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AN ECOFEMINIST APPROACH ON TURKISH AND

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AN ECOFEMINIST APPROACH  
ON TURKISH AND AMERICAN  
ANIMATIONS

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by

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Communication and Design

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AN ECOFEMINIST APPROACH ON TURKISH AND AMERICAN  
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The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences

of

İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by

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COMMUNICATION AND DESIGN  
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May 2022

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## ABSTRACT

# AN ECOFEMINIST APPROACH ON TURKISH AND AMERICAN ANIMATIONS

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M.A., in Media and Visual Studies

Supervisor:

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This thesis aims to analyze and compare four Turkish and four American animations from an ecofeminist perspective. The selected animations from Turkey are *Kral Şakir Cumburlop* (2021), *Pırıl* (2019-), *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe* (2019), *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* (2016) while the animations from the US are *Frozen* (2013), *Avatar: The Last Airbender* (2005-2008), *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* (2018-2020), *Invincible* (2021-). Each selected animation is given an age range for the purposes of this research and these ranges indicate which animation pair is compared in terms of ecofeminism concepts. Close reading method is conducted to each animated work with the help of the Bechdel Test as well as the Maisy Test. Regardless of its location or which platform it gets aired, animations have been an important part of people's entertainment. A concept as relevant and needed as ecofeminism should be researched within animation and its' related concepts in order to show animation audiences the feminist and ecologically positive world views.

**Keywords:** Animation, Ecofeminism, The Bechdel Test, The Maisy Test, Kral Şakir Cumburlop, Pırıl, Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe, Kötü Kedi Şerafettin, Frozen, Avatar: The Last Airbender, She-Ra and the Princesses of Power, Invincible

## ÖZET

### TÜRK VE AMERİKAN ANİMASYONLARINA EKOFEMİNİST BİR

### YAKLAŞIM

Irmak Dünder

Yüksek Lisans, Medya ve Görsel Çalışmalar

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Bu tez, dört Türk ve dört Amerikan animasyon eserini ekofeminist bir bakış açısıyla analiz etmeyi ve karşılaştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Seçilmiş Türk animasyonları *Kral Şakir Cumburlop* (2021), *Pırıl* (2019-), *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe* (2019), *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* (2016), iken, seçilmiş ABD animasyonları *Karlar Ülkesi* (2013), *Avatar: Son Hava Bükücü* (2005-2008), *She-Ra ve Güç Prensesleri* (2018-2020), *Yenilmez* (2021-) olmuştur. Bu araştırmanın amaçları doğrultusunda seçilen her animasyona bir yaş aralığı verilmiştir ve bu aralıklar ekofeminizm kavramları açısından hangi animasyon çiftinin karşılaştırıldığını göstermektedir. Bechdel Testi ve Maisy Testi yardımıyla her animasyonlu çalışmaya yakın okuma yöntemi uygulanmaktadır. Konumu veya hangi platformda yayınlandığına bakılmaksızın, animasyonlar insanların eğlenmelerini sağlayan önemli araçlardır. Animasyon izleyicilerine feminist ve ekolojik olarak olumlu dünya görüşlerini göstermek için ekofeminizm kadar güncel ve ihtiyaç duyulan bir kavram, animasyon ve ilgili kavramlar içinde araştırılmalıdır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Animation, Ecofeminism, The Bechdel Test, The Maisy Test, Kral Şakir Cumburlop, Pırıl, Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe, Kötü Kedi Şerafettin, Frozen, Avatar: The Last Airbender, She-Ra and the Princesses of Power, Invincible

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# CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Introduction to the Thesis

The focus of this research is to analyze four animations from Turkey and four animations from the US in terms of ecofeminism and compare Turkish animations to American animations in the same context. This research is first going to show ecofeminist elements within eight selected animations and then compare how ecofeminism is portrayed differently in the animations that have ecofeminist elements. The initial aim of this thesis is to find a combination ecological awareness and feminist elements within the selected animations in terms of characters, concepts, scenes, and illustrations. The combination of the two concepts mentioned is the core theory of this thesis, which is ecofeminism.

Ecofeminism is a theory that attempts to be globally oriented and actively concerns itself with multiple issues concerning women, nature and other oppressed groups and most ecofeminists agree patriarchal logic of domination keeps justifying the hand-in-hand dominations of women and nature (Lorentzen, 2003). Within the scope of this thesis, it was important to find and select animations that had treated women and nature concepts carefully. With an ecofeminist approach, it was possible to seek certain problematical issues which are gender issues along with misogyny and mistreatments towards oppressed groups through the selected animations that are *Kral Şakir Cumburlop*, *Frozen*, *Pırl*, *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe*, *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*, *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* and, *Invincible*. These eight animations were thoroughly watched and close reading method has been conducted. Then, they have been through the Bechdel Test, to understand women representations and the Maisy Test, to understand status of gender balance, gender freedom, gender safety, social justice and

equality. After that, content analysis is conducted with creating units of analysis as equality of gender representations, gender stereotypes, sexualization, disrespectful and respectful treatment, violence, and justice. Ecofeminist analysis is made through content analysis and lastly, each animation is compared with its pair. These pairs are in order: *Kral Şakir Cumburlop* and *Frozen*, *Pırıl* and *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe* and *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*, *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* and *Invincible*. By conducting these methods and tests, ecofeminist approaches of the selected animations are depicted and found out which country has more ecofeminist representations in their animations.

Ecofeminism's creation and usage arises in the late 70s, and the concept still has a place in today's world. Today's capitalist world is highly industrialized which is considered as the main cause of the global warming. Global warming is in its peak and its effects continue to harm the planet in various ways. Along with the nature's condition, women's condition is no different than the mistreated environment. As it is also stated in the 1999 Human Development Report of The United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the world we live in is both intentionally unjust and not women-friendly (Gnanadason, 2003). It is clearly seen in 2020s, the world is still not eco-friendly or women-friendly. For instance, Turkish women encounter with daily hardships and obstacles in almost every aspect of life. As Turkish citizens living in Turkey, we witness the news about numbers of women being harmed lethally and killed on a daily basis by men. We also perceived natural destructions which consist of forest fires, floods, and landslides caused by lack of care from authorities in the last few years. These kinds of happenings and situations

reflect in the media and how they are being reflected to their audience becomes an important part of ecofeminist studies. It can be said that media, in any form, is the direct mirror when understanding a society's way of classifying, portraying and, re-introducing people. Better reflections create positively different apprehensions of certain happenings or groups of people. By having ecofeminist animations, ecofeminist characters and concepts would be apparent for audience to create new perspectives for already-existing groups of people and situations.

Animations have wide ranges of audience groups regardless of regions, starting from toddlers to adults and even elders. To have an inclusive analysis that would involve various examples from different genres and categories, animations that belong to different age groups were selected. We have created four age groups which categorize the chosen animated works. These age groups are five and older, seven and older, 15 and older, 18 and older. Age grouping is needed in the process of analyzing animations since, at the end of the research, the aim is to compare age grouped animations within each other. However, age grouping in the Turkish media is generalized compared to the American media, and it also applies to the animations in this research. That is why, backbone of age groups come from the American age categorization for animations. Turkish animations are mostly classified as “general audience” and does not distinguish children's animations to different age groups. That is why we assigned Turkish animations to relevant age groups, when it was not needed to do the same to the US animations. Each Turkish animation is assigned through observation made in the close reading stage of the thesis. Turkish animations are watched and elements such as

characters' age, the animations' plot and aims are compared to the already categorized American animations. Compatible and similar animations are categorized as the same age group. Animations that are targeted for four and younger are not included in this research since analyzing those would be harder in multiple aspects one being the didactic element in toddlers' animations. Those types of animations prioritize to engage its audience with teaching basic terms, shapes, colors or other elements while in this research we look at ecofeminism, a sophisticated theory that suggest much to offer to the current patriarchal world order. Tests in this thesis would not be applicable for these types of animations.

There are some limitations in this research, one being the inability of fully comparing films to films and series to series. Animations that are classified by age groups happened to be different kinds of animations, films and series. The imbalance in the types of animations are caused by the differences of these two animation industries' levels of development. Even though numbers of animations in Turkey started to increase in recent years, number of animated works are still limited in Turkey when compared with the US. For the US side of the research, we started to search for animations we have already watched or knew, to make the choice process easier. We took into consideration having ecological elements as well as having multiple female characters within the animation while selecting it. The animations which did not have apparent ecological elements and multiple female characters were disqualified in the process. The first four American animations that were selected are *Frozen*, *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*, and *Invincible*. After choosing the American side of the research, multiple Turkish animations were watched and the ones which had ecological elements



and multiple female characters were taken into consideration. Later, we looked at protagonists' and antagonists' qualifications such as age, aim, gender, and characteristics to see if there are any connection-points we can have between them and the pre-selected American animations. The final four Turkish animations that were selected are *Kral Şakir Cumburlop*, *Pırl*, *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe*, and *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin*. Within the selection processes, types of animation did not have the equal importance as content similarities. Characters, concepts, scenes, and illustrations are analyzed in this thesis. That is why, Turkish side of the research mostly consists of films rather than series and American side of the research mostly consists of series rather than films.

This research explained histories of Turkish and American animation industries as well as the background information about the chosen eight animated works. Later, important literary work is defined on ecofeminism and its relation with feminism, media and animation industries of both countries. With the help of the Bechdel Test (Bechdel, 1985) and the Maisy Test (Rowden ,2015), each animated work is analyzed and in the light of these two sections, ecofeminism analysis of the chosen animated works is done. Finally, comparisons of Turkish and American animations are made regarding their stated age ranges.

## **1.2 Animation History**

In order to fully grasp selected animations of this research, the development process of both country's animation industries should be understood. Each country has different traditions regarding cultural and social factors. Since the economic and social aspects of a

country are directly reflected in each sector of the same country, understanding the conditions under which animation as a sector grows and expands is necessary to make assumptions as well as to state facts.

History of animation started on 20th of July 1887 in France with Charles-Émile Reynaud, a self-taught engineer's first animated film, *Pauvre Pierrot* (1892) that he projected at the Musée Grévin in Paris (Odessa Animation Studio, 2021). Each country has its own pace for animation development. The beginnings of American animation go back to English photographer, Eadweard Muybridge, who helped to form two types of basic principles of animation which are frame-by-frame animation and real-time animation (Motalová, 2017). First animation integrated film in the American film industry goes back to *Humorous Phases of Funny Faces* (1906). The creator of this specific film J. Stuart Blackton and other contributors such as Emile Cohl and Winsor McCay helped the US animation industry form in its very early stages. Their contributions changed the film world slowly and helped the introduction of animation techniques to films. Early 1910s were a time the US film industry grew exponentially (Arnold, 2017).

