

# The Future of Ecocriticism



The Future of Ecocriticism:  
New Horizons

Edited by

Serpil Oppermann, Ufuk Özdağ,  
Nevin Özkan and Scott Slovic

**CAMBRIDGE  
SCHOLARS**

---

P U B L I S H I N G

The Future of Ecocriticism:  
New Horizons,  
Edited by Serpil Oppermann, Ufuk Özdağ, Nevin Özkan and Scott Slovic

This book first published 2011

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

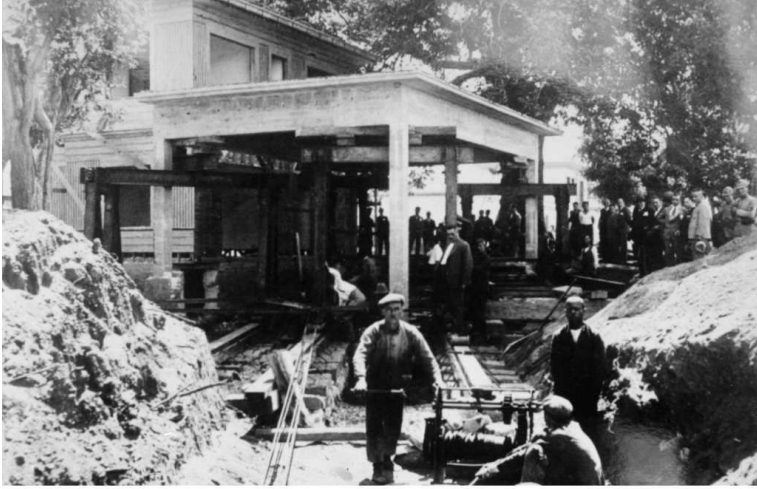
British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data  
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2011 by Serpil Oppermann, Ufuk Özdağ, Nevin Özkan and Scott Slovic and contributors

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-4438-2983-8, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-2983-0

*To the enduring memory of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk*



The historic “Walking Mansion” in Yalova, Turkey,  
during its move on tram rails, attended by Atatürk.  
*Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Library*

*A pivotal moment in world environmental history occurred in 1930 when Atatürk did not grant permission to cut the branches of a plane tree on account of their giving damage to a mansion close by. He famously stated, “Do not cut the branches, move the mansion instead!” Eighty years later, this real-life story is attracting people from around the world to Yalova, and the “Walking Mansion” has become a symbol for environmental protection.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments .....	xii
Introduction .....	1
New Connections in Ecocriticism	
Poems by Linda Hogan.....	9
The Singers	
Not So Very Long Ago	
Valley of the Artists	
<b>Part I: Ecocritical Theory</b>	
Chapter One.....	14
The Future of Ecocriticism: Present Currents	
<i>Serpil Oppermann</i>	
Chapter Two .....	30
Ecocritical Theory, Presentism, and Praxis	
<i>Simon C. Estok</i>	
Chapter Three .....	43
Global Warming Narratives: A Feminist Ecocritical Perspective	
<i>Greta Gaard</i>	
Chapter Four .....	65
The Wilderness of the Human Other: Italo Calvino's <i>The Watcher</i>	
and a Reflection on the Future of Ecocriticism	
<i>Serenella Iovino</i>	
Chapter Five .....	82
The Nomad as Theoretical and Literary Model of Ecological Inhabitation	
in a Globalised World	
<i>Axel Goodbody</i>	

Chapter Six .....	100
Humanizing <i>Moby Dick</i> : Redeeming Anthropomorphism <i>Elizabeth Schultz</i>	
<b>Part II: Turkish Perspectives</b>	
Chapter Seven.....	118
Keeping Alive the Memory of the Amik: Environmental Aesthetics and Land Restoration <i>Ufuk Özdağ</i>	
Chapter Eight.....	136
The Sea Connects It All: Yaman Koray’s Deep Ecology and Turkish Environmental Thought <i>Pınar Batur</i>	
Chapter Nine.....	150
Doruk’s Plight: Human/Non-Human Relations in Abbas Sayar’s <i>Yılkı Atı</i> <i>Nevin Özkan</i>	
Chapter Ten .....	159
The Garip (Strange) Movement: A Poetic Return to “Naturalness” or a Deep Ecological Reappraisal of “Nature”? <i>Gülşah Dindar</i>	
Chapter Eleven .....	172
Nature in Anatolian Mystic Poetry and Folk Songs <i>Zafer Parlak</i>	
Chapter Twelve .....	188
Perceptions of Nature in Turkish Poetry: A Historical Perspective <i>G. Gonca Gökalp Alpaslan</i>	
Chapter Thirteen.....	202
An Ecocritical Analysis of a Children’s Picture Book: <i>Yürüyen Çınar</i> (The Walking Plane Tree) <i>Ayfer Gürdal Ünal</i>	



Chapter Fourteen .....	209
The Statist Environment: Gazi Orman Çiftliği and the Kemalist Modernization Project <i>John VanderLippe</i>	
Chapter Fifteen .....	227
Turks and Birds <i>Jak den Exter</i>	
<b>Part III: Cultural Ecology and Postcolonial Ecocritical Reflections</b>	
Chapter Sixteen .....	244
(Un)mapping (Ir)rational Geographies: Linda Hogan’s Communicative Places <i>Carmen Flys Junquera</i>	
Chapter Seventeen .....	256
Ecopoetics: Ethics of Body, Cyborg Writing, and Excess <i>Peter I-Min Huang</i>	
Chapter Eighteen .....	268
The Ecological Function of Imaginative Texts: A Recent Model in Theory and Practice <i>Christina Caupert and Timo Müller</i>	
Chapter Nineteen .....	279
“Portraits of Things”: Cultural Ecology and Gertrude Stein’s Modernist Experiments in <i>Tender Buttons</i> <i>Erik Redling</i>	
Chapter Twenty .....	288
Self, Community and Nature: Jacob Ross’ <i>Pynter Bender</i> <i>Şebnem Toplu</i>	
Chapter Twenty One.....	300
Henry Rider Haggard: An Early Ecocritic? <i>Sinan Akilli</i>	
Chapter Twenty Two .....	310
Byron’s “Darkness”: Prophet of Climate Change Past and Future <i>A. Clare Brandabur</i>	

