perspective. They refuse to call Rabia Özcan as Rabia Özcan because they do not want to lose of her resistance in the "holiness of motherhood". They argue that when Rabia Özcan rebels by asking who the governor is, she answers giving references from her childhood, youth and life. So, her motivation of defense of nature turns into her struggle of living space. She says "I am here" with her body against a kind of displacement. According to some feminists, just calling her as mother causes underestimating her stance. Hence, they prefer to not call her Rabia Özcan because they do not want to disappearance of her resistance in the cliché of "heaven lies under the feet of mothers." In Turkey, as in any other part of the world, top-down macro-scale projects leave devastating traces in rural women's life because these projects directly target their natural habitats. These macro-economic investment projects can be defined as violence against women because negative effects of environmental degradation as a result of these investments first affect women. Women have to deal with diseases of family members caused environmental pollution as a result of industrial and energy projects built near houses and

cultivated fields of rural settlements. Moreover, feminist claims that constructions of energy and road projects might provide job opportunities for men but these projects bring difficulties to rural women's life (Bayram and Güler, 2015).

As a result of violence against women through top-down energy projects, they form their grassroots movement to protect nature in which they live. Therefore, women's struggle for environment is organized in their habitat. It is valuable because rural women are aware of future damages of today's macro-scale government projects and this environmental awareness of women comes from their close link to nature instead of external information. In Turkey, the will of women who rebel to poisonous gas of coal thermal power plants, dry river beds caused by hydropower plants and trees cut down for mining is the same. Their motivation behind this protest is save nature that they establish close relationship with it.

Some feminists approach to women's place in the Green Road protests by asking that who decided to call Havva Ana instead of Rabia Özcan and how it is decided that she is our mother. They criticize that some frames of minds decide to call a woman in struggle as "mother" according to her age, clothing style, accent and naivety. This perception may sometimes be harmful because women who are against underestimation of their struggle by categorization and subordination can be declared as marginalized, alienated and even counter-revolutionary. Besides, some feminist points to Özcan's statement that her real name is Rabia Özcan but it may be misunderstood in the protests. She is known as Bekar in her village because she was married for many years. It is her ex-husband's surname and she did not use it anymore. However, in interviews she says that it does not matter being Özcan, Bekar or Havva Ana, newspaper can wrote as 'one of the protesting aunts'. So, some feminists claim that she objects to symbolization and individualization of protests (Bayram and Güler, 2015).



Figure 13: Women activists in local dress in Green Road protests

Source: Eteğimize, Peştemalımızla... (2015). Retrieved June 12, 2016, from <http://www.evrensel.net/haber/256473/etegimizle-pestamalimizla-topragimizi-savunacagiz>

Another issue related to feminist approach to the Green Road protests is sexist statement of Şefik İnce, the Chairman of the Youth Branch of the AKP in Çamlıhemşin district. After the resistance against arrival of vehicles in plateaus of Rize to cut down trees for the road construction, women protested the Green Road by dancing Horon (a type of folk dance from Black Sea Region) and singing folk songs. After this protest, İnce wrote “Mini-skirted girls coming from other provinces protest. It is like a mini-skirt fashion show rather than Green Road protests.” in his social media account. Then, women attending protests complained about the marginalization of women in sexist comment. Executive Board Member of Derelerin Kardeşliği Platformu (Brotherhood of the Rivers Platform), Kamile Kaya, says men who have sexist and humiliating viewpoints ignore press releases about the nature massacre in Rize and they prefer to focus on what women wear in the protest. According to her, this perspective is the reflection of social hysteria turned into women’s murder in Turkey. She states that women who defend their living space and nature and resist construction of

the Green Road are insulted due to their skirt length. However, courageous women of Black Sea will be at the forefront of defending nature and they will continue to fight against the Green Road with the most beautiful clothes they wear based on their own free will (Karafazlı, 2015).