Animation in Turkish culture has its roots back in the Ottoman era with shadow play techniques. Shadow play, which is based on the reflection of the shadow of the depictions on a white curtain, is a type of puppetry and an art form unique to most eastern cultures (Şenyer, 2021). Most known example of shadow play is the *Karagöz ve Hacivat* which is a play about two construction workers of a mosque that joke with one another. There is no definite information about when the shadow play technique started to be used in

Turkish society. Even though shadow play is a version of beginning of animations in Turkish culture, Turkish animations as we understand today, started to be developed later than American animations. Interests for animation in Turkey started between 1930s and 1940s and the first works in the field of animation were carried out by cartoon artists such as Yüksel Ünsal, Tan Oral, Erim Gözen, and Tonguç Yaşar (Mercin, 2017).

Turkey and the US started their animation histories differently and the development processes also varies. The American animation industry became one of the most known, world-famous entertainment sources, however; the Turkish animation industry has not produced as many animations as the American animation industry.

#### 1.2.1 History of Turkish Animations

After the Ottoman Empire, today's modern Turkish era conserved the tradition of making traditional, hand-drawn animations, however; computer engineered, 3D animations dominate the Turkish animation industry. However, before technologically advanced times, Turkish animation history has seen multiple traditional animations.

In the 1930s, when the films of Walt Disney and the company's contemporary artists began to be shown in Turkish cinema theatres, cartoonists in Turkey became interested in animation cinema and started their studies in this field (Gülgen, 2014). The first Turkish animation experiments started with a course given by Vedat Ar who was at the time a lecturer in Fine Arts Academy, Ceramics Department, in between 1947 to 1949. The

black and white, 3-minute short animation *Zeybek Oyunu* (1947) became the very first animated work of Turkish animation industry (Gölgen, 2014).

The first animated full-length film is *Evvel Zaman İçinde* (1951). The director of the animated film is Turgut Demirağ. The film was a hand-drawn, traditional work which was also the first colored animated film of Turkey. It included characters from Turkish folk tales such as Nasrettin Hoca, Keloğlan and the film finished in 4 years of making. After its finalization, the film was sent to US, MGM Studios in California, for some technical laboratory operations, specifically to be worked on the negatives as well as the coloring process of the film. However, the film got lost in the same year as it finished. This unfortunate incident affected animators of the time negatively and the development process of the Turkish animations stopped even before getting properly started. For almost 20 years, there was no sight of Turkish animation productions anywhere in Turkey. 60s coup of Turkey and socio-economic instabilities of the period also has an influence on this blank 10 years for Turkish animation industry (Alıcı, 2019).

In the early 70s, animations started to be made once again after a long break (Kalkan, 2016). During 70s, animation artists such as Derviş Pasin, Ateş Benice, Tonguç Yaşar, Erim Gözen, Tunç İzbek, Emre Senan, Ali Murat Erkorkmaz, Cemal Erez, Meral Erez and Ruhi Görüney have accomplished successful works (Gölgen, 2014). Some Turkish universities started to have animation contests such as Boğaziçi University's Cinema Club's short animation film contest in 1974 (Alıcı, 2019). Towards the end of 70s,

Turkish animation artists started to find it hard to stay in the industry by only making films and leaned into advertisement sector as well as government agencies (Alici, 2019).

The 80s were a new era for Turkey's political and economic structuring. In the same time period, it is seen that Turkish animation artists participated in screening abroad. Turkish animations started to be recognized by other nations and won multiple foreign awards (Gülgen, 2014). Many Turkish animation artists stated that the Turkish animation industry is highly influenced by foreign works, especially American animations and Turkish animation industry struggled to achieve a stylized line and somehow failed to reflect Turkey's sociological uniqueness (Alici, 2019). During 80s, TRT focused on producing an increasing number of cartoons with many artists from outside the institution and, most of these productions were sold to foreign television organizations of various countries and broadcasted outside of Turkey (Alici, 2019). Towards the end of 80s, Eskişehir Anadolu University opened its Animation Department and contributed to the industry with official animation education and many successful graduates (Alici, 2019).

In 90s, the shortcomings that existed in the production and animation cinema were quickly eliminated by technological advancements and the increased education levels (Alici, 2019). 3D computer animations became relevant and Turkish animations tried to catch up to the trends. With new productions, Turkish animated works kept on participating in foreign competitions.

During 2000s, advertisement sector included 3D animations in TV advertisements. Alongside using 2D and 3D motion graphics or models in these television advertisements, using 3D animated mascots as the screen face of a brand became a popular idea. Using imaginary characters in ads has turned into a race with the TV advertisement of the Turkish home appliance brand Arçelik's introduction of "Çelik" character after 2004 (Ersoy, 2004). There are other brands that used animated mascots such as Vaillant, Papy, World Card and many others. To emphasize the importance of animation in the advertisement sector in Turkey, in an interview, Haluk Sicimoğlu who is one of the former vice presidents of the Advertisers Association stated "Those characters are the Trojan horses of ads." (Ersoy, 2004). This statement shows the animated characters have an important part in the advertisement sector. Throughout the years, Turkish animations diversified in terms of its contents and expanded to different areas in the Turkish media.

Towards the end of 2000s, TRT Çocuk television channel started its broadcasting in November 1, 2008 (TRT Haber, 2020). This event caused an improvement for the Turkish animation industry since Turkish animated series started to be produced alongside with Turkish animated films to be distributed and broadcasted in TRT Çocuk television channel (Turkaya, 2016). When we look from the 1970s to the 2000s, it can be said that there is a liveliness in the production of animated short films, which show itself in fields such as festivals and competitions, even if there is no possibility to be shown directly on television in the form of serial cartoons (Alici, 2019). Animated series were developed specifically for the television audience, especially for TRT Çocuk's target

audience groups. Numbers of series started to increase as a result of TRT Çocuk channel's opening.

With 2010s, Turkish animated films started to get attention from the Turkish film audience. *Allah'ın Sadık Kulu: Barla* (2011) is one of those films. It was the first computer-animated full-length film of Turkey. When the film was compared by film critics to other foreign examples of its time made with same animation techniques, it is seen as an underdeveloped animated film because of the non-natural movements and lifeless characters. It was watched by 2.2 million viewers, gaining the title of the most watched animated film as the third most watched film in Turkish movie theatres in 2011 (Gülgen, 2014). Another successful animation is the 3D animated film *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* (2016) which was an adaptation from Bülent Üstün's comic book series. The film has taken its place as an important work in the history of animation cinema in Turkey with its technical features such as loyalty to the comic book, working with a professional staff of a considerable number, animation experience, sound, camera movements, lighting and color (Gülgen, 2014). According to data by Boxoffice Turkey, 352 thousand people watched the movie in movie theatres for three weeks of its time. The film grossed approximately ₺4.5 million.

Turkish animated films changed animation techniques over time and the 2D animation got switched with 3D animations. With each production new styles and techniques were tried which resulted in both highly liked and disliked animated films. Most 3D animated

film projects were criticized in terms of their lack of usage of proper technologies and developments. Comparing the Turkish animated films to foreign animation films is one of the top reasons why the whole industry gets criticized by Turkish animators and critiques (Kalkan, 2016).

### 1.2.2 History of American Animations

After 1900s, new movie theatres opened which were called “movie palaces” at the time and American audiences became familiar with variety of new films. Just as the new “movie palaces”, animation studios were formed and opened in order to create early animations. Raoul Barné opened a new animation studio and contributed to the film industry with his animated works. Another studio opened around the same time by John R. Bray to specifically make animated films. The Brat Studio became a success for the newly forming animation industry over a short period of time with contributions of successful animators as Paul Terry, Max Fleischer and Dave Fleischer. At the same time, small animation studios emerged and most become successful since film industry became interbedded with new animation effects and techniques (Arnold, 2017).

In 1914, with the start of the World War I, American animations got affected by the world's, especially Europe's state at the time even though US did not intervene to the situation directly. This influence of war did not affect the US industry in a negative direction and it continued to grow with new productions and films. During these times, comic-strip-type productions were popular. When World War I ended, the US animation



industry was still callow and competitive. Many early animation studios dissolved and closed entirely because of the competitive market conditions. Distribution of the animated films became a huge problem in these years after the war. These years are the same ones the US film industry and Hollywood receiving positive attention. The whole industry started to have fame and begin to shape today's fame of Hollywood. The US cinema and Hollywood started to become a cultural symbol of the country. New York was the center of animation industry at the time, however; Hollywood as a film production engine, was the drive of the animation industry. Since Hollywood had a great influence over the animation industry, most animations targeted adult audiences with some suitable for younger groups. The animated films continued being successful, however; with the expanding borders of the animation world, distribution issues became an important problem (Arnold, 2017).

In 1920s, US animation industry's expansion continued as many new animation studios emerged, including the, Walt Disney's animation studio. In Disney's rise, the short-lived Laugh-O-Gram Studio has an influential role. The studio remained active between 1921 - 1923. Many animated films were produced under the influence of Laugh-O-Gram such as one of Disney's early princess short- films, *Cinderella* (1922). With another iconic figure in the US animation history, *Steamboat Willy* (1928), Walt Disney gained visibility. Another Laugh-O-Gram Studio influenced animated film of Disney is *Alice in Wonderland* (1951). Even after the Laugh-O-Gram Studio was shut own, it kept on influencing Disney productions (Meyer, 2016). The one and the most fame-bringing icon of Disney, Mickey Mouse, which was first featured in *Steamboat Willy* (1928), brought

Disney to a whole new level of fame and recognition. Previous declines or on and off successes of the studio stopped with the creation of Mickey Mouse and the studio found stability for the time. This was the new beginning of a new era for the US animation history. In the era, a short film called *The Debut of the Thomas Cat* (1920) was introduced to the animation world and became one of the greatest icons of the US animation history. The industry seemed to be thriving in 1920s economic conditions, mostly with short film and live-action film productions. During these times, ways of storytelling became important with new productions. Additionally, the new way of producing animation suggested and emphasized the importance of sound an early sound design process.

US animation industry faced with hardships cause by the country's economic events. The Great Depression, started in October 29, 1929, the industry was shaken even though the American audience did not let go of the industry right away. Despite the shaky economic ground and ambiguous conditions of the animation industry, Disney as an animation studio was at one of its peak points. Disney Studio continued to improve and produce films on a timely manner. It continued its way to become better with disciplined work style. By the time, Disney's success was influencing other American animation studios and motivate the US animation industry to be a success. One example to the successful studios at the time is The Fleischer Studio. The studio is best known for *Betty Boop* (1935), who as a character is still relevant and known in this day. Another popular character of the studio is Popeye from *Popeye* (1929). During this period, some other

studios continued to stay open or become founded such as Warner Bros., The Terrytoons and, Van Beuren Studio along with Mintz Studio (Arnold, 2017).