## **Part IV: Eco poetics and Ecological Narratives**

Chapter Twenty Three .....	324
“I Pull the Parapet's Poppy / to Stick Behind My Ear”: Nature in the Poetry of World War I <i>Huriye Reis</i>	
Chapter Twenty Four .....	337
The Politics of Disengagement: An Ecocritical Reading of Wang Wei <i>Guangchen Chen</i>	
Chapter Twenty Five .....	352
Ecocriticism, the Germinating Instance and the Four Landscapes of Nature Writing <i>Christian Hummelsund Voie</i>	
Chapter Twenty Six .....	362
‘Sacred’ ‘Ecology’: The Significance of Ancient/Aboriginal Consciousness during the Downfall of the West <i>Nevio Cristante</i>	
Chapter Twenty Seven.....	379
<i>The Stone Gods: The Story of a Repeating World</i> <i>Nurten Birlik</i>	
Chapter Twenty Eight.....	392
“Nature Is the Second God”: The Human Claim to Mastery over Nature and Its Negation in Medieval German Literature <i>Robert Steinke</i>	
Chapter Twenty Nine.....	407
Primo Levi’s Ecocritical Stance <i>Raniero Speelman</i>	
Chapter Thirty .....	420
Children’s Literature and the Ecocritics <i>Anthony Pavlik</i>	
Chapter Thirty One.....	436
Linking Foreign Language Education and the Environment <i>Uwe Küchler</i>	

Chapter Thirty Two .....	453
Nature's Response to Harmful Human Activities: Calvino and Buzzati's Views on the Environment <i>Elis Yıldırım</i>	
Conclusion.....	459
A Roundtable Discussion on Ecocriticism <i>Serpil Oppermann, Ufuk Özdağ, Nevin Özkan, and Scott Slovic</i>	
Contributors .....	480

## CHAPTER SEVEN

# KEEPING ALIVE THE MEMORY OF THE AMİK: ENVIRONMENTAL AESTHETICS AND LAND RESTORATION

UFUK ÖZDAĞ

There was once a large freshwater lake in the heart of Asia Minor where millions of waterbirds, including cranes, landed on its surrounding wetlands. This purest lake in the world, with its extensive wetlands, covered an area of 300 square kilometers. So it was referred to as “the sea” by the local people there. Healthy strands of floating aquatic plants in the crystalline waters played a vital role in the lake’s ecology and formed the base of its food web. This interconnected aquatic habitat was a refuge for numerous species of migratory birds along the African-Eurasian flyway. There were more than seventy villages in its environs, and all life seemed to live in harmony with its surroundings. The villages lay in the midst of prosperous farms where, in spring, white clouds of bloom drifted above the green fields... This lake does not exist today.

The fable-like surroundings described above echo the setting in *Silent Spring*,<sup>1</sup> the book that initiated modern environmental movement in the West. Unlike Rachel Carson, though, who is sounding an alarm through her fictionalized town, in “A Fable for Tomorrow,” to raise awareness about the hazards of pesticides, my own lines above are not about a fictitious lake. The lake in question is the Amik (Lake Antioch), once located north-east of the ancient city of Antioch (modern Antakya), in Hatay, Southern Turkey. The lake was drained in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s to open up new croplands. The unfortunate drainage of this freshwater lake in the centre of the Amik Plain, on the flyway used by 500,000 migratory birds annually,<sup>2</sup> initiated an environmental disaster that has yet to be overcome.

In the aftermath of the destruction of the lake and its surrounding wetlands, the Amik area is now Turkey’s wasteland.<sup>3</sup> Inhabitants of Antakya often observe flocks of migratory birds circling the skies, looking

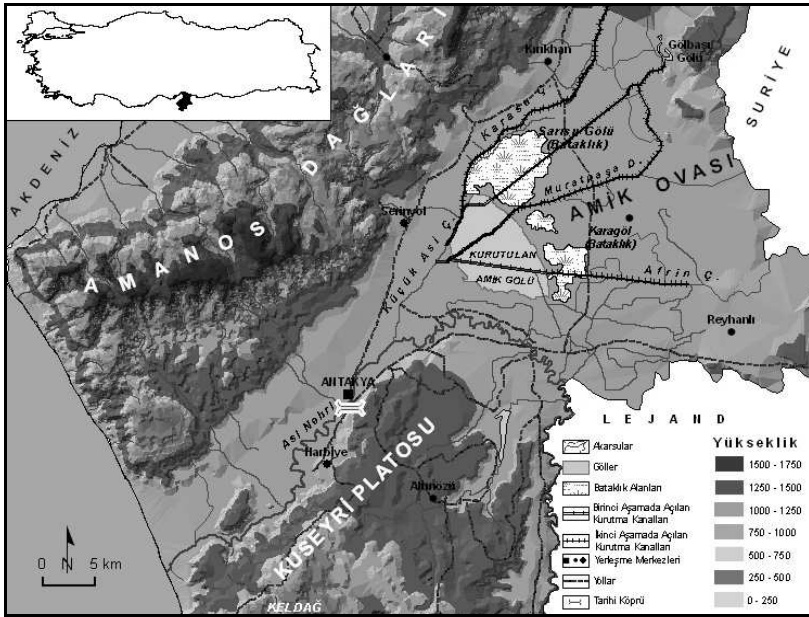


Figure 1. The Amik watershed, as wide as 300 square kilometers, before drainage. Korkmaz, “Amik Ovasında Kurak Devre ile Buğday, Pamuk ve Mısır Tarımı Arasındaki İlişki” [The Relationship between Drought and Wheat, Cotton, and Corn Cultivation in the Amik Plain] (60).

for their former habitats, then changing direction to alternative feeding sites on their route between Eurasia and Africa. The lake and its surrounding wetlands, once a key feeding station for numerous bird species,<sup>4</sup> were depleted within a time span of only 30 years with the consent of State Hydraulic Works.<sup>5</sup> The map above shows parts that were drained, a watershed that once was as wide as 300 square kilometers. Ironically, today, in the part of the lake that was once deepest, lies Hatay airport,<sup>6</sup> another tragic decision made for this area after the drainage of Lake Amik and its wetlands. The irony of it all is that the soil in the Amik plain which had been productive for a few decades after it was drained, is now unsuitable for farming.<sup>7</sup> It is important to note that drainage has completely destroyed local biodiversity and devastated local economies. Migratory birds are now seldom seen in this area. Upon drainage, the African darter (*Anhinga Rufa*) has lost its only habitat in Turkey.<sup>8</sup> Many freshwater plant species have become extinct, and fishing, once an important source of income for local people, has come to a tragic

end.<sup>9</sup> Without the lake and wetlands, the climate has also changed drastically. Many of the local people living in the villages in the Amik area who once led sustainable lives are in utter poverty.<sup>10</sup> Without the lake which once was a regulator of rain, the Hatay area has been frequently hit by floods.<sup>11</sup> In short, the land is “crying out for its water” and wishes to have its wetlands back.<sup>12</sup>



Figure 2. The Amik Lake before its drainage. Courtesy of İl Jandarma Komutanlığı archives, Hatay.