5.2. Village Women and Struggle for Protecting Olive Trees in Yırca

In September 2014, Kolin Company's construction machinery arrived at Yırca village of Manisa City to cut down olive trees so as to establish a coal-fired thermal power plant. In Yırca, villagers have provided livelihood from olive trees for many years. After the cabinet's rapid expropriation decision for olive farm in Yırca village, Kolin Company began to cut trees. Nevertheless, the company employees encountered the resistance of villager. Especially, women threw themselves in front of vehicles came for cutting olive trees. In September 2014, the company cut only few trees. But villager women together with men began to keep guard beside their olive trees. Their resistance to stop construction of coal thermal power plant in Yırca started in this way. In the early hours of November 2014, almost 6.000 olive trees were cut down by Kolin Company despite of the all resistance of villagers. These trees were 85 to 100 years old so, they were like heritages for villagers. Kolin Company sacrificed these 6.000 olive trees for the sake of building coal thermal power plant in this field. Women villagers are again in the leading part of this resistance (Türkkan, 2014).

Emine Sezer, one of the villagers, says that no one asks them about cutting trees or building coal thermal power plant. These olive trees are their children and someone comes in a night and nearly all trees. She emphasizes that they have no idea about building coal thermal power plant. There are some rumors but they do not guess that their olive trees would be cut down because no one tells them this power plant would be built where the olive trees are. Ayşe Ürücü, another villager, says that after they learned about their rights, they began to resist against this injustice because they want to cultivate their soil and they do not want coal thermal power plant instead of their olive trees. Then, they began to keep guard

near olive trees from night until morning. In this process, only a few environmental activists from Greenpeace and a woman lawyer, Deniz Bayram, support their resistance especially until 6.000 olive trees were cut down in a night. She also said that after their 13 olive trees were cut down without permission of villagers, they understand that they have no choice other than resist to desire of tree cutting of Kolin Company. In the first attempt of to stop tree cutting, the women of the village threw themselves in front of the vehicles. Ürücü says in that they realized it is possible to achieve by struggling with unity (Kızıl, 2015).

Women in Yırca have a lot of reason to oppose the establishment of coal thermal power plant. Employment policy in existing coal thermal power plant, for instance, is sexist because only men can work in this thermal reactor. Hence, women are engaged in agriculture and they work in nature in Yırca. Moreover, both women and their family members have health problems because of existing thermal power plant. Patient care is certainly under responsibility of women. Establishment of another coal thermal power plant means destruction of agricultural land, the death of their olive trees as they love their children, more air, soil and water pollution in the village. Even one coal thermal power plant had a very negative effect on people living in the village. So, they were faced to danger of cutting down their olive trees and they might they were confronted with the possibility of exposure to more poisonous gas. Furthermore, they have already excluded from coal industry (Bayram, 2014).

In such a case, women tried to save olive trees from being cut down and then villagers supported them in their struggle. In the night watches, in the olive groves, women sat in front of the vehicles and they asked “Why would we give our olive trees?”. When commander of the gendarmerie said “Women, now let’s go to your house,”¹⁷ women said they would not go anywhere and continue their watch for days. The governor of Soma District came to the village to persuade villagers to tree cutting. Women questioned the real reason the desire of

¹⁷ “Neden topraklarımızı verecekmiz? Zeytinimiz bize yeter”. “Kadınlar, haydi evinize gidin artık”

establishment of coal thermal power plant and the governor reply them by saying “How are you talking like that? All women become good lawyers.”¹⁸ Because patriarchal symbols like a commander of the gendarmerie or a state official are not used to women’s struggle in an environmental issue in Turkey, they did not know how to react the resistance of women in Yırca (Bayram, 2014).



Figure 14: Village women kept vigil near olive trees in Yırca

Source: Yırca’da Direniş ve Dayanışma Sürüyor. (2014). Retrieved June 12, 2016, from <http://www.halkizbiz.com/gundem/yircada-direnis-ve-dayanisma-suruyor-h9208.html>

¹⁸ “Sen neden öyle konuşuyorsun, iyi avukat olmuşsun”



Figure 15: Village women in night watch to prevent cutting down trees in Yırca

Source: Somalı Köylülerden Zeytin Ağacı Nöbeti. (2014). Retrieved June 11 June, 2016, from <http://haber.sol.org.tr/kent-gundemleri/somali-koylulardan-zeytin-agaci-nobeti-haberi-97388>

According to Bayram's observations (2014), a Greenpeace lawyer, women in Yırca were very strong and their fight was respected. When vehicles of Kolin Company entered into olive trees groves, they asked where women are before asking where gendarmes are. Gendarmerie commander phoned his hutment and he said "You do not need to come, women are already here." The night before the destruction of 6.000 olive trees, women gathered outside of wire mesh and sat by the fire until the morning. In the morning, they blocked the road goes to olive trees grove because vehicles came again to cut down trees. One of the elderly women sat in front of the vehicle to stop it and one touched her for a while but then, private security forcibly lifted her from the ground. Women could not resist against them because private security gave a very harsh response.