Towards the end of 1930s, Disney released its first feature film *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1938). This film is the start of the Disney's "princess" marketing strategy that would happen in early 90s. The same princess theme and narrative are apparent in Disney's other princess feature films such as *Cinderella* (1950), *Sleeping Beauty* (1959), and other productions in between, which would also be included in this princess marketing strategy of Disney. These films inflicted traditional perspective on how a woman should be or how they should act. Since they emphasized stereotyped views about women, the 60s newly issued feminist views did not appreciate these films' narratives (Xu, 2021). After years passed the dissatisfaction with Disney princess narrative did not change. These complaints were not enough to strip Disney from its success and it continued to remain in the public's eye with all its glory. (Arnold, 2017)

After Great Depression's affects started to pass, US animation studios started to make their art and animation styles better than before (Meyer, 2016). Capitalization of animation started with the success of animated feature films. Disney slowly became the name and the representative studio for the US animation industry. Disney's *Dumbo* (1941) was a success at the box-office value. However, after its release, other studios' films did not do well, again at the box-office since the World War II is apparent (Arnold, 2017).

According to Arnold (2017), the U.S. Office of War Information established the Bureau of Motion Pictures in 1942, a unit that was specifically designated to work with the Hollywood studios in the war effort (Arnold, 2017). War themed animations got released to the American audience. Studios made these productions both for government and individual reasons. With studios producing war related works independently, they contributed to the American war propaganda at the time. Even though there were independent contributions, American government at the time established the First Motion Picture Unit (FMPU) for their production of wanted or needed animated works. Alongside FMPU, Disney played a strong role during the war in terms of propaganda animation. Additionally, some war related mix-releases were made by Disney. *Bambi* (1942) was an example for this mixed genre (Meyer, 2016). Some other well-known studios were also active during the World War II times. An example would be the Warner Bros. Studio.

After the war ended, there was a new postwar world system. At the time, it was not certain that American cinema, especially Hollywood would have the same glorious reputation as before. In the new postwar world, animation as an art form and a capitalized tool became a significant part of the US film culture. The competitiveness of the animation market continued and many feature films continued to get released after the war (Arnold, 2017).

By the time passed, animated films started to be reformatted for television entertainment. Animated films started to get edited in order to make them fit better to television and its audience. In 1950s, US animation industry, continued to expand even more, including the Disney Studio. Within the same years television advertising became a part of the industry's reality. Animation became a source for television entertainment with the implemented changes. By the end of 50s, television itself became a successful choice of medium for animated works. With this new medium, many important studios which used to be powerhouses of the industry slowly lost their power and small studios had the chance to become more successful with new opportunities (Arnold, 2017).

The impact of television on the animation industry is incontrovertible. Animated films started to lose their spark within American audience. This affected Disney films, the industry's most accomplished company, as well. In the Cold War era, 1960s, animated series were being broadcasted in television. Some examples consist of, *The Flintstones* (1960) and *The Bugs Bunny Show* (1960). Even though these 2 shows were successful and became iconic later on, there were many instances where animated shows did not make it big. Most of them failed to be influential and relevant. Since it appeared as a problem of the industry, to get rid of it, channels wanted to air animated specials rather than multiple episode series. These special episodes covered American holiday themes which consist of Christmas, Halloween, Thanksgiving and, more. While these episodes were being produced by other studios, Disney continued to make feature-films, without rushing and in a less busy schedule. The variety of animated works increased and the

industry did not shift to another direction. It only expanded even though the era consisted of continuous stress (Arnold, 2017).

1970s became an era for US animation industry that traditional ways are challenged from the roots. Even though commercial broadcasting continued to target younger audiences, adult animations stayed relevant to the era's situations (Arnold, 2017). In 1980s, demand for animation decreased exponentially and the industry faced multiple hardships.

Dissatisfaction among the workers of the US animation industry became one of the most hard-to-solve problems. Labor in the US animation industry was an important issue (Arnold, 2017).

With the rise of the cable television services, animation remained relevant to the television audience in the form of animated series. Some examples are, *Scooby-Doo and Scrappy-Doo* (1979), *The Smurfs* (1981) and, *The New Yogi Bear Show* (1988) (Arnold, 2017). Towards the end of 80s, people could not predict the direction that animation would go but the first sign came from the Pixar Studio which ran by Steve Jobs. Short films *The Adventures of Andre and Wally B.* (1984) and, *Tin Story* (1988) were computer generated animations and led the animation industry to another direction and found an alternative to the traditional hand-made animation techniques (Motalová, 2017).

In 1990s, Disney produced iconic and successful feature films such as *Aladdin* (1992), *The Lion King* (1994), *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1996), *Tarzan* (1997), and more.

Popular songs started to be integrated with the films. Also, Disney's princess narrative started to shift to a less traditionally acceptable notion during this time. After *The Little Mermaid* (1989), main female characters of the princess films seek freedom and their free will (Xu, 2021). Films such as *Beauty and The Beast* (1991), *Pocahontas* (1995) and, *Mulan* (1998) are great examples, however; their representations did not make feminists happy in multiple angles (Hu, 2020). Issues of representation for Disney continues even in 2020s.

Even though each feature film was mainly drawn traditionally, computer involvement is apparent in some films as new techniques. Disney's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and *Tarzan* are examples for computer involvement. Also, in this era of US animation industry, voice acting became an inseparable branch of animated works. Celebrities, mainly actors and actresses as well as singers starred in Disney's feature films as important characters (Taberham, 2018). Before its merger with Disney, Pixar's *Toy Story* (1995) used computer animations in the whole making of the animated film. The film was well-received and liked by many people. With the film's success, it was understood the traditional ways of animation were declining. These 3D computer-generated (CG) animation techniques became relevant to the era (Motalová, 2017).

With 2000s, animations became widespread in different mediums and areas such as game industry, health sector, architecture and many more (Motalová, 2017). Special effects are also another area for animations. Television animations and animated series continued to

exist (Arnold, 2017). Disney's last hand-drawn traditional feature film is *The Princess and The Frog* (2009) and is also the last hand-drawn princess film. 2000s became an important era for women animators since their influence over the animated works continued to increase with the increase in their employment numbers. "Although women gained more opportunities, they still faced significant hurdles. Women were seldom hired as directors at major studios, and even when they were, it could be a precarious assignment." (Arnold, 2017).

With *Tangled* (2010), Disney shifted its whole princess narrative and animation style to a whole new form. With its 2006 merger with Pixar, Disney continued to produce feature-films and some adaptation series of well-known animated films in 2010s. Although it might be too soon to talk on 2020s animations, it can be said that the broadcasting mechanism evolved into the internet platforms such as Netflix or Amazon Prime Video. However, Disney still holds an important role in shaping American animation industry and culture.

### **1.3 History of Women in Animation Industries**

Women, as in most creative industries, have been overshadowed by men in the American animation industry (Brewer, 2018). In the 1920s, the beginnings of the US animation industry, women were less likely to be involved. The US animation history is filled with influential men rather than women. Back in those days, the industry was dominated by male animation artists. There are few women who had an opportunity to work in the



animation industry. A significant woman in the animation industry of the Fleischer Studio was Lilian Friedman. She was a respected and hard-working artist of the Fleischer Studio. However, women's positions did not go further than assistants in many cases and women were not able to get promoted to more discipline-requiring jobs within the animation industry (Arnold, 2017).

The ability to create a moving picture considered to require high levels of concentration and hard work, which was not seen as a task for women. Because of this reason, women were not allowed to physically animate in the American animation industry. They were only allowed to work in the inking and painting departments (Chusid, 2016). There were some changes in the industry in terms of women in animation during 60s. Women were hired in various animation studios more than the previous years. However, they kept on getting jobs mostly in inking and painting positions. Top animation artists remained as men. Even though the change was not drastic, it is an important step for women in the industry (Arnold, 2017).

Associate dean at the RCA's School of Communication and current head of animation, Teal Triggs who is an activist for the gender issues facing the animation industry, states that animation industry, as a whole, faces deep rooted challenges in equal gender representation whether in the industry or within animations (Brewer, 2018). In today's world order, women are still lacking in positions in animation industries around the world. According to Women in Animation's "50/50 by 2025" project, 60% of animation

students in the US and Europe are women (WIA, 2022). However, the drop off rate as they move into industry is staggering, with only 20%–40% of professional roles held by women (Brewer, 2018). Women in Animation (WIA) state in their mission and vision (WIA, 2022):

“As animation continues to reach audiences of diverse age, gender, ethnicity, abilities and culture, so does the need to ensure that animation content represents the world as it should be — a world where people of diverse genders are equally represented, both behind the scenes and on the screen, to move culture forward.”

WIA which is a non-profit union found in 1995, aims to “bring together the global animation community to empower and advocate for people of underrepresented gender identities in the art, technology, production, and business of animation, inspiring excellence and justice in all facets of the industry.” (WIA, 2022). The group envisions a world that all people, regardless of their gender identities, share fully in the creation, production, and rewards of animation (WIA, 2022). Similar groups are formed in Turkey in terms of women’s participation to animation industries and one of them is the project Animasyonun Kadınları. The project suggest that voices of women should be heard who work in the Turkish animation industry. There should be researches done and reports being created in order to understand the unjustness of the numbers of women labor however, it is difficult to talk about the existence of these reports, as the data is already missing or not kept at all. That's why oral history, profiles of the past and present, a digital archive of films, visual materials and online resources can be a great starting point when it comes to creating reports and collecting important information regarding women

visibility in the Turkish animation industry. The Animasyonun Kadınları project is an up-to-date platform that would act as an archive for related information (Animasyonun Kadınları, 2022). Unions and projects as such provide hope for future of women in animation industries of different countries. Additionally, to women who work in animation companies, many women today work independently in animation, due to more creative and experimental freedom with this approach (Chusid, 2016).

#### **1.4 Background Information About Selected Animations**

We have chosen to work with four Turkish animated works and four American animated works which makes in total of eight animated works. There are four animated series and four animated films. Out of Turkish animations, there is one animated series and, three animated films. Out of American animations, there are three animated series and, one animated film. We have grouped all animations under four age categories and choose one animated work from each country. For each age category, we have animation pairs, one from Turkish side and one from American side that would be pairs in the comparison part of the research.

All animated works have a spectrum of different character portrayals, concepts, scenes, and illustrations which have various ecofeminist elements. To follow the age groups and make the comparison of Turkish and American animations easier, analyses are in the following order; *Kral Şakir Cumburlop*, *Frozen*, *Pırl*, *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe*, *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*, *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* and, *Invincible*.