Now some crucial questions in the expanding discourse of ecocriticism, as it is leveled more than ever at “mov[ing] the notion of environment from abstraction to a tangible concern”<sup>13</sup>: How can literature or other forms of artistic expression help us to understand what we value about the Amik and how society should react to the current degradation of this place? Why should we, in Turkey, read literature about ecological restoration in other parts of the world in order to appreciate what is happening in our own country? Could this be an effective way of drawing attention to the once teeming wildlife, and interconnected streams and ponds of the Amik and its surrounding wetlands for possible future restoration? Land restoration is no longer a dream elsewhere in the

world,<sup>14</sup> so why not help rebuild the Amik and use it as an example to facilitate and encourage the restoration of other degraded landscapes in Turkey<sup>15</sup> and others across the world? With the advent of bioregionalism, the movement that emphasizes intimate connection to local bioregions, land restoration efforts are becoming fundamental in today's world. The alluring concept of "life-places"<sup>16</sup> (watersheds that sustain life within a bioregion) involves many people from many local groups, working to restore lands to their natural, once healthy, states. Embracing what I would like to call a restoration ecocriticism, i.e., land restoration as a topic within ecocritical studies, then, in the face of mounting environmental problems, continuing degradation, and loss of sustainability, may contribute to the pioneering work done in many local bioregions.<sup>17</sup> This essay, seeking an effective means of contributing to land restoration practices, brings to the fore the need to preserve the memory of landscapes and their wildlife, prior to their devastation. The memory of the once healthy landscapes described in literary works may serve as an advantage to local land managers and, ultimately, may inform planning decisions.

Framed in the backdrop of expressive environmental history, Aldo Leopold's "Marshland Elegy" is undoubtedly one of the most powerful nature essays to inspire the future restoration of the Amik. It is all the more powerful in that it evokes the memory of a healthy landscape prior to its destruction.<sup>18</sup> Written by the father of conservation, the essay has contributed to wetland restoration efforts in the US, and will undoubtedly inspire interest in land restoration practices across the world: In Wisconsin alone, many wetlands have been restored, perhaps largely owing to its influence.<sup>19</sup> As Leopold's biographer Curt Meine notes, "[w]hen the essay was first published in the magazine *American Forests* in 1937, neither its readers nor Leopold himself fully realized that the essay itself was an announcement. Through it, a new voice proclaimed its arrival. That voice would help transform the way we write and think about the natural world, and the human place within it" ("Giving Voice" 132). The essay is an elegy to a former crane habitat—in rural Wisconsin—that Leopold was deeply fond of. In this work, Leopold expresses poetically why protecting wetlands is a must for the *integrity, stability, and beauty* of an ecosystem and brings to the fore an aesthetic formula, directed at the "appreciation of landscapes usually considered ordinary or even worthless."<sup>20</sup> Simply told, the aesthetic formula concentrates on an "esthetic indicator species"<sup>21</sup> in an ecosystem—the *numenon*—as an effective way to extend moral consideration to its life-place. In Leopold scholar, Callicott's terms, "[The numena] supply the hallmark, the imprimatur to their respective ecological communities. If they are missing, then the rosy glow of perfect health is

absent from the landscape” (242). As Flader and Callicott explain, “Leopold adapted the concept of *noumena* from Ouspensky and used it to designate the vital signs, so to speak, of the health of land organisms, species without which ecosystems would lack wholeness and integrity” (10). For Leopold, the *numenon* should be coupled with the study of the regions’ ecological and evolutionary history. To initiate his discussion of the *numenon* in “Marshland Elegy,” Leopold names some of these “aesthetic indicator species” in his “Guacamaja.”<sup>22</sup> After stating that “[t]he grouse is the numenon of the north woods, the blue jay of the hickory groves, the whisky-jack of the muskegs, the pinonero of the juniper foothills,” Leopold names the thick-billed parrot [Guacamaja] as “the numenon of the Sierra Madre” (146-47). In Leopoldian aesthetics, the survival of these heavenly creatures ultimately depends on the expansion of aesthetic sensibilities to their life-places, which is a process made only possible by the study of their ecological and evolutionary histories. In “Guacamaja” Leopold speculates,

The physics of beauty is one department of natural science still in the Dark Ages. Not even the manipulators of bent space have tried to solve its equations. Everybody knows, for example, that the autumn landscape in the north woods is the land, plus a red maple, plus a ruffed grouse. In terms of conventional physics, the grouse represents only a millionth of either the mass or the energy of an acre. Yet subtract the grouse and the whole thing is dead. An enormous amount of some kind of motive power has been lost. (146)

In “Marshland Elegy,” Leopold puts his ideas on land aesthetics into practice. He emphasizes the sandhill crane<sup>23</sup> as the *numenon* of the Wisconsin marshland, and states, “[w]hen we hear [the crane’s] call we hear no mere bird. He is the symbol of our untamable past, of that incredible sweep of millennia which underlies and conditions the daily affairs of birds and men” (103). In Meine’s words, “[t]he value of the [crane] lay not in its appearance alone, but in its story as a species” (*Leopold* 330). Overall, the essay turns into a plea for an ecological and evolutionary understanding of land aesthetics which fosters a moral attitude toward nature. Leopold argues that we ought to conceive of the crane taking into account its place in the cosmic and natural environment, or its primordial connectedness with the world. One has to admire both cranes and crane marshes—the ecosystems with which they are interlocked. In this way, Aldo Leopold singles out cranes in this essay:

[O]ur appreciation of the crane grows with the slow unraveling of earthly history. His tribe ... stems out of the remote Eocene. The other members of



the fauna in which he originated are long since entombed within the hills. ... these cranes [have their being] not in the constricted present, but in the wider reaches of evolutionary time. Their annual return is the ticking of the geologic clock ... a crane marsh holds a paleontological patent of nobility, won in the march of aeons, and revocable only by shotgun. (102-03)



Figure 3. The Sandhill Cranes. Courtesy of Roger N. Clark

But, Leopold has a motive in bringing cranes to the fore. He actually had an aesthetics/ethics connection in mind. Since he thought aesthetic valuing is embedded in our relationships with nature, he was thinking about ways in which one could have a good eye for wild places. He reasoned it was looking in an intelligent way, and then being able to develop an educated eye for such places. Having an educated eye would better enable us to empathize with other beings and this would, in turn, motivate moral action. Since in his philosophy he grounded ethics in aesthetics, he was thinking of ways to make it possible to perceive the land without utilitarian considerations. In “Marshland Elegy,” Leopold states, “[o]ur ability to perceive quality in nature begins, as in art, with the pretty.” This is another way of describing that which is pleasing to the eye. Then he asks us to consider the pleasing object within a larger picture—its ecosystem. Leopold goes on to say, “[i]t expands through successive stages of the beautiful to values as yet uncaptured by language. The quality of cranes lies, I think, in this higher gamut, as yet beyond the reach of words” (102).