Women's resistance in Yırca is not just like tears of elderly women who worry about cut olive trees. Their struggle is for nature and also for being on the streets, for protecting their living areas, for going to collect olives rather than sitting in the house. This struggle is slightly different from men's resistance because olive trees grove is their socialization area. If they do not go to collect olive and then they process them for eating, they have to stay at home. Lung diseases are very common in Yırca and women have to care of their patients. To go to collect olive means taking breath by breaking the household responsibilities. Besides environmental sustainability concerns, women fought for olive trees because their relations to collect olives is related to their socialization in the village. If they did not go to olive trees grove, they have to clean ashes from their balcony while men go to work in mines in Soma.

Emine Akın, one of the protesting women from Yırca, states that in this process they learned how to resist defending their nature in which they live. When vehicles arrived to their olive trees grove, villagers revolted under women's leadership. First women reached to near olive trees and prevented them from being cut down by workers' of Kolin Company. They were exposed to attacks by private security paid by the same company. The day 6.000 olive trees were cut down, villagers were removed from olive trees by private security and olive trees grove was surrounded by wire mesh. Women who wanted to pass wire mesh faced violence of private security. Ayşe Ürücü, one of villagers, said that till that day she had not been subjected to violence from anyone. She also added that they are not prone to violence but they feel under threat of violence (Kızıllı, 2015).

In the documentary of Kazım Kızıllı (2015), *Ölmez Ağaç, Yırca Direnişi Belgeseli*, which is dedicated to women in Yırca, Emine Sezer says that olive trees cry like a human when they are cut down. She wishes she had not come to see them. She still hears trees' cry in nights. She feels as if she cut down these olive trees and she is angry with herself for not saving trees. However, she states that they try their best to prevent cutting down of trees. Another elderly woman cries and hugs the cut tree branches on the ground and says "These trees are my

babies; I did not take care as much of my babies as I cared for my trees. In the one part of the documentary, the district governor of Soma asks villagers what they do if this coal thermal power plant project is not cancel and women answer “we will resist.” Then, the district governor says they are provocateurs but a woman says there is a democracy in this country. Nevertheless, the district governor’s answer is that people have no right to revolt against the government. After their 6.000 olive trees were cut down, women took an olive tree to leave in front of the Governorship of Manisa. They wanted to meet the governor but he was busy so he did not talk with them.



Figure 16: Women whose olive trees were cut down for thermal power plant in Yırca

Source: Yırca’da Termik Santral... (2015). Retrieved June 11, 2016, from <http://www.karsigazete.com.tr/gundem/yircada-termik-santral-icin-koylulere-imza-kampanyasi-kumpasi-h32561.html>

In this environmental resistance, firstly they went out to stop vehicles and hug trees, and then men in the village joined them to protest. So, without women in Yırca, men cannot win alone. They emphasize that they have to resist against the establishment of coal thermal power plant because lung diseases like asthma and lung cancer are very common in Yırca. They are aware of the negative impacts of this thermal reactor on their health and nature. Olive trees are vital in Yırca because poisonous gas and ashes caused by the first coal thermal power plant destroyed tobacco. Greenness of Yırca has disappeared in time until villagers planted olive trees. It was difficult to grow other crops in this region because of air pollution. The soil had become unproductive and only olive trees could endure this pollution.