#### 1.4.1 Kral Şakir Cumburlop

Şakir, the protagonist of the story and his family suddenly turn into hybrid creatures, half sea animals and half themselves. Mirket the scientist mentions that the only way to help them turn back to their original bodies is by getting the DNA sample of a dangerous shark. The group go on an adventure in the open sea, but on this journey, they deal with robot fishes, an evil jellyfish and dangerous sea monsters (Kral Şakir, 2021). The *Kral Şakir* series and multiple films were produced by Grafi2000 Production which is a Turkish company that makes projects especially for internet, TV, mobile media, written and visual media, with its creative applications that combine the world of informatics and the world of humor (Grafi2000 productions, 2022). Main idea of the film is to raise awareness for water pollution, especially in terms of seas and oceans. This animated comedy started its screening in the Turkish streaming platform, Exxen in 23 April 2021. The film's duration is 41 minutes.

#### 1.4.2 Frozen

Walt Disney Studios' *Frozen*, which was the 53<sup>rd</sup> animated work of the Walt Disney Animated Classics series, was released in 2013. The origin of the story comes from the Danish author Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale *The Snow Queen* (Biography.com Editors, 2014). The film is considered to be one of the most successful films of the Disney brand as it won several awards including the Academy Awards for Best Animated Feature and Best Original Song, the Golden Globe Award for Best Animated Feature Film, the BAFTA Award for Best Animated Film, and two Grammy Awards (Gioia, 2014). The story of the animated film is about Elsa, the Queen of Arendelle, cursing the

whole kingdom with a snow storm while embracing her true self for the first time and her sister Princess Anna wanting to bring back Elsa with the help of Kristoff, Sven and Olaf. Unlike most Disney Princess narratives, the film focuses on sisterly love rather than finding a male partner who would be the true love interest of a princess. *Frozen* consists of multiple genres such as musical comedy, fantasy and family. *Frozen* has a duration of 102 minutes and is officially available in DVD format in Turkey.

#### 1.4.3 Pırl

*Pırl*, ongoing animated series is being broadcasted in TRT Çocuk channel since 2019 and is created by AFT Studios between 2016 – 2020. The series have currently 48 episodes. The story is about a 9-year-old school girl called Pırl and various realizations she has along with her friends about the non-boring, fun, and usable as well as informative aspects of mathematics. Children enter their academic life with elementary school education, and with the help of Pırl and the topics the series touches upon, every student's generic question, "Why do we learn these?" is being answered. The didactic *Pırl* series, as a project, aims to give children academic information prepared while considering the cognitive and emotional-social development of its target audience (AFT Stüdyoları, 2018). The series is available in TRT Çocuk official website.

#### 1.4.4 Avatar: The Last Airbender

*Avatar: The Last Airbender* is a Nickelodeon TV series created by Michael Dante Dimartino and Bryan Konietzko. The show aired on the American cartoon broadcasting

channel Nickelodeon from 2005 to 2008. The series is currently available at Netflix, a US based digital streaming platform. Genres of the series are fantasy and comedy drama. The story revolves around Aang, an airbender Avatar and his journey to learn to bend all elements and defeat the Fire Lord to bring peace and harmony to their imbalanced world. Along with his friends, Katara, Sokka and Toph, he explores being a kid and being the savior of the world at the same time. There are 3 seasons of the animated series, called as books and each book is named after an element as; Water, Earth and, Fire.

#### 1.4.5 Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe

*Rafadan Tayfa* is a TRT Çocuk series which started airing in 2014 and reflects the neighborhood life and intimate human relations of the 90s as well as the adventures of a group of friends which form the “Rafadan Tayfa” (ISF Studios, 2019). The 2019 film *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe* is the second film of the franchise and is about the adventure of the group to the excavation site of Göbeklitepe and its’ genre is animation adventure (Beyazperde, 2019). The story starts with Akın receiving a Sini, a traditional tray, from one of his friends from Şanlıurfa, Veysi. The mystery of the Sini attracts the attention of the kids and they head to Şanlıurfa in order to learn more about the unknowns of Göbeklitepe (T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2019). The film’s duration is 84 minutes and is available in Google Play.

#### 1.4.6 She-Ra and the Princesses of Power

Premiering in 2018, Netflix's *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* is a reimagining of the classic '80s She-Ra series, which itself was a spin-off of *He-Man and the Masters of the*

*Universe* (Kelley, 2021). *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* has 52 episodes and five seasons. The series is available in Netflix as a Netflix Original. Genres of the series consist of adventure, comedy drama and scientific fantasy. On the planet Etheria, Adora is an up and coming soldier for the Horde, eager to defend her home from the menace of the Princesses she has been taught all her life to fear (IMDb, 2020). However, she becomes She-Ra, the Princess of power and defends Etheria from the Horde forces with the Princess Alliance and the rebellion against the Horde.

#### 1.4.7 Kötü Kedi Şerafettin

The comic *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* written and drawn by Bülent Üstün was adapted by Mehmet Kurtuluş and Ayşe Ünal to the movie with the same title in 2016. In the beginning of the film, Şerafettin is preparing for a barbecue with his friends Rıfkı and Rıza. However, not everything goes smoothly and Şerafettin starts getting into trouble with accidentally causing housecat Pırtav's death. Shortly after he falls in love and learns that he has a son named Tacettin. His whole life turns upside down and the solution is to act like human beings, not animals (Tuzlu, 2016). The genre of the film is action comedy. The film has a duration of 85 minutes and can be watched in Google Play.

#### 1.4.8 Invincible

*Invincible* is an animated superhero series which aired in 2021, Amazon's Prime Video service as an Amazon Original series. The animated series is an adaptation of the 2013 comic series with the same name created by Robert Kirkman and illustrated by Cory Walker and Ryan Ottley. The genre of the series is superhero fiction. The story revolves

around 17-year-old Mark Grayson, who's just like every other guy in high school. His father, on the other hand, is the most powerful superhero on the planet, Omni-Man. As Mark develops same powers as his father, and wants to become a superhero, just like his father. However, by time passes and Mark gets used to his powers, he discovers his father may not be the father he always knew. The ongoing series has only one season for now open to streaming however, another season is in works within the series' animation team.



## CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Feminism and Ecofeminism

“In 1952, Simone de Beauvoir pointed out that in the logic of patriarchy, both women and nature appear as other.” (de Beauvoir, 1952, as cited in Glazebrook, 2022, p.12).

Feminism, in its core, delves into this exact systematic oppression of women and oppressed others. As a women’s movement, with the second wave feminism, relations of women and urban life started to be discussed addition to women and rural life (Güneş Peschke & Peschke, 2018). “Since the 1970s, feminism has interrogated the origins of patriarchy in order to better understand the roots of this societal structure.” (Bahaffou, 2022). As Eaton & Lorentzen (2003) state, ecofeminism is considered to be a third wave of feminism that also deal with oppressed groups such as women, children, people of color and LGBTQ+ community and the oppressors generalized as toxic masculine men. “While feminism suggests that patriarchy dominates women, ecofeminism argues that patriarchy also leads to the domination of ecology and nature.” (Kongwattana, 2018, p. 1078). As Gaard (2014) emphasizes in her paper, Kheel (2008) states that all environmental ethics are constructed through the lens of gender.

The term ecofeminism has been defined by multiple ecofeminists and each touched upon different topics and approached from various angles to ecology and women issues.

Ecofeminism, as a branch of feminism, was first introduced as a concept in Francoise d'Eaubonne’s *Le Féminisme ou la Mort* (1974). Politics of ecofeminism were first stated by d'Eaubonne and as a controversial and attracting phrase, “feminism or death” is used,

implying if answer to the capitalist, consumerist world's problems is not feminism, the result will be utter death for both human and non-human life on the planet.

Ecofeminist discourses' foundational thinkers were mostly Euro-Western women. Some of them were Susan Griffin, Karen Warren, Carol Adams, Petra Kelly, Marti Kheel, Charlene Spretnak, Elizabeth Dodson Grey, Ynestra King, Carolyn Merchant, Vandana Shiva, Maria Mies, Ariel Salleh, Val Plumwood, and Mary Mellor (Gaard, 2017). From foundational thinkers, Karen Warren and Val Plumwood, who recommend a kind of philosophical idealism in ecofeminism and insist that oppression comes from hierarchical dualisms. Therefore, they think oppressed will be set free once these dualisms are destroyed (Maruyama, 2003). A definition of Karen Warren's ecofeminism is portrayed by Lorentzen (2003, para. 2):

“As Karen Warren notes, ecofeminism is an ‘umbrella term’ for a wide variety of perspectives, some of which are compatible with each other and others that are contradictory. What holds these disparate positions together is the claim that ‘there are important connections between the unjustified dominations of women, people of color, children and the poor, and the unjustified human domination – beginning with gender as a category of analysis. Ecofeminism provides both a ‘theory of domination and strategy for change’ and thus is both a social movement and a theoretical perspective”.

Many views and ideas were thought upon and mixed by reputable academics, contributing ecofeminism to have stronger backbones. For instance, Val Plumwood

extended the views of d'Eaubonne and King by comparing differences of ecologists and ecofeminists. (Merchant, 2022) According to Maruyama (2003) ecofeminism as a feminist theory discusses there is a mutual enhancement between domination of women and domination of nature, both dominated by privileged men. As many before her who claimed similar purposes for ecofeminism, many continued to agree with this definition and later suggested “critical ecofeminism” as a stronger argument. Gaard (2017) emphasizes the term “critical ecofeminism” in her work by stating the importance of connecting feminism with ecology and makes parallels between capitalism and patriarchy with the oppression of women along with nature. Her view is that critical ecofeminism is strongly constructed since it uses the previous discussions on gender and racial essentialism, along with economic structures, posthumanism, and postcolonial analysis.

Plumwood’s understanding of critical ecofeminism has been written in Gaard’s (2017) words by delving into the pointlessness of dualisms. Dualisms such as culture/nature and human/nature, which play a key role to the ecological failings of Western societies also cause the ethical fall of the same societies. Origins of dualities in ecofeminism are discussion topics between academics. Some dualisms originate from prehistoric times while others were created during and after scientific and industrial revolutions (Eaton & Lorentzen, 2003). Many ecofeminists agree on dualisms being clustering and limiting of women in general. Some ecofeminists argue that most basic dualisms such as sun/moon, hot/cold are derivations of man/woman dualism and this becomes the core reason why dualism concept becomes problematical. In an ecofeminist perspective, dualisms suggest women are responsible of ecologic issues and men do not partake in the solution

processes of ecological problems. “The earth is not a woman, not a single body but billions.” (Gaard, 2017, Chapter 7, para. 25). Any issue regarding ecology is the problem of humanity and other non-human beings. It cannot be weighted to single gender’s shoulders, but should be the concern of every alive entity. Since dualisms caused such misleading paths for both genders within the gender binary, American feminist scholars also pointed out the dangers of assuming ecologic problems being only related with women and only women (Serafini, 2019). To oppose to the idea, many suggested new approaches on ecofeminism. A great example would be, deconstructive ecofeminism, which mainly takes part in deconstruction of dualisms (Maruyama, 2003).