To clarify Leopold’s aesthetic vision, because his aim is to promote aesthetic appreciation and place-attachment to particularly “neglected

natural environments,”<sup>24</sup> such as a crane marsh, he starts out with a pictorial object, the cranes, to whose beauty we have an innate sense of taste. From there he arrives at pictorially unsatisfactory parts of nature, which ultimately require a cognitive, science based approach to aesthetics.<sup>25</sup> These merge, in turn, leading to a “disinterested” look for the entire ecosystem: a way of perceiving the ecosystem entirely free of utilitarian and economic concerns.

For Leopold, the “retreating wetlands” were ultimately a problem of perception. He starts out with the traditional criteria of beauty, then he merges it with land health and sustainability. Delight in the ecosystem—i.e., the aesthetic experience of the ecosystem—is a result of a combination of intellect and the senses (interaction of the perceiving mind and the wild place), and it is this “*higher gamut*” that Leopold is talking about, which is “*as yet beyond the reach of words.*” This Leopoldian aesthetic experience, a fusion of the sensuous and intellectual, goes beyond the senses, giving delight to the mind.<sup>26</sup> Mind and senses are united in appreciating the *integrity*, *stability*, and *beauty* of the natural world. But it is the pleasing object—the crane—that initiates the process of aesthetic judgment. In “Marshland Elegy,” then, Leopold’s scientific knowledge of evolutionary biology and ecology merges with his deep feeling for cranes in the description of the great marsh.

In “Marshland Elegy,” Leopold makes a plea for a fusion of knowledge and beauty, science and art, to build receptivity for wetlands. Within this very fusion of cognitive and non-cognitive modals in “Marshland Elegy,” he gives expression to a land aesthetic that celebrates not only the natural beauty of the *numenon*, but also the evolutionary history and ecological relationships of its life-place. As a matter of fact, the bulk of Leopold’s writing suggests that he wanted a fusion of the cognitive and the sensuous modals to guide our aesthetic appreciation of nature.<sup>27</sup> Thus, through this connection, Leopold brings about a revolution in the aesthetic appreciation of “unscenic” wetlands.<sup>28</sup> This powerful aesthetic formula, narrated against a backdrop of the memory of a wetland that once held “a paleontological patent of nobility,” stimulated a great deal of land restoration in the West and helped to recover the biodiversity that once existed.<sup>29</sup>

Echoing the wetlands in Wisconsin that were drained in the past, are many regions in the Turkish landscape that have been seriously degraded and urgently await revitalization. There is however, a particular need to restore the Amik, once the feeding ground of hundreds of thousands of waterbirds in the African-Eurasian flyway.<sup>30</sup>



Figure 4. The African-Eurasian Flyway. Atmaca, “Kuş Göçü ve Gözlemciliği” [Bird Migration and Bird Watching] (17).

In Amik, borrowing words from “Marshland Elegy,” “the Arcadian age for marsh dwellers” came to a tragic end when the landlords “envisaged farms not only around, but in the marsh. An epidemic of ditch-digging and land-booming set in. The marsh was gridironed with drainage canals, speckled with new fields and farmsteads.”<sup>31</sup> Just as it happened in the Wisconsin wetlands, the desiccation of Lake Amik and the wide expanses of its wetlands was against ecosystem laws in this region, and has had tragic consequences for both human and non-human inhabitants of the bioregion as a whole. “Marshland Elegy,” with a unified approach to arts and sciences, guides us in fostering aesthetic attraction and place-attachment to such an injured bioregion. In the light of Leopoldian aesthetics, then, the Amik watershed could be regained by re-membling the “numenon,” as well as its life-place. There is no question that the loving memory of the cranes that once arrived in large flocks in the Amik is still alive. In interviews with elderly people currently living in this area, grief is expressed for the lost cranes. And there is no question, the memory of cranes is still alive in the Turkish cultural and literary imagination.<sup>32</sup> Today, as in the past, the crane is considered to be a sacred bird in Turkey.

The reason for an abundance of crane motifs in Turkish mythology, folklore and folk songs is the simple fact that once numerous expanses of wetlands lay in this geographical area, visited during migration by cranes flying at astonishing heights.<sup>33</sup> And yet, despite these pervasive crane images, one cannot assert that there is a proper perception of these legendary birds. Most species of cranes are under threat today<sup>34</sup> around the world, as well as in Turkey,<sup>35</sup> where they are still celebrated in performances of the crane dance. It seems that it was not enough to honor the cranes for their beauty, and dismiss their life-place.

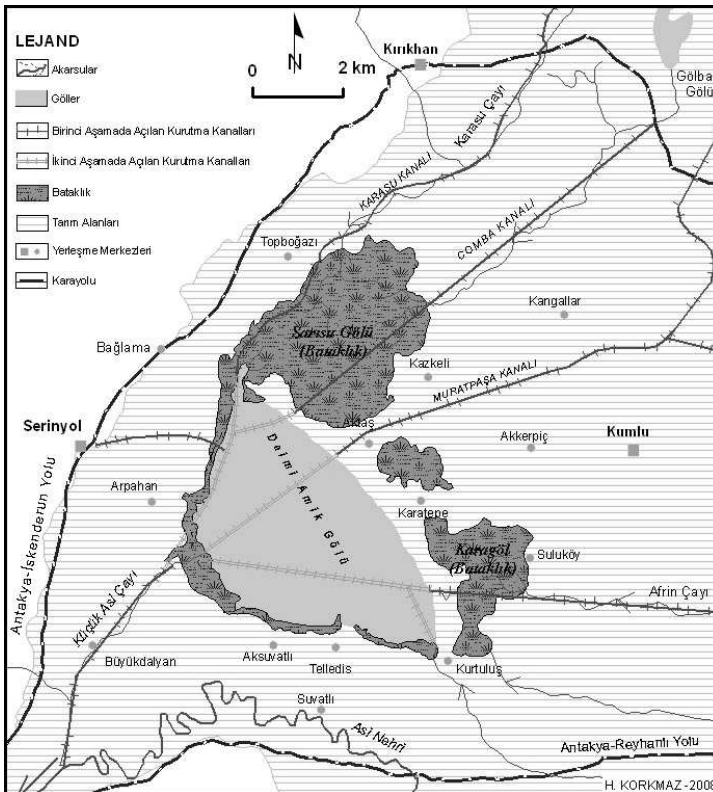


Figure 5. Lake Amik and drying works. Korkmaz and Gürbüz, “Amik Gölü’nün Kültürel Ekolojisi” [Cultural Ecology of Lake Amik] (7).