Figure 17: Women who plant olive trees after their trees were cut down

Source: Yırca'da Fidanlar... (2015). Retrieved June 11, 2016, from <http://bianet.org/biamag/toplum/164913-yirca-da-fidanlar-soma-nin-madenlerine-uzanacak>

Women in Yırca believes that Kolin Company cut down their olive trees because the Company plans to force men in the village to work in coal thermal power

plant. However, they do not want to send their sons, brothers, fathers and husbands there because of dangerous health conditions. After Turkey's Council of State has cancelled the Cabinet's rapid expropriation decision of olive trees grove in Yırca, they had already lost their trees. Nonetheless, they did not lose their hope because they won against the Kolin Group. They lost their trees but coal thermal power plant will not be established in Yırca. Hence, as a woman in Yırca said, they took their olive trees but villagers did not give their lands. The first olive seedling was planted by one of the elder woman in Yırca in May 2015. Each olive seedling in Yırca has a name like victory, resistance, struggle, democracy and Gezi. These are the names of values that are struggled for (Bayram, 2015).

After all of these bad experiences and olive trees loss, the only way to generate income of women in Yırca was sell coal from the waste of a coal thermal power plant. Then, all women in the village came together in the village coffeehouse in order to search for solution to their financial situation. They talked and agreed to produce and sell handmade soap. It has a meaning that they transform the soot of coal to aroma of soaps. They found Sabun Evi (Soap House) to produce soap and worked day and night. They began to earn money by selling their handmade soaps. In this process, people support their effort by providing 3D printers to produce models for different shape soaps. Increase in variety of models increases sales and revenues. Soap production of women in Yırca is a livelihood painless and eco-friendly. Thanks to women, nice smells spread from their hands to streets in Yırca (Kızılcık, 2015).

Women's attempt in Yırca is important in terms of being an example for other women resistance in environmental issues. Their handmade soaps reached to every corner of Turkey, even to America and Alaska. In the last summer, a group of villagers who wanted to establishment of second coal thermal power plant in Yırca, complained about the women on the grounds that they pollute the environment. Then, gendarmery came to Sabun Evi and then the situation was understood. Besides, they were awarded by Soma District Governor. Women in

Yırca who do not want the second coal thermal power plant experienced resistance with solidarity and inspired women in other environmental protests. In this resistance, they stand against government's security forces and also Kolin Company's bulldozers so, they realized that they can make their voice when they came together. Although they lost their 6.000 olive trees, their attempt to keep watch over their olive trees in nights and to produce handmade soaps to sell them gives hope to other environmental struggles. They state that they understand the importance of being together and fight for protect nature in which they live. They say "If you have an environmental problem related to mining, coal thermal or hydroelectric power plants, we come to resist against them." (Dermenci, 2015). Therefore, to produce handmade soap in Yırca by women is the other name of resistance.



Figure 18: Village women in Soap House in Yırca and their handmade soaps

Source: Sabunlar ve Hikaye... (2015). Retrieved June 12, 2016, from <https://yesilgazete.org/blog/2015/12/12/yircali-kadinlar-termik-santrale-sabun-ureterek-meydan-okuyor/>

Agriculture is important source of livelihood in Yırca but women in Yırca are against the establishment of second coal thermal power plant not only because of economic reasons. Before their olive trees were cut down, they earned money from selling olive and olive oil. They also cultivated tobacco before the establishment of the first coal thermal power plants in the village but ashes of

coal thermal power plant damage to both their health and their crops. Then, they found the solution to plant olive trees. According to elder women in Yırca, olive trees are combative ones, they can withstand harsh conditions (Vardar, 2015). So, they always found environmentally sustainable solutions in order to continue their lives without damaging their environment. Olive trees mean is more than just economic income. They made an effort to plant and cultivate olive trees so that trees were like their children for women in Yırca. They wanted to protect them as the first coal thermal power plant exterminated greenness of tobacco. Thus, they were aware of possible damage of the second coal thermal power plant.

This resistance is women's struggle because most of their children are sick and women care them. They clean the ashes come from the existing coal thermal power plant. Generally women work in collecting olives and making olive oil so, they contribute to household economy. Moreover, olive trees grove is freedom area for them. If they do not go to collect olives, then they are trapped at home. So, the motivation behind their protests is that women are firstly affected by negative impacts of coal thermal power plant. Even if they are not affected they take care of sick family members. Thus, they want to avoid any health problems caused by coal thermal power plant because women have already known how this thermal reactor damaged their tobacco plants. Moreover, in Yırca, nature means agriculture for them. It is vital for women because agriculture provides them economic freedom and also an opportunity to spend time in nature.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In this study, women's motivations to involve in environmental movements in Turkey, their framing including network structure, discourses and tactics in Turkey are analyzed in the light of ecofeminist philosophy. Women's relation with nature is also investigated in order to understand what motivates them to participate in environmental movements. In order to find out their concerns, demands and motivations, their discourses and concerns are evaluated. So, when analyzing framing issues, it is questioned whether there is space for women in environmental movements in Turkey.