Within every class, status and race group, women are oppressed as the inferior gender group which means they encounter additional handicaps that belong to their socio-economic class, status and race group. This only emphasizes the fact that women are poorest of the poor anywhere around human civilizations (Ruether, 2003). However, it should not be forgotten that neither feminism nor ecofeminism is just about women’s liberation but involves in destruction of the toxic masculinity and patriarchal societies. “We must be clear that promoting women’s equality is not a matter of isolating women from men or children.” (Ruether, 2003). It must be repeated that feminism is not about a gender but about changing patriarchal domination for every oppressor and oppressed group. The concept of gender expression and gender identity became a part of feminism in that sense. The common oppressor is considered as white, cis gendered men for many marginalized groups. One of the ways to express oneself is through using different gender terms. The term “cis” is used as a noun and indicates a person who was assigned a

specific sex at birth and whose identity is accordance with their sex. (Solomon, 2021) For instance, a cis male would be a man whose sex is male and identifies as a man. It can be also summarized as people who are not trans.

It is not unusual people misinterpreting ecofeminism, just as it happens for feminist theories. In a general sense, feminism can be seen as being a man-hater from the point of view of people who do not concern themselves with real gender issues. Ecofeminism may be misinterpreted or misunderstood from the point of view of the privileged or the rich just the same way. It may seem as a capitalist consumer's way of reaching "spirituality" (Ruether, 2003). We shouldn't forget that ecofeminism is completely opposing this idea of seeing ecofeminism as an escape from reality because it is seen as a real solution to the real problem of capitalist, patriarchic societies which do not prioritize something other than personal gain. Ecofeminism examines the relationship between the existence of oppression of nature and gender. It also clarifies the borders of gender, nature control, nations, species, and inequality in society. There are some views of ecofeminism which examine the oppression of women, combining it with the oppression of nature which happens in Western cultures as a theoretical background (Kongwattana, 2018). This oppression is caused by the forged power of white supremacy, heteropatriarchy and, human supremacy over other alive beings (Kim, 2014). Gaard (1997) states ecofeminism should be inclusive of queer backgrounds and as a combination of it, queer ecofeminist perspective, should discuss queer liberation along with nature's and women's liberation. Ecofeminism now critically analyses militarism, sexism, classism, racism, and environmental issues which are strongly linked together. "Ecofeminism now reflects the

concerned efforts of women trying to integrate their personal, ecological, and sociopolitical concerns.” (Eaton, 2003).

## **2.2 Ecofeminism and Animation World**

Türker (2011) explains animation is an art form that develops the artistry of countries. Even though this research is not focusing on how animations influence their audiences, according to many animation scholars, there are distinct connections between what people watch and how they behave. Since animations are a part of people’s lives as entertainment sources, they also serve new perspectives of life, and harbors the quality to improve their aesthetic tastes. A similar remark can be seen in Keys’ paper (2016). “Cartoons provide materials through which children construct their identities and sense of gender, race, and class, and therefore serve as a form of cultural pedagogy, teaching children how to conform to the dominant system of values and norms.” (Keys, 2016, p. 357).

As it is stated in Anderson and Hanson’s article (2009) compared to reading research and theory, there is relatively little understanding of the cognitive, social, and emotional processes underlying media use or its short and long-term implications. Even though this research is not dealing with psychological and sociological outcomes of exposing younger audiences to ecofeminist animations, Anderson and Hanson’s article (2009) conducted shows the validation of media influence on people, especially children. “The corporate world has colonized everywhere: from television to classrooms, painting themselves green, supporting woman’s initiatives, universalizing the consumer, and

commercializing youth.” (Eaton, 2003, para. 22). By integrating ecofeminism into the animation medium, main objective and the essence of the idea is transferred to wider audiences, as well as younger generations. Ecofeminism is used as a critiquing mechanism of animated works that are in the scope of this thesis.

Over the years, there have been ecofeminist models declared and introduced to the media. For instance, Wiyatmi, Suryaman and Swatikasari’s paper (2019) suggests, the importance of developing an ecofeminism-based literary criticism model. When similar models are used on animated works, new ways of integrating ecofeminism with media branches occur. With a critical literacy model as mentioned, it is a way to bring awareness to the importance of ecofeminism (Serafini, 2019).

Within the area of literary works, Gaard (2017) discusses that literary nonfiction works may contribute to environmental literature but miss out on giving needed information about environmental politics, sociology, climate justice, or ecosocial strategies for response. In a similar way, children’s environmental literature has potential in terms of giving ecosocial messages. A part of ecofeminist discussion, dystopian fiction and apocalyptic scenarios are also portrayed in young adult’s fiction. Since literary fiction and non-fiction works portray ecofeminist elements within their scope, it can be hoped that animation industry, which is highly influenced by literary works for younger generations, would embody the same principles or elements of ecofeminism.

Stated in Peshke (2015), character studies are based on elements such as ontology, creation, reception, textual and cultural references. Understanding thoroughly the fictional world that these characters exist in is important and is apparent in fictional world theories and the philosophical possible world theory. In order to analyze a character from a specific perspective, narrated environment depictions should be well understood from the point of view of the researcher. The world of animation contains multiple understandings of varied realities and these imaginary worlds pave multidirectional paths for each character they contain.

In a compact sense, to analyze ecofeminism in media works, it is necessary to have apparent reflections of oppressed minorities within the media works. One of the main focuses of ecofeminism is related with women and because of it, women's representations are important among animations. One of the ways to see women's representations among visual media is Alison Bechdel's Bechdel Test (1985). There are some thoughts on the reliability of the Bechdel Test from multiple aspects. Questions about accuracy, reliability, reality, and relevance appear when this test is used to analyze a work in terms of feminism, as a very general theory. However, usage of the test for looking at certain aspects, such as women visibility or women speech, dismisses the possibility of problems or issues that may arise. Lakhotia, Nagesh and Madgula's paper (2019) suggests that using scientific models and sufficient proof they were able to prove the Bechdel Test can be used in academic works as an indicator of availability of women dialogues. Their final suggestion being, each work that is being tested should be understood from a genre perspective first and then should be taken into consideration in



terms of women speech, it is understood that without decomposing the test itself, the paper is suggesting a new perspective of looking at the Bechdel Test. In this research the Bechdel Test is used for showing feminist tendencies among the selected animated works. According to Demir's article (2021), especially in Turkish animated films, inequality among roles attracts attention. Such unfairness or the positioning of some roles in films cause discrimination between women and men.

Keith (2021) states that Kehoe Rowden implemented the Maisy Test, a derivation of the Bechdel Test, as a way of indicating feminist values in children's animations. The test is mostly used for animations that are targeted at children aging less than 18 and aims to find gender balance, gender freedom, gender safety, social justice and equality in animations. By using both of these tests, feminist values are pointed out in the animations within the scope of this research.

The Bechdel Test and the Maisy Test are both tests that are beneficial for this thesis. Even though they are tests that are similar to one another, they have their differences as well. The Bechdel Test seeks women visibility and speech while the Maisy Test checks criteria around gender balance, gender freedom, gender safety, social justice to give an idea to parents which kinds of animations are suitable for their children to watch. These two tests are not indicators of ecofeminism and were not used directly to seek ecofeminist elements within animated works. However, the questions of these tests indicate gender related issues which is a huge part of ecofeminism. These tests, combined with close reading and content analysis, created our codes which help us find ecofeminist elements.

## **CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Close Reading**

In this research, the goal is to find an answer to the question how do Turkish and American animation series and films portray ecofeminism. The number of sectors worldwide which benefit from the art of animation has been gradually increasing over the past years. For the Turkish case, advertisement sector is the one that has been involved with various animation techniques and styles to its apparent functioning since 1990s. Leaving advertisement sector aside, Turkish animations started to be visible to audiences through cartoons which were targeted at younger audiences. Therefore, children's media has a major role in progress of the Turkish animation sector. The American case has more depth and history compared to the Turkish case, however; it can be said that American animation sector is highly rich in terms of children's media content. By comparing similar animated films or series from both countries, we aim to find and point out the similarities and the differences in selected animated works with ecofeminist approaches. Before starting this analysis, our hypothesis was that Turkish animations mostly do not have ecologic awareness or feminist narratives on the contrary to the American case. The best way to confirm this hypothesis is to focus on doing close reading of the selected animated works.

The appearance of close reading first emerged with Ivan Armstrong Richards' *Practical Criticism* (1929). The main outcome of the book was to underline the problems the readers face when reading poetry especially in terms of poems with hidden meanings.

When he was in Cambridge, he analyzed his pupil's reactions and thoughts about several poems he distributed and realized the occurrence of some problems which he states in this book. He used close reading method on the same poems he distributed and made sense out of the misunderstandings his pupils had. His work focused on the language of the poems and its specific form. This method of explaining what practical criticism is, became the very first back bone of close reading as a way of analysis.

After practical criticism, in 1930s and 1940s new criticism emerged. New criticism considered literary texts as autonomous, which means the written material should be understood as it is written. It was thought that the literary text itself as it is had the most impactful factors to readers ("New Criticism", 2021). As one of the new critics, Cleanth Brooks (1947) showed his readers content and form of the literary work has equal importance. Poems were analyzed by conducting close reading method in this book as well. The significance of his contributions to the development of new criticism and close reading shows in the last chapter, *The Heresy of Paraphrase*. Brooks showed, in this specific chapter, that meanings which lied in poetry could not be flattened. He argued that a poem in its essence is an image of the daily life which cannot be paraphrased. For him, poetic structures such as irony had superiority over the true meaning of a poem. While he was concluding these results by conducting the close reading method to the poems, he also compared non-literary arts with poetry.

On one hand, Brooks (1947) showed readers the new critical way of doing close reading by analyzing only the textual object. On the other hand, it was later understood that close

reading method can be conducted for other types of work as well. This meant that not only literary works could be analyzed with close reading method, but it would be possible for other works to be perceived in a new angle. Gilbert and Gubar (1979) showed an example of how it can be done by close reading female literary imagination in terms of its distinctiveness. The main argument was that women writers undergo series of struggles in order to be perceived as a proper writer. To support their argument, the works that have been analyzed with close reading method in this research are works of various women authors. With their work from their close readings, they have come up with the conclusion that because of the patriarchal structure of the literary world, women writers had harsh experiences and hard times trying to just exist in a male-dominant branch. “Male sexuality, in other words, is not just analogically but actually the essence of literary power. The poet’s pen is in some sense (even more than figuratively) a penis.” (Gilbert & Gubar, 1979, p. 19). With using literature analysis, a sociological and political problem for women was vocalized.