In a quest for possible texts with expansive understanding of land aesthetics—texts celebrating both the aesthetic indicator species and their

life-place—one may encounter a leading folk poet, Karacaoğlan,<sup>36</sup> in the Turkish literary heritage. Karacaoğlan's passion for nature in his *türkü*<sup>37</sup> entitled "Bir Çift Turna Uçurdum" [I Let Fly a Pair of Cranes], immortalizes the cranes' habitats in Anatolia, celebrating not only their heavenly migration, but also their life-places:

Beyond Maraş, rise the Gavur Mountains  
I should Mount the Erciyas, and the Gesibağları  
The Turkmen lords are the spear bearers  
Land, cranes, on the Saçsuna waters

Fly from the Saçsuna waters, land on the Gürün  
Keep away from the inlets, you won't be needing  
Give my salutations to the Elbistan lords  
Land, cranes, on the Amik Plain<sup>38</sup>

In this poem, Karacaoğlan's cranes land on Anatolia's once richest wetlands—found in the plains of Erzurum (Erzurum Ovası), Aşkale, Kazova, Sarız (Sultan Sazlığı), Kızlar Kalesi, Maraş, Gürün, Amik, Reyhanlı, to name a few<sup>39</sup>--the crane migration routes within the African-Eurasian flyway. This very fact, apart from revealing Karacaoğlan's affection for cranes, shows that he had expanded his aesthetic sensibilities to the heavenly cranes' life-place, if not to their evolutionary history.

A lack of a Leopoldian understanding of perception hinders the appreciation of the remaining wetlands in Turkey and around the world today, and leads to the exploitation of natural habitats, no matter how sincerely people's stories describe their reverence for cranes, no matter how sacred the cranes are perceived in the cultural and literary imagination. It is little wonder that no one cares about the worldwide destruction of wetlands. It is no wonder that many wetlands in Turkey were drained in the second half of the 20th century, all in the mindless pursuit of creating new croplands. All of them are ecological tragedies, perpetrated on an unprecedented scale.

Eighty percent of Turkey's wetlands are under threat today, as are the remaining migrating cranes and other waterbird species who arrive there. In September 2008, over 160 representatives of both governmental and nongovernmental organizations, as well as experts on waterbirds from eighty countries met in Antananarivo, Madagascar to discuss the urgent conservation responses that were necessary to reverse the declines of many migratory waterbird species along the African-Eurasian flyways.<sup>40</sup> A study was presented which showed a decline of forty one percent in migratory waterbird populations along their main migration routes on the African-

Eurasian flyway. The main cause for the declining numbers of waterbirds was determined to be the destruction and exploitation of wetlands, driven largely by poorly-planned economic development. I do not think the Amik tragedy came to the fore in this meeting. If it had, possibly the restoration of the Amik wetlands would have been proposed, with aid from some future international cooperation.<sup>41</sup> Delegates in this meeting discussed urgent conservation responses—how to accommodate ourselves to the needs of these birds, how best to restore their status. I would like to suggest that one of the best ways to restore their status would be to follow the lead of Leopold and his formula for place-attachment, and contribute to the aesthetic appreciation of “unscenic” wetlands by attaching the emotional component of literature to a solid cognitive understanding of ecosystems. To promote high level sensitivity and affection for our Amik, then, whose interconnected systems have been disrupted for so long, and to make a dream come true, let us start out with the enduring memory of our beloved cranes that once arrived here and expand our aesthetic sensibilities to their vanished homes.

*Acknowledgments: I wish to express my sincere thanks to Professor Sancar Ozaner of Abant İzzet Baysal University and Associate Professor Yaşar Ergün of Mustafa Kemal University, Turkey. Had they not introduced me to a TÜBİTAK project to take part as a lecturer in the “Ecology Based Outdoor Environmental Training Programs” in the Amik area, I would not have written this essay.*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Rachel Carson in “A Fable for Tomorrow,” the first chapter in *Silent Spring* (1-3), describes an imaginary rural town with singing springs, and its eventual downfall when it encountered the effects of DDT.

<sup>2</sup> See Atmaca “Kuş Göçü ve Gözlemciliği” [Bird Migration and Bird Watching] (259).

<sup>3</sup> As quoted in Korkmaz and Gürbüz, “Amik Gölü’nün Kültürel Ekolojisi” [Cultural Ecology of Lake Amik], “[t]he conception, until the 1960s, that wetlands were worthless and redundant led to the drainage of many of them. Starting from the mid 1960s, the functioning of wetlands and their significance for ecosystems were fully understood, and from 1980s onward it was deemed necessary not to drain the wetlands. In the 1990s, the cultural significance of wetlands was fully apprehended, and as was the case in many countries, the drainage of wetlands was legally banned in Turkey, as well” (4). All translations into English in this essay are my own.

<sup>4</sup> Prior to drainage, 250 species of birds were observed in the Amik area. Quoted in Korkmaz, “Antakya-Kahramanmaraş Grabenindeki Sulak Alanların—Amik Gölü, Emen Gölü ve Gavur Gölü Bataklığı—Dünü, Bugünü ve Geleceği” [The Past,

Present, and Future of the Wetlands in the Antakya-Kahramanmaraş Graben Area: Amik Lake, Emen Lake, and Gavur Lake Marshes] (40).

<sup>5</sup> Turkey has changed its approach to wetlands and is currently a party to the international Ramsar Convention that aims at the protection of wetlands. For detailed information see, Korkmaz, “Antakya-Kahramanmaraş Graben Alanında Kurutulan Sulak Alanların—Amik Gölü, Emen Gölü ve Gavur Gölü Bataklığı—Modellerinin Oluşturulması” [The Constitution of Modals of the Dried Wetlands—Amik Lake, Emen Lake, and Gavur Lake Swamp—in the Antakya-Kahramanmaraş Graben Area] (20-21).