When we look at the woman-nature relations, it can be said that in Turkey, women have traditionally and culturally close relations with nature. Especially in rural areas of Turkey, agriculture, caring of livestock animals and carry water is under responsibility of women because their husbands or sons generally work in cities to earn more money. Women have close relations with soil because they are engaged in all steps of the food cycle. They plant seeds, grow them, harvest, process crops and turn them into food. They are master in picking seeds, keeping them and then planting again. In villages, women keep seeds for the next planting time.

Concerning networking issues, rural women transfer their knowledge and experience on agriculture and food to next generations. This tradition and naturally established connection also transfer the motivation to protect natural environment. Women in Yırca and Çamlıhemşin, they emphasize importance of sustaining nature which has been entrusted by the previous generations. In rural areas, women's involvement in environmental movements is more spontaneous and it generally does not continuous.

It means that when they have success or fail to reach their aim, the movement ends. However, they network and organize in local environmental initiatives, forums and associations in order to share their ideas on the issue and support each other. Moreover, these initiatives and local associations are in touch with each other and they go to support their protests. It is difficult to say that there is ecofeminist or women's environmental movements or initiatives but women are at the forefront and become pioneer in the resistance against government's projects that will destruct nature. In urban areas, they generally communicate and build networks through web sites, blogs and social media accounts. Some of them organize regular meetings and activities to intensify their action. Urban women's environmental movements seem to be more continuous than rural women's struggle for environmental protection.

Tactics of women in environmental movements are also various. For instance, in rural regions, women keep vigil near rivers or trees in order to stop cutting down trees or construction dams on river. Women sit in front of bulldozers to prevent them to work in nature to construct roads or power plants. They defend nature in which they live in the field. In urban women's environmental movements they try to reach people through internet and they also try to raise awareness about their concerns. In their websites, blogs or social media accounts they share their manifesto and call for protests. In slow food movement for instance, they try to reach women and mothers in order to make genetically modified food issue visible. They organize campaigns and meetings in which they share their experience and ideas. For instance, Vegan Feministler comes together once a year and their choice for meeting place is generally in danger of environmental degradation. Their last meeting was in Akkuyu, Mersin where the nuclear power plant is under construction. So, as a tactic, they try to call attention of people to this place despite their primarily focus concern is animal rights and veganism.

Women's discourse is another important element of environmental movements. When trees are cut down or animals are exploited for human use, they emphasize on right of next generations and non-human living creatures and also sustainability. A woman says trees are as her children or another woman says she is here for her

grandchildren in Çamlıhemşin. In slow food movement, they address to mothers to protect their children from genetically modified foods. Vegan Feministler try to raise awareness about the right of life of animals and fight for both speciesism and sexism. In Yırca, a woman who tries to protect olive trees to be cut down says if she did not go to collect olives, they have to stay at home because olive grove is her socialization area. In all of these discourses, there are commonalities with ecofeminism. Except from a few movements, most of woman actors in the environmental movements do not define themselves as ecofeminist in Turkey. Nevertheless, their discourse is share from social and cultural ecofeminist philosophy.

Women's struggle is slightly different from men's resistance for protection of environment. Because they are excluded from social, economic and political realms in patriarchal society, their struggle for environmental issues is significant. It is making claim to protection of environment, their living space and lifestyles. For instance, for many women, except from being areas of exploitation of women's labor force, fields are socialization places where they collectively cultivate soil and collect crops. Moreover, women in many villages in Turkey, still carry water from fountains or rivers for household use. So, they are suppliers of water for animals, hygiene, irrigation, drinking and food processing. They collect, transport and store water. The situation of water scarcity, like drying of rivers due to dams on them or freeze of water sources, primarily affected women. Thus, they know the value of nature and possible threats that disrupt the balance of nature.