Rose (2000) explains how to conduct close reading method on audiovisual material and gives insight to the extent of ethics when conducting close reading. “Each step in the analysis of audiovisual material is a translation and, usually, a simplification. There can be no perfect reading of the text.” (Rose, 2000, p. 260). As she suggested, each step in the process of analyzing audiovisual material needs translation. Each translation includes analyzing decisions of a researcher and no reading can be truly accurate. That is why she again suggests the ethical perspective of readings a researcher would make. Some parts of information between lines would get lost while analyzing and it is an involuntary action

that happens during the close reading process, however; to fix this problem she suggests some systems including coding and enriches the close reading method on audiovisual material.

### **3.2 Content Analysis**

“Content Analysis is a method of qualitative research that enables researchers to further explore and understand field realities.” (Nair, 2014). Content analysis was introduced as a systematic method to study mass media by Harold Lasswell (1927) who is an American political scientist and communications theorist, initially to study propaganda. Later, Lasswell and Leites (1949) developed a framework for applying content analysis to international politics. Bernard Berelson (1952) published *Content Analysis in Communication Research*, which gained recognition for the technique as a versatile tool for social science and media researchers. Charles Winnick and Mariann A. Winnick (1968) proposed ways to analyze television cartoons using content analysis. They mainly wanted to figure out codes that would help to analyze television cartoons, which took 12 pages to finalize. Content analysis achieved great popularity among social science scholars as well as a method of communication research. Jurgen Ritsert (1972) developed a process that was able to identify the latent meaning and ideological contents by applying quantitative analysis. Ever since his contribution, content analysis as a method, has been used to interpret the texts and to arrive at valid conclusions (Clootrack, 2022). The growth in the use of content analysis over the past four decades is undeniable (Neuendorf, 2002). Margaret F. Callcott and Wei-Na Lee (1994) used content analysis to examine animation and animated spokes-characters in television advertising. It can be

understood that content analysis has been used in multiple areas of research, along with media studies.

“The purpose of content analysis is to ‘read between the lines.’ It aims to determine answers to questions where the text implies something and is not necessarily explicit.” (Cloontrack, 2022). This thesis also benefited from content analysis and needed some certain units of analysis, or in other terms, codes to analyze eight selected animations within the scope of this thesis. In order to ‘read between the lines’ these codes were formed with the help of Maisy Test sections and questions which will be explained in upcoming paragraphs.

### **3.3 The Bechdel Test**

The Bechdel Test was first illustrated in The Rule comic strip in book *Dykes to Watch Out For* (Bechdel, 1985, p. 22). In the comic strip, two women are talking about going to the movie theatre and one tells another her rules for seeing a movie, which are now used as the Bechdel Test criteria. The Bechdel Test is a simple test which names the following three criteria: the work has to have at least two women, they must talk to each other, and the topic of their talk must be something besides a man. If a work has these three criteria provided, then it passes the test completely. This indicates availability and visibility of women speech which contributes to gender equality (“Bechdel Test Movie List”, 2021).

There have been ideas on the Bechdel Test being non-academic since the test does not indicate a solid conclusion. In this sense, Bechdel Test’s results are open for evaluation.

For this confusion, researches and papers on academic validity of the Bechdel Test can be taken into account. One study suggests the test's criteria are not enough to portray female dialogue and it is proven by conducting the Principal Component Analysis method.

The Bechdel Test is not a determinant of a work being feminist or, in this research's context, ecofeminist. However, since it is an indicator of availability and visibility of women, it would be easier to find what kind of female representations or speeches are there in the eight selected animated works once they are tested through the Bechdel Test. Although it has been in use for a long time, it can be said that the bar has been set pretty low when it comes to deciding which work passes from the Bechdel Test. It is also necessary to understand that if any work of fiction, in this case animation, passes the test, it does not make it concretely feminist. "It is only one criterion to see how the work presents women." (Sharma, 2018).

I have watched eight selected animations and decided whether they passed or failed the test. For films, it is easier to decide whether they pass or fail since only one scene is considered enough to count a film passing from the test. However, it becomes tricky to decide for series. In this sense, it is seen that articles which list series that pass from the Bechdel Test take percentages of passed episodes into consideration while deciding. They conclude series as passing easily, barely passing or not passing in a general sense. If the percentage mentioned is high, the series easily pass while if the same percentage is low, the series barely pass. If the series does not have even one scene that pass from the

Bechdel Test, the series is considered to fail the test. The same principle is valid for this thesis.

### **3.4 The Maisy Test**

Another test that is very new to the academic world is the Maisy Test. The founder of the Maisy Test, Kehoe Rowden works for Motu which is a charitable trust that deals with promoting well informed and reasoned debate on public policy issues relevant to New Zealand (Motu, n.d). She partakes on the first global project to track the human rights performance of countries, Human Rights Measurement Initiative (Motu, n.d). Inspired by the Bechdel Test, she created the Maisy Test to test visual and digital media for sexism, which target children as main audience (Keith, 2021). The Maisy Test has four criteria which focuses on; gender balance, gender freedom, gender safety, social justice & equality. According to Rowden (2015), each criterion has sets of questions which should be directed at the subject of analysis;

- For Gender Balance: Are male and female characters present in roughly equal numbers and status?
- For Gender Freedom: Do girls and boys get to do the same things or have their separate adventures? Do male and female characters subvert traditional gender roles and have the freedom to enjoy a whole range of experiences, unlimited by their gender?
- For Gender Safety: Is the show free from sexualization of children, objectification, unrealistic body standards and misogyny? Is everyone safe?



- For Social Justice and Equality: Does the show support equality and social justice in other ways? Can every kid see someone like them? Is the show free from materialism and violence?

Relating these four categories of questions to ecofeminism depends on the animated work. Conducting the Maisy Test only gives a rough idea on the questions it asks and is not an indicator of feminism as well as ecofeminism. However, as it is in the Bechdel Test, it is a way to understand core ideas about a show. The test also shows two important aspects which are misrepresentations, mistreatments and misogyny. With using the Maisy Tests, we aim to make connections between characters, environments, scenes and gender and feminism. The most important use of the Maisy Test in this thesis is

### **3.5 Codes**

“In content analysis the preparatory phase of determining themes, categories and codes is crucial and extremely important to the study itself.” (Nair, 2014). In this thesis, we have watched eight selected animations and took notes for each animation. At the same time, we checked whether there are scenes in which the film or the series pass from the Bechdel Test. Later, with the help of the notes we took, we have answered questions of the Maisy Test. After the two tests are done, ecofeminism analysis was made regarding the two tests’ results, using the codes we will mention below. The codes of the thesis are equality of gender representations, equality of social status, gender stereotypes, sexualization, respectful and disrespectful treatment, violence, and justice.

Equality of gender representations mean equal numbers of male and female characters. Equality of social status mean comparatively equal numbers of characters who belong to the same social class or power dynamics. Ecofeminism suggest that ecological problems are a result of high- power, privileged capitalist men's greedy behavior. The solution of the problem they've caused shouldn't depend solely on women. These two codes combined helped us find and identify which animated series have these kinds of meanings.

Gender stereotypes mean general views of how men and women are seen in traditional perspectives. An example of traditional perspective would be the general assumption of men being considered to be active while women being considered to be passive in any kind of social interaction. Ecofeminism argues that women are active and not passive while fighting for their rights as well as environmental crises. Thus, this code helped us see if there are any characters as such.

Sexualization mean characters whose dominant trait is being seductive or characters who are meant to be a sexual representation or objectified as a prize to win. Some ecofeminist scholars suggest sexuality and environment are topics that go hand in hand but the meaning we want to have by saying "sexualized" should be precepted as something negative, just like an act of disrespect. We checked each animation if there are any sexualized or objectified characters, regardless of their gender.

Disrespectful treatment means verbal and physical mockery of characters made by the creators using other characters inside the animated work. Respectful treatment means the complete opposite of disrespectful treatment in this case. In ecofeminist views, disrespectful treatment counts as oppressing someone, mostly someone from a disadvantaged group. This code made us understand who is oppressed and who is the oppressor.

Violence mean clear depiction gore and blood, slurs, foul language, fighting or combat scenes. In ecofeminist views, violence is being done towards nature and environment and there is a connection between the violence user and their lack of concern towards their environment. This code helped us understand who moved forward to being a more ecofeminist character and who are not ecofeminist characters.

Justice mean, in very basic terms, good being rewarded and bad being punished. Ecofeminists argue that women are the ones who seek justice for women, other oppressed groups and nature. They are the ones to resist oppressors and fight for claiming everybody's rights. We looked at characters who have a sense of justice in them in this sense and also looked at the endings of the films and series, whether antagonists are punished and protagonists being rewarded.

All codes above were taken into consideration while making ecofeminist conclusions about selected animations within the scope of this thesis. Three main figures are made which show different aspects we took into consideration while indicating ecofeminist

elements within animations. The first figure is for gender balance and freedom and it uses three codes which are equality of gender representations, equality of gender status and gender stereotype. The second figure is for gender safety and it uses three codes which are sexualization, respectful treatment and disrespectful treatment. The third figure is for social justice and equality and it uses two codes which are violence and justice. According to the figures, ecofeminism analysis is done.

## **CHAPTER IV: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 The Bechdel Test Analysis**

According to the Bechdel Test Movie List's description of the Bechdel Test, for a media work to pass from the test, it must consist of the following three criteria: the media work has to have at least two women in it, who talk to each other, about another topic which is not about a man (Bechdel Test Movie List). In this research, when an animated film's scene passes from the test, the whole film is considered to pass from the Bechdel Test. Within the scope of this research, when it comes to animated series, if a scene from an episode passes from the test, the whole series is considered to pass from the Bechdel Test. However, as it is mentioned before, numbers of episodes that passed from the Bechdel Test creates how the series pass from the test. Lower percentages make the series barely pass while higher percentages make the series easily pass. All animated series are watched and each episode went through the Bechdel Test in order to determine numbers of episodes that passed from the test. Each animation is analyzed separately and the results are given in different sections below.

#### **4.1.1 Kral Şakir Cumburlop**

The film has two cis female representations; Canan and Jellyfish Lady as a young girl and an adult woman. The film passes from the Bechdel Test over one scene where Canan and the Jellyfish Lady converse. Canan asks to Jellyfish Lady what are they building and she answers back saying that it is a satellite to watch that night's football match. The rest of the film does not have any interaction between these two characters.

#### 4.1.2 Frozen

The film passes from the Bechdel Test in multiple scenes. One instance is from the very beginning of the story, Anna wakes Elsa up and they start playing with snow that Elsa created in one of the halls of their castle. They talk to each other while playing and closeness of these sisters are shown to the audience. For the most part, Elsa shuts herself to her environment and stops conversing with everyone, including Anna. That is why, the next scene they talk to each other is the coronation of Elsa. Another example is when Anna wants to bring Elsa back to Arendelle, she tries to persuade Elsa by conversing and singing together, which can be perceived as a part of Disney tradition. All these instances suggest the animated film passes from the Bechdel Test successfully.