<sup>6</sup> The airport has been under operation since 2007. Many local people protest the airport, with its *metallic birds* landing on the Amik plain, saying it is on the bird flyway. Ozaner, in “Interview with Sancar Ozaner by Ismail Zubari,” calls for the restoration of the Amik Lake and its surrounding wetlands, saying “a courageous project to remove the airport will be one in accordance with nature’s laws in this area,” *Hatay Gazetesi*, 17 October 2006. See the photo, “A view of the construction of Hatay airport on the ground of desiccated Lake Amik,” in Çalışkan, “Human-Induced Wetland Degradation” (7).

<sup>7</sup> For a depleted soil quality in the Amik area, see Korkmaz, “Antakya-Kahramanmaraş Graben Alanında Kurutulan Sulak Alanların—Amik Gölü, Emen Gölü ve Gavur Gölü Bataklığı—Modellerinin Oluşturulması” [The Constitution of Modals of the Dried Wetlands—Amik Lake, Emen Lake, and Gavur Lake Swamp—in the Antakya-Kahramanmaraş Graben Area] (28-29).

<sup>8</sup> For information on the darter, “Anhinga Rufa,” and other rare bird species in this area, prior to drainage, see Çalışkan, “Human-Induced Wetland Degradation: A Case Study of Lake Amik” (7).

<sup>9</sup> Korkmaz, in “The Past, Present, and Future of the Wetlands in the Antakya-Kahramanmaraş Graben Area: Amik Lake, Emen Lake, and Gavur Lake Marshes” reveals, “as much as 80 tons of eel, 100-150 tons of North African catfish, and 200 tons of carp were caught on average in the Amik lake annually. The fish thus hunted abundantly, apart from meeting the needs of the local people, were exported to Middle Eastern and European countries” (40-41).

<sup>10</sup> Çalışkan reveals, “[t]here was a population of around fifty thousand people in around seventy villages around the lake in the 1950s. The main economic activities of the population here were stock raising, agriculture, fishing, reed harvesting and hunting” (3).

<sup>11</sup> The city of Antakya is frequently flooded, and Hatay Airport itself, is often under water.

<sup>12</sup> See Ozaner, “Interview with Sancar Ozaner by Ismail Zubari,” where Ozaner states, “[a]n area determined as a wetland by techtonics cannot be used as a cropland, for the area will always cry out for its water.” 17 October 2006.

<sup>13</sup> See Lawrence Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* (29), where Buell is citing Terrell Dixon’s words, “move the notion of environment from abstraction to a tangible concern” in “Inculcating Wildness: Ecomposition, Nature Writing, and the Regreening of the American Suburb.”

<sup>14</sup> See [http://www.evergladesplan.org/about/why\\_restore\\_pt\\_01.aspx](http://www.evergladesplan.org/about/why_restore_pt_01.aspx)

for information on the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). Also see the Wetlands Reserve Program in the US

(<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/wrp/>) within the Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), "a voluntary program offering landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property." According to the website information, The Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, "with voluntary participation by landowners and the cooperation of many partners, has restored and protected more than one million acres of wetlands and associated uplands through the WRP."

<sup>15</sup> Thirty-eight wetlands were drained in Turkey, in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, to eradicate malaria, and to open up new croplands.

<sup>16</sup> I am borrowing the term, "life-place" from Peter Berg's title, *Discovering your Life-Place: A First Bioregional Workbook*, and Robert L. Thayer's title, *LifePlace: Bioregional Thought and Practice*.

<sup>17</sup> As human modification of the natural world puts more pressure into our lives, the need, for the literary scholar, to delve deeper into the interconnections between the text and the physical environment intensifies: It becomes ever more meaningful, on the part of the practitioners of literary criticism, to study the physical world, and to connect arts and sciences across many disciplines. Back in 1996, the ecocritic Cheryll Glotfelty, in her breakthrough essay, "Literary Studies in an Age of Environmental Crises," had underlined the "discrepancy between current events and the preoccupations of the literary profession" and had given expression to ideas that radically changed the direction of literary studies. Glotfelty had revealed that the English profession had not responded, yet, to "the most pressing contemporary issue of all, namely, the global environmental crisis" (xv). The English profession, in the years following this remark, has fully responded to the call: currently, literary activists across the globe play an enduring role in raising environmental awareness, and in contributing to the improvement of seriously degraded environments.

<sup>18</sup> See "Marshland Elegy" in *A Sand County Almanac* (101-08). For an extensive study of "Marshland Elegy," see Curt Meine, "Giving Voice to Concern" in *Correction Lines: Essays on Land, Leopold, and Conservation* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2004).

<sup>19</sup> For Leopold's restoration legacy, see Zedler, "The Continuing Challenge of Restoration" (116-26). Also see information on Wisconsin Wetlands Association at <http://www.wisconsinwetlands.org/restoration.htm>

<sup>20</sup> Kinsey, in "Through Successive Stages of the Beautiful," states, "Leopold's most important contribution to esthetics may be in his appreciation of landscapes usually considered ordinary or even worthless" (280).

<sup>21</sup> J. Baird Callicott, proposes the term, "aesthetic indicator species" for the term, "numenon." See Callicott, *In Defense of the Land Ethic* (242).

<sup>22</sup> See "Guacamaja" in *A Sand County Almanac* (146-49).

<sup>23</sup> For Leopold's interest in the Sandhill cranes, see Meine, *Aldo Leopold: His Life and Work* (330-31). Also see Meine, "Giving Voice to Concern," where Meine states, "By the mid-1930s the sandhill crane had been extirpated from large portions of its former range in the United States after decades of indiscriminate



hunting, wetland destruction, and conversion of its upland habitats to agriculture. Wisconsin's sandhill cranes were almost gone; Leopold and his students estimated that only about fifty breeding birds were left in the state" (133).

<sup>24</sup> Callicott states, "Leopold's land aesthetic ... recognizes the beauty of neglected natural environments. It emphasizes less the directly visible, scenic aspects of nature and more the conceptual—diversity, complexity, species rarity, species interactions, nativity, phylogenetic antiquity—the aspects of nature revealed by evolutionary and ecological natural history" (240).