Although urban women have not direct relations with nature in cities, management of household energy consumption and water usage is under responsibility of women. Moreover, women, as a nurturer of family, are also responsible for food security of the family. Urban women play important role in energy consumption which is directly related to destruction of natural resources. Because a large part of the energy is generated from non-renewable natural sources in Turkey, energy usage in the household which is generally managed by women is important for environmental sustainability. Women's preferences in food shopping are again significant determinant in supply and demand of inorganic and genetically modified foods. They

are influential in consumption of natural resources through energy usage in the household.

It can be said that in Turkey, urban women generally frame their concerns related to nature through their lifestyles. To become vegan or vegetarian because of environmental reasons and animal rights issues is one of the examples of this framing. For instance, Vegan Feministler and Abolisyonist Vegan Kadınlar establish their philosophy on exploitation animals and repression of woman. So, they express that sexism and speciesism is similar and woman and animal will liberate together. In food movement, urban women also concerns about what they consume. They are against the usage of any chemicals in crops or any modification in genetics of plants because of consuming healthy diet as a part of their lifestyle. However, they also concern about disappearance of local seeds and they organize seed exchange festivals so, they protect biodiversity.

The contribution of a study on women environmental activism from an ecofeminist perspective is important in terms of to understand and to provide applicable solutions for environmental degradation. To analyze on women and environmental activism is a part of intellectual process which can evolve practical process to realize their impact on environmental issues. Searching for solutions for environmental problems through ecofeminist approach is significant because environmental issues are gendered. So, both in our relations with nature and protection of nature women should be included in decision making process. To study women environmental activism is starting point to raise women's awareness about environmental issues. This thesis may contribute to the field of earth system science in terms of drawing attention to gender issue in environmental politics and economics and also sustainable development. When the issue of women and environment is discussed, it is seen that there is not a viewpoint in the plans and programs on the environment do not have gender equality. Moreover, there is lack of comprehensive study on this issue in the literature. There is no official data on women and environment issues. So, in order to include women in decision-making process and environmental

policies to study on relations with gender and environment issues may contribute to future research.

Women are influential in use of natural resources and also consumption so that, the engagement of women in sustainable development. The National Environmental Strategy Turkey, preservation of biodiversity, improvement of quality of life, sustainable use of natural resources and healthy and balanced environment are among future targets. In order to realize this vision, a right to equitable participation of women in to policy making process is vital. For this participation, it needs to promote scientific research on women and environmental issues. National and international research on this issue may collect to increase the number of studies women and nature. In addition, organizations working on environmental issues may produce data on the basis of gender issue. The number of women in the decision making process related to environmental politics needs to be increased. It requires creating awareness and sensitivity about women's vulnerability to damage by adverse environmental conditions. Awareness-raising activities and education for women in terms of the use and management of natural resources and also ecologic and sustainable consumption and production methods also need to increase.

There are some limitations in this study. For instance, literature on women environmental activists is limited. There is only a book on women and environment which is Emet Değirmenci's book namely *Kadınlar Ekolojik Dönüşümde*. In addition, there are a few articles on this issue. In foreign literature, there are many sources on ecofeminism. However, there is no any collection of researches on women's relations with nature and activism in Turkey. More importantly, the lack of data on gender in environmental issues is another limitation in this study. A field study may be conducted but I tried to draw general framework for women activism in environmental movement through an ecofeminist approach. Thus, it is difficult to analyze general features of women's environmental activism in Turkey only focus on a field study. As a further research, some framing issues like women's motivation for engagement in environmental movement, their network types can be investigate

through survey. In addition to women's discourse, issues related to framing may be questioned.

In conclusion, women's visibility in environmental movements seems to rise in Turkey. Their stance and discourses in movements are important in terms of both their and nature's existence far away from all kind of domination. Whether they sit in front of bulldozers to stop cutting down of trees or sharing an article on natural environment on blogs, women try to raise awareness environmental degradation in Turkey. Some of them define themselves as feminist or ecofeminist while others participate environmental movements because of only being woman who wants to protect Earth we live in. I think there is a space for women can make their voices heard in environmental issues in Turkey. If there is no enough space, they seem to prepare to create this space for their struggle for environmental conservation. So, being a woman, their struggle for environment is valuable.

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