#### 4.1.3 Pırl

This research is limited to first 29 episodes of the series since that many was released when the analysis began. By number, 33<sup>rd</sup> episode is the last episode that has been analyzed. Episodes 16, 21, 27 and, 29 are not available in the same website. Within these 29 episodes, 21 episodes pass from the Bechdel Test. The episodes which do not pass from the test are limited to episode six, eight, 15, 17, 22, 24, 30 and, 32. Most of the episodes pass from the Bechdel Test because Pırl is talking with her mother, Bahar. Most cases Pırl asks about things she doesn't know or has small talk with Bahar. Other instances consist of Pırl talking with her girlfriends about schoolwork or friendly chatting.

#### 4.1.4 Avatar: The Last Airbender

*Avatar: The Last Airbender* has 61 episodes and three seasons. The first season, book one: Water is 20 episodes while the second season, book two: Earth is 20 episodes and the last season, book three: Fire is 21 episodes. The episodes which passes the test from the first book are 14, 18 and, 19. The only girl in the main group is Katara and her interactions with other women are limited in this season. Second book is has the most episodes which passed from the test and they are episodes 21, 23, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, and, 39. This season included one more lead cis female into the main group, Toph along with the new cis female antagonist group of Azula, Mai and Ty Lee. Since female representations increased drastically compared to the previous season, numbers of episodes which passed from the test increased accordingly. The episodes which passes the test from the third book are 45, 47, 48, 52, 57, and 60. In total, 20 episodes pass from the Bechdel Test. With each season, number of cis female representations increased and it led the show to have more conversation among girl characters.

#### 4.1.5 Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe

The film can be considered to pass from the Bechdel Test with one scene where Sevim and Hale have a small talk about the people who used to live on the Göbeklitepe area. Sevim and Hale are the only cis female representations of the film who are two young girls. They talk with other characters of the story, however; have very limited communication with one another. The film barely passes from the Bechdel Test, only for one scene that takes place in the middle of Göbeklitepe.

#### 4.1.6 She-Ra and the Princesses of Power

The series has many cis female representations as girls and women. Additionally, the series includes a trans female character and a non-binary character. Men of the series, when compared to the women representations, fall on the short side. Each episode has multiple women representations that converse with each other in various topics which is mostly not about a male, confirming that the series absolutely passes from the Bechdel Test.

#### 4.1.7 Kötü Kedi Şerafettin

*Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* is the only Turkish animation that does not pass from the Bechdel Test in the scope of this research. There are only three cis female characters where one of them is portrayed as an old woman and the other two are adult cats. They do not interact with one another in the entire film. Only one of the cats, Misket, can be included to the main group of the story as the love interest of the main character and even she does not have much screen time or lines.

#### 4.1.8 Invincible

*Invincible* is the only American animated work that barely passes from the Bechdel Test in the scope of this research. The ongoing Amazon Prime series is the comic book adaptation of the comic work which has the same name. The series started to be aired in 2021 and only has one season as today and the scope of this research is limited with only



the first season of the series. Issues such as feminism are portrayed by the high school girls in the series, Amber and Eve. Their small talk on the fifth episode, *That Actually Hurt*, saves the series from failing the Bechdel Test however, there need to be more than one dialogue between women of the series in order to make this animated adaptation more inclusive.

## **4.2 The Maisy Test Analysis**

The Maisy Test, as explained before, is a test meant for parents' use when choosing shows that are, in summary, safe and appropriate. The test looks at four aspects within media works which are gender balance, gender freedom, gender safety, and social justice and equality. Each animation in the scope of this thesis has been analyzed with the Maisy Test questions that were described before.

### **4.2.1 Kral Şakir Cumburlop**

#### **Gender Balance**

The main group of the film consists of four characters, three being cis male, Şakir, Remzi, and Necati, and one being cis female, Canan. The main protagonist is Şakir, a young boy, while the antagonist of the film, the Jellyfish Lady, who is not named or isn't called by any name, is a woman. There are only two female characters, one being a young girl and other being an adult woman, in the whole film so it cannot be said that there is a balanced representation of the two genders in the gender binary.

Both characters are important for the plot of the film, especially the Jellyfish Lady. Her aim is to destroy the whole world and kill everyone because of her hatred towards people on the surface who dirtied underwater life and made them unable to live in their original habitats. The confrontation of the main group is with the antagonist Jellyfish Lady. There are only two female characters and it does not create a balanced cast in terms of gender representations.

### Gender Freedom

The antagonist of the story, Jellyfish Lady is used as a symbol of rage of underwater life. Throughout the film, the wrongdoings of “humankind” in terms of lack of environmental awareness is mentioned by Jellyfish Lady. She plays a key role not only in the underwater scenes of the film but also in the plot of the story by pointing out a very real and serious issue of today’s reality, water pollution caused by human factors. With her presence in the film, the audience gets to realize the seriousness of the pollution issue and the plot gives adequate scenes and monologues to convey the realness of the problem. One example is when Mirket, the scientist gives a speech on the same topic. He says:

“We have polluted the seas and made the sea creatures unhappy. Many have been displaced. Some got caught in our plastic waste and drifted from place to place. We polluted our jellyfish friend's house. We separated her from her friends. However, we learned our lesson. Now we will keep our seas clean. Because we know that a clean sea will lead to a clean world!”

Jellyfish Lady decided to commit to a terrible choice of solution to her biggest problem, and even if that solution is extreme and evil in many ways, she decided to stop people who harm her environment all by herself. She is not being held back by the traditional gender norms which would indicate women to remain passive even in frustrating situations, and is given the role of an antagonist, a villain in the story as an active and angry character. However, when it comes to her outer appearance, as it can be seen in the Figure 1, the color pink is evident and can be considered a traditional choice of coloring. Her head is pink and her tentacles, as well as her hair, are transparent but at the same time in light purple-gray tones. The electricity she creates is in purple and white tones.

*Figure 1: Jellyfish Lady, Kral Şakir Cumburlop*



*Figure 2: Canan, Kral Şakir Cumburlop*



Şakir, Canan, Remzi, and Necati start their common journey after they realized the antagonist's evil plans. While she tries to destroy the world because of her anger, the main group of the film try to prevent her goals from happening. Most parts of the story take place underwater and all characters get to be a part of this adventure. Canan is the

only girl representation in the main group and she gets to do pretty much the same things as the other characters. As her outer appearance, it can be seen in Figure 2 that she has a pink bow on her white furry head and thick eyelashes. Her outfit, tail, and fins are also pink. Canan is an active character of the group even though she doesn't have a separate, her own journey in the film. The whole aspect of the group is changing but they move towards a goal altogether. She makes observations and finds solutions to trivial problems quickly such as finding the memory card on one of the electronic fishes and reporting it to Mirket. She is the one to find how to send this memory card to Mirket, by using a pufferfish. She stands out by her innovative solutions and down-to-earth personality. Both female representations of the film have active parts in the plot of the film. In terms of their colors, it cannot be said that they subvert the traditional gender stereotype, however; in terms of their actions in the film, they do subvert traditional gender norms.

### Gender Safety

Since the characters are not exactly human, it becomes harder to find faults or discomforts about the designs of the characters. Both genders are unique animal-human hybrids. Both gender representations are not objectified or sexualized in any way. In terms of their outfits and bodies, Canan and Şakir both have the same sized bodies the only difference being the clothes they wear. In a traditional portrayal, the girl wears a dress and the boy wears a sporty outfit. In the film, Canan wears a pink dress while Şakir is wearing a sweatshirt. Their silhouettes are almost the same. Additionally, Jellyfish Lady does not have a part that we can call a body. She has a huge head and multiple tentacles which serve as her arms and legs. With these aspects, there is not a concern of

objectification or sexualization of female characters in the film. Additionally, there are no romantically involved characters.

The film is free from misogyny and grievance in general. Only the antagonist has this questionable anger towards earthlings. Towards the end of the film, this hatred also disappears towards the end of the film. Opinions and beliefs of each character are respected but also get confronted at one point in the end. Apart from everyone else in the film, one character who makes various jokes about almost every sentence in the film is Necati and in most instances, his jokes are welcomed by appropriate and decent comments.

### Social Justice and Equality

It is apparent to the audience that the film is not drained out of violence. The antagonist wants to use a machine to destroy the whole planet and the advertisement of this exact machine is apparent towards the end of the film. In the advertisement for this machine called İNTİK 800, the below monologue is given;

“Tired of the injustice done to you? Tired of earthlings polluting the sea and destroying your habitats? Do you want to take revenge on these selfish earthlings who see nature as their property? You can easily establish world domination with our product called İNTİK 800. It is also quite simple to use. Assemble the pieces and press the unlock button. You can easily control the Moon, the satellite of the Earth, with the electromagnetic waves it creates. Thus, you will create tides in the

world's waters and you will be able to easily destroy any piece of land you want. In fact, if you get the correct alignment of the planets in our Solar System, you can destroy the entire world in one go. If you want to have this product at a very special price, call us now.”

This dangerous machine draws its power from the natural phenomenon, the alignment of planets, and is advertised in a very casual and cheerful way as if it is not a mass destruction appliance. Şakir, Canan, Remzi, Necati, Mirket and his assistant aim to stop this machine before it does what it is supposed to do while they put an end to Jellyfish Lady’s plans in a non-violent way. They stop the machine while it got turned on by reaching various groups of people from a social media platform and making them all jump at the same time to shift the orbit of the Earth. After that, they confront verbally Jellyfish Lady and acknowledge her problems as well as her anger. Şakir turns her anger into hope as he reassures her polluting the ocean would stop. Then she says these words; “I had no hope for you. But with what you have done, you have brought hope to me again.”

After this catharsis, the group takes now-good Jellyfish Lady to watch a football match with them to a café on the surface. The justice construct of the film is shown in this scene where they all enjoy an unrelated activity altogether as if nothing ever happened and as if Jellyfish Lady did not have her evil plans. The group did not respond to violence with violence and talked everything out with the antagonist of the film while at the same time

warn the audience about water pollution and raise awareness about the issue. It is mostly because of this deductive scene that the antagonist of the film is well-heard and is not met with counter-violent behaviors. The villain does not get a fulfilling punishment ever in the film.

There is no direct reference to gender equality in the plot of the film, however; both male and female characters have their own places and valuable roles in the film which makes it harder to replace one's position hard to fill. That is why audience members may see different aspects of each character and relate to these differences. For example, Jellyfish Lady's concerns have a backbone in the real world. Finding clean water resources, preventing water pollution as well as keeping sea creatures' habitats safe are a few instances where Jellyfish Lady's concerns become real.