<sup>25</sup> Whereas Allen Carlson, in "Nature, Aesthetic Judgment, and Objectivity," argues for scientific knowledge for the aesthetic appreciation of nature, and underlines Leopold's "knowledge and experience of the naturalist" (25), Leopold's land aesthetic depends on the appreciation of nature informed by both cognitive and non-cognitive modals.

<sup>26</sup> Leopold, in his essay "Conservation Esthetic," has famously stated, "[e]cological science has wrought a change in the mental eye" (291).

<sup>27</sup> See the essay "Aldo Leopold: On the Path Toward Unity of Knowledge" by Nina Leopold Bradley.

<sup>28</sup> I borrow the term "unscenic" from Yuriko Saito in "The Aesthetics of Unscenic Nature." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 56:2 (Spring 1998). In this article, Saito rightly draws attention to Leopold's words in *A Sand County Almanac* related to the unscenic. Leopold in *Almanac*, stated, "American conservation is ... still concerned for the most part with show pieces" (193), "There are those who are willing to be herded in droves through 'scenic' places; who find mountains grand if they be proper mountains with waterfalls, cliffs, and lakes. To such the Kansas plains are tedious. ... In country, as in people, a plain exterior often conceals hidden riches, to perceive which requires much living in and with" (179-80). As Yuriko Saito argues, "[r]evolution in the aesthetics of nature often takes place when people start appreciating the parts of nature formerly regarded as aesthetically negative.... The picturesque...approach to nature has...encouraged us to look for and appreciate primarily the *scenically* interesting and beautiful parts of our environment. As a result those environments devoid of effective pictorial composition, excitement, or amusement (that is, those not worthy of being represented in a picture) are considered lacking in aesthetic values" (101).

<sup>29</sup> Wisconsin's Sandhill cranes, once "only about fifty breeding birds ... in the state" (Meine, "Giving Voice to Concern" (133)), are no longer threatened species following land restoration efforts.

<sup>30</sup> As Atmaca states, in spite of the rapid decline in bird species around the world, still around 450 bird species are observed in the Turkish skies (17). Atmaca's two year long research in Gölbaşı, Asi River, and Afrin Stream, however, reveals the drastic decline in the number of bird species in the Amik area; a total number of 250 bird species went down to 70. See <http://www.cnnturk.com/2008/turkiye/07/13/kuslar.amik.ovasini.terkedyor/48038.1.0/index.html>

<sup>31</sup> The drainage of Lake Amik was quite a complicated process. As Korkmaz and Gürbüz explain in "Amik Gölü'nün Kültürel Ekolojisi" [Cultural Ecology of Lake

Amik], originally a number of streams—Karasu, Afrin, Muratpaşa, Topboğazı, Bakras, Bekirli, Karaali, Bedirge, Harim, Sarısu, and Kızılark—were feeding the lake. The waters from these streams, through a network of drainage canals, were forced into the Asi River, which led to the gradual drainage of the entire lake (6-10). The first phase of the drainage was the drainage of the wetlands surrounding Lake Amik with four major drainage canals—Karasu, Comba, Muratpaşa, and Afrin canals. The second phase was the drainage of the actual Lake Amik (See Figure 5). Non-native eucalyptus trees also helped speed up the process of draining the entire watershed.

<sup>32</sup> For a revealing study of cranes in Turkish literature, see Şükrü Elçin, “Türk Halk Edebiyatında Turna Motifi” [Crane Motif in Turkish Folk Literature] (75-90).

<sup>33</sup> Cranes reach over a mile above the earth’s surface. See Peter Matthiessen, *The Birds of Heaven: Travels with Cranes* (3).

<sup>34</sup> As Archibald and Harris reveal, “[t]oday eleven of the fifteen species may fairly be considered threatened or endangered” (xii).

<sup>35</sup> Among the fifteen species of cranes in the world, the most widely known, in Turkey, are the Eurasian Crane and the Demoiselle Crane, and they are highly threatened. Dr. George Archibald, the co-founder of the International Crane Foundation states, “Two of the four species of cranes that are not threatened when considered within their wide ranges, are the two species native to Turkey—the Eurasian Crane (*Grus grus*) and the Demoiselle Crane (*Anthropoides virgo*). The Eurasian Crane benefits from its wide distribution in Europe and Asia, with birds wintering in north Africa, the Middle East, and India. The Demoiselle Crane breeds exclusively in Asia and winters in northeast Africa and India. Migrating flocks of both species cross Turkey in spring and autumn. And small numbers of both species actually breed in Turkey in spring and summer. Unfortunately, the nesting populations in Turkey of both the Eurasian and the Demoiselle Crane are extremely low. Turkish ornithologists estimate that as few as a dozen pairs of Eurasian Cranes and as few as twelve individual Demoiselle Cranes occur in Turkey, with none confirmed nesting for several years.” Personal communication, August 1, 2010.

<sup>36</sup> Karacaoğlan, a leading folk poet who lived in the 17th century in the Çukurova region of Southern Turkey, was from a Turkmen tribe. From the Middle East to the Balkans, within the Turkic world, he is still the most widely known Turkish bard, and his folk songs are still being sung.

<sup>37</sup> The term means “of the Turk.” A *türkü* is a Turkish folk song.

<sup>38</sup> The English translation of these two stanzas from the *türkü* “Bir Çift Turna Uçurdum” are my own. See the original poem in eleven stanzas (in Turkish) in Alpay Kabacalı, ed. *Sarı Defterdekiler: Yaşar Kemal* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2002) (50-51).

<sup>39</sup> The wetlands mentioned in this *türkü* have all been drained. According to various sources, the total area of the drained wetlands in Turkey, since 1950s, is as large as the Marmara Sea (1.250.000 ha).

<sup>40</sup> This 4th meeting of the Parties (MOP-4) to the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) highlighted continuing declines of many waterbird species in the African-Eurasian Flyway. The African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement,

or AEWa is a United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) backed treaty dedicated to the protection of 235 species of waterbirds which migrate along the African-Eurasian Flyways. See

[http://www.unep-aewa.org/meetings/eN/mop/mop4\\_docs/mop4.htm](http://www.unep-aewa.org/meetings/eN/mop/mop4_docs/mop4.htm)

<sup>41</sup> So far, a wetland restoration plan has not been proposed for this area. But, there is a project now, under consideration, to revive the spirit of an extinct ecosystem in a nearby small lake (Gölbaşı Lake): Korkmaz's proposal in "Antakya-Kahramanmaraş Graben Alanında Kurutulan Sulak Alanların (Amik Gölü, Emen Gölü ve Gavur Gölü Bataklığı) Modellerinin Oluşturulması" [The Constitution of Modals of the Dried Wetlands—Amik Lake, Emen Lake, and Gavur Lake Swamp—in the Antakya-Kahramanmaraş Graben Area] is a first attempt in this respect. Korkmaz, in his essay, proposes functional small size modals of the drained wetlands. As Korkmaz argues, to perpetuate the once Amik Lake, it is possible to create a replica of the Amik (796 ha) in Gölbaşı Lake that is a last remaining body of water connected to the Amik. See the location of Gölbaşı Lake, to the North of Amik, in Figure 1. And see the photo of the actual Gölbaşı Lake in Korkmaz, "Antakya-Kahramanmaraş Graben Alanında Kurutulan Sulak Alanların (Amik Gölü, Emen Gölü ve Gavur Gölü Bataklığı) Modellerinin Oluşturulması [The Constitution of Modals of the Dried Wetlands—Amik Lake, Emen Lake, and Gavur Lake Swamp—in the Antakya-Kahramanmaraş Graben Area] (33).

## Works Cited

- Archibald, George, and James Harris. "Foreword." Peter Matthiessen. *The Birds of Heaven: Travels with Cranes*. New York: North Point P, 2003. xi-xii.
- Atmaca, Mustafa. "Kuş Göçü ve Gözlemciliği." [Bird Migration and Bird Watching]. *Hatay'da On Sıcak Gün* [Ten Hot Days in Hatay]. Ed. Yaşar Ergün. Antakya, Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi. Yayın no 19. 17-21.
- Bradley, Nina Leopold. "Aldo Leopold: On the Path Toward Unity of Knowledge." *Aldo Leopold's Land Ethic: A Legacy for Public Land Managers*. Ed. Kelley Wadsworth, Hannah Kirchner, and Jeremy Higgins. St. Paul, MN: Pheasants Forever, 2000.
- Buell, Lawrence. *The Future of Environmental Criticism: Environmental Crisis and Literary Imagination*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005.
- Callicott, Baird J. *In Defense of the Land Ethic: Essays in Environmental Philosophy*. Albany: SUNY P, 1989.
- Carlson, Allen. "Nature, Aesthetic Judgment, and Objectivity." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 40 (1981): 15-27.
- Carson, Rachel. *Silent Spring*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987.
- Çalışkan, Vedat. "Human-Induced Wetland Degradation: A Case Study of Lake Amik (Southern Turkey)." Third International Conference on

- Water Observation and Information System for Decision Support, BALWOIS 2008. Ohrid, Macedonia.  
<[http://balwois.com/balwois/administration/full\\_paper/ffp-1144.pdf](http://balwois.com/balwois/administration/full_paper/ffp-1144.pdf)>.
- Elçin, Şükrü. "Türk Halk Edebiyatında Turna Motifi" [Crane Motif in Turkish Folk Literature]. *Türk Edebiyatında Tabiat* [Nature in Turkish Literature]. Ed. Şükrü Elçin. Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Yayını-Sayı 66, 1993. 75-90.
- Flader, Susan L., and J. Baird Callicott, eds. *The River of the Mother of God and Other Essays by Aldo Leopold*. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1991.
- Glotfelty, Cheryll. "Literary Studies in an Age of Environmental Crisis." *The Ecocriticism Reader*. Ed. Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm. Athens: U of Georgia P, 1996. xv-xxxvii.
- Karacaoğlan. "Bir Çift Turna Uçurdum" [I Let Fly a Pair of Cranes] in *Sarı Defterdekiler: Yaşar Kemal*. Ed. Alpay Kabacalı. İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2002. 50-51.
- Kinsey, Joni L. "Through Successive Stages of the Beautiful." *The Essential Aldo Leopold: Quotations and Commentaries*. Ed. Curt Meine and Richard L. Knight. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1999. 279-95.
- Korkmaz, Hüseyin and Mehmet Gürbüz. "Amik Gölünün Kültürel Ekolojisi" [Cultural Ecology of Lake Amik]. *Marmara Coğrafya Dergisi* 17 (January 2008): 1-26.
- Korkmaz, Hüseyin. "Antakya-Kahramanmaraş Grabenindeki Sulak Alanların--Amik Gölü, Emen Gölü ve Gavur Gölü Bataklığı--Dünü, Bugünü ve Geleceği" [The Past, Present, and Future of the Wetlands in the Antakya-Kahramanmaraş Graben Area: Amik Lake, Emen Lake, and Gavur Lake Marshes]. *Ekolojik Okur Yazarlık: Sürdürülebilir Bir Dünya İçin Amanoslar'da Doğa Eğitimi* [Ecological Literacy: Outdoor Nature Education at Amanoslar for a Sustainable World]. Ed. Yaşar Ergün, et al. Hatay: Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2008, 35-48.
- . "Antakya-Kahramanmaraş Graben Alanında Kurutulan Sulak Alanların-Amik Gölü, Emen Gölü ve Gavur Gölü Bataklığı-Modellerinin Oluşturulması" [The Constitution of Modals of the Dried Wetlands—Amik Lake, Emen Lake, and Gavur Lake Swamp—in the Antakya-Kahramanmaraş Graben Area]. *Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 5.9 (2008): 19-37.
- . "Amik Ovasında Kurak Devre ile Buğday, Pamuk ve Mısır Tarımı Arasındaki İlişki" [The Relationship between Drought and Wheat,

- Cotton, and Corn Cultivation in the Amik Plain]. *Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 6.11 (2009): 56–68.
- Leopold, Aldo. *A Sand County Almanac: With Essays on Conservation from Round River*. 1949. New York: Ballantine, 1970.
- Matthiessen, Peter. *The Birds of Heaven: Travels With Cranes*. New York: North Point P, 2003.
- Meine, Curt. *Aldo Leopold: His Life and Work*. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1988.
- . “Giving Voice to Concern” in *Correction Lines: Essays on Land, Leopold, and Conservation*. Washington, DC: Island P, 2004.
- Ozoner, Sancar. “Doç. Dr. Sancar Ozaner’le Röportaj” [Interview with Sancar Ozaner by Ismail Zubari]. *Hatay Gazetesi*. 17-31 October 2006.
- Saito, Yuriko. “The Aesthetics of Unscenic Nature.” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*. 56:2 (Spring 1998): 101-11.
- Zedler, Joy B. “The Continuing Challenge of Restoration.” *The Essential Aldo Leopold: Quotations and Commentaries*. Ed. Curt Meine and Richard L. Knight. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1999. 116-26.