### Conclusion

*Kral Şakir Cumburlop* is not balanced in terms of gender representations. There are more cis male characters than any other and is bounded to the gender binary. There are no trans characters. Female characters of the story are active both as a supporting character, who is Canan and as an antagonist, Jellyfish Lady. Audience gets to understand who is Jellyfish Lady as a character who has depth. The film is safe for children since there are no sexualization regarding characters. The end of the film suggests forgiveness and owning up to mistakes. Moral of the film is to put an end to water pollution.

#### 4.2.2 Frozen

##### Gender Balance

Disney, as a company, works on gender representations with its various movies, especially with their most impactful marketing subgroup, Disney princesses. Its feminist message grew even bigger with *Frozen* by featuring two leading female roles for the first time in the company's history (Xu, 2021). *Frozen* also covers the ecofeminist values and connotations with its choice of character representations. Especially creating a complex yet relatable character as Elsa solidifies the connection between the treatment of women and nature.

The main cast of the film consists of six characters which are Anna as the protagonist, Elsa as the deuteragonist, Hans as the antagonist, Kristoff as the tritagonist, Olaf as a major character, and Sven as the animal companion of the tritagonist. Elsa and Anna are the female characters while Hans and Kristoff are the male characters of the film. Two other non-human characters can be included in the main group of the story, which are Olaf, the snowman created with Elsa's magic, and Sven, the reindeer companion of Kristoff. Other characters consist of castle attendants, guests that come to the palace for the coronation, trolls, a snow monster, soldiers, the late Queen of Arendelle, Queen Iduna, and the late king of Arendelle, King Agnarr. Within the main group, Olaf's and Sven's sex or gender are not clearly pointed out. In this case, the main group consists of equal numbers of male and female representations. It can be said that the balance of female and male characters is apparent within the main group of the film.



The film has good and ill-intentioned characters as any other Disney production. The two good-intentioned characters are the main characters, Anna and Elsa while the ill-intentioned characters are Hans, the antagonist and the Duke of Weselton, a supporting character. It can be said that the good characters are mostly represented as females and the villainous characters are represented as males in this case. Hans is portrayed as a young, charming prince of the Kingdom of the Southern Isles who wants to take advantage of Anna to become the King of Arendelle. The Duke of Weselton is shown as an older man who has ulterior motives that concern Arendelle. These four characters are all from similar social statuses which can be covered as royalty. Although it is the case, all these royal characters serve a different purpose in the film. Their statuses are divergent. An example of that would be how characters are strong in one point and weak in another. Elsa is the physically strongest character with her magical powers. Her weak point is her mental and emotional distresses. Anna does not have magical powers, however; her insistent nature and dedication make her emotionally and mentally stable compared to Elsa. Two sisters' weaknesses and strengths complement and complete each other which allows these characters to be relatable.

With her bond and love towards her sister, Anna is one of the most influential characters of the story. The bond between the two sisters is very intense in terms of their love for one another. This literally unbreakable commitment is also portrayed as the “true love” which indicates a sisterly bond is stronger than any kind of love form. Intense emotions as Anna and Elsa have for each other do not exist between male characters. Among Kristoff and Hans or Hans and the Duke of Weselton there is no strong relation.

When it comes to the other male character, the tritagonist of the film, Kristoff is the only human character in the main group who has a different lifestyle and belongs to a lower rank as an ice harvester. He also comes from a different background from the others since he was brought up by the troll community in Arendelle. He was getting his work done with his animal companion Sven and minding his own business in his daily life when Anna asked for his help. He is an important character who shows not all-male representations in the film are prone to negative connotations.

Another fact about Kristoff is that he was raised by trolls. There are some scenes where the audience gets to meet with them and even there, some gender representations are noticeable. Among the trolls, two of them stand out the most. One of them is called Bulda, a female troll that took Kristoff and Sven in when they were very small as they had no place to go. The other troll we see is the wise person of the troll community, Grand Pabbie who is a male. Bulda appears to be a commoner with a good heart while Grand Pabbie is an elder that is knowledgeable and wise. Even if there seems to be a difference between these two characters in terms of their knowledgeability, they are both kind-hearted, regardless of their gender. By showing characters of different backgrounds along with a balanced portrayal of female and male representations, Frozen was able to spread the message of feminism, independence, and the love of family to billions of people everywhere (Xu, 2021).

## Gender Freedom

There are all kinds of different roles assigned to the characters in the film. They all have different goals and adventures throughout the basic storyline. To start with, the most visible adventure belongs to Elsa. Her storyline starts with her needing to be the new Queen of Arendelle and her being afraid of her powers to be known by everyone. Elsa's fears come from her childhood trauma in which she accidentally struck Anna with her powers. Then she and her parents were so afraid of Elsa's capabilities, they, especially the late King Agnarr teaches and shows ways of her not revealing her true self to others. This only makes Elsa's fearful state worse and she comes to a state where she cannot control her powers without wearing gloves on her hands. Those scenes may be understood in the light of women not being able to show their true humanity and nature under the social consciousness of the patriarchy. They are always in a passive state and are required to learn to hide and control themselves (Wu, 2020). The song *Let It Go*, sung by Elsa's voice actress Idina Menzel, shows that Elsa's main journey is to free herself from the fear her father and mother inflicted on her. Let It Go as the soundtrack of the scene when Elsa decided to accept her power and be herself was so popular and got an award in the Academy Award as the Best Original Song (Sriastuti, 2014). She does what she wants to do and runs away from her actual fear, getting found out. She gets to be free and do whatever she wants with her powers and she reflects her feeling of freedom with this song.

Relatively to Elsa's escape from Arendelle, Anna feels the heavy responsibility for causing Elsa's leave and wants to bring Elsa back to their Kingdom. Since Anna did not get restrained emotionally and physically, similar to Elsa, despite all the warnings, she

confidently goes after her sister which becomes the starting point of her idiosyncratic adventure. She risks every hardship to communicate with her sister throughout the film. Similarly, her physical journey to the mountain has the same intentions as her emotional journey to reach Elsa. Both the protagonist and the deuteragonist of the film have different adventures with different aims. Elsa wants to be free while Anna wants to repair their relationship by connecting with Elsa on an emotional level.

Just like Elsa and Anna, Kristoff has a different aim when starting his adventure with Anna. His adventure and aim are helping Anna get through the snowy, cold mountain. As the tritagonist of the film, he becomes protective over her and accompanies her in her journey. Anna's and Kristoff's journeys became mutual while their motivations remained separate but a bond starts between them in their shared journey. In one instance, this bond turned into more than friendship for Kristoff and he realized his feelings for her, even though his affection towards Anna will be a secondary love form that will help save her from her demise. Their romantic involvement did not occur until the very end of the film. The plot did not revolve around romantic achievements but let every character find out what is best for them, including the female characters.

When it comes to Hans, his adventure began the instant he stepped his foot on Arendelle. He had one motivation, to become the ruler of Arendelle right from the beginning of the story. Even if the audience did not know about this ulterior motive, Hans proved that he is on the verge of achieving his goal and ending his journey when Anna was dying in his

arms. His ego-centered way of thinking led him to think his actions were justified and caused him to be more and more daring by the end of the movie.

Each main character had a journey in the story, even Olaf and Sven had their fair share of adventures. They also had significantly different aims until the end of the story. Olaf wanted to know what fire, heat, and summer felt like. Sven wanted to eat Olaf's nose since it was a carrot, his favorite thing to eat.

As Mo Xu (2021) stated, in the gendered world, women are associated with passiveness, and men are considered as the only active gender. In this sense, the story denies the toxic portrayal of these two genders. With its new model for princesses, Disney tries to produce films that establish feminist role models for their audiences while portraying women empowerment through princesses. In Frozen, it is a concrete fact that women representations are free to make choices and show that it is completely fine to act according to their wishes and needs.

### Gender Safety

Disney-produced animations were known to include highly similar styles of body shapes and outer appearances, especially in their early princess movies. Anna and Elsa are in the same age range; with Anna being 18 and Elsa being 21 years old. As the protagonist and the deuteragonist of this story, both have similar physical features as it can be seen in the

Figure 3. Their figures are similar since they have slim arms, slender necks, small waists, round heads and comparatively big eyes, and small noses which have tilted tips and curved nose bridges. The main antagonist, Hans also has the ideal Disney prince look as it is seen in Figure 4. He has rounder features compared with other Disney villains. However, this does not change the fact that he has sharp shapes apparent on his physical features and outfit. His nose is smaller and pointier than Kristoff's and looks like he has a longer nose bridge than Kristoff. He has a slim figure and it is apparent he is taller than Elsa and Anna, which is also a trait of Disney villains. When it comes to Kristoff, he has a buff figure compared to Hans as seen in Figure 5. He also has rounder shapes in his face, including his relatively bigger nose. He is the tallest character in the story. He seems to be larger than most of the Disney princes.

*Figure 3: (From left to right)  
Elsa and Anna, Frozen*



*Figure 4: Hans, Frozen*



*Figure 5: Kristoff, Frozen*



Neither the plot nor the visual style of the film sexualizes female characters, however; they are designed in a very stereotypical way. Anna and Elsa both have big round heads, big round eyes, small pointy noses and small mouths. They both have synched waists and are portrayed thin. Both have fair skin. In terms of the objectification of women, the film does not specifically point out or delve into sexualized topics. There is almost no sexualized or indecent behavior, however; Hans is the one character who objectifies the two sisters. To achieve his goal, which is being the ruler of Arendelle, he needed to make one of the sisters fall in love with him and marry him. For the sake of achieving this goal, he admitted to Anna he first Elsa first but since “no one was getting anywhere with her” he found it easy to trick Anna instead. He even blames Anna for being “so desperate for love” and does not consider neither Anna’s nor Elsa’s feelings. Hans, in his moment of truth, tells Anna his plans “I figured after we married, I’d have to stage an accident for Elsa. But then she doomed herself and you were dumb enough to go after her. All that’s left now is to kill Elsa, and bring back summer.” Hans’ misogynistic behavior shows here as he reveals his true intentions. He assumed he can easily fool one of the sisters and he technically did fool the younger sibling. The objectification of female characters is only apparent from the antagonist’s point of view. As for sexualization, only one concept which is the concept of “true love’s kiss”, can be considered as one. However, since it is a Disney cliché to have this aspect in every princess film, it can be said that it is not out of the blue to see this concept in the plot of the film. The other case of a possible objectification scene may be where the troll community sees Kristoff with Anna, and immediately assume and decide they are going to marry one another. They do not even

ask them or know about who Anna is but jump to the conclusion that she is a nice girl that can “fix” Kristoff and change him for the good.

In terms of the respect Elsa and Anna receive, their wishes and wants are established by their own efforts and work. As a male representation, Kristoff respects both Anna and Elsa as well as Sven which shows he is a caring and a “good-willed” male representation. Hans is the opposite of Kristoff and shows a lack of morals and respect towards women. Kristoff specifically criticizes Anna for getting engaged to a guy she has just met, thereby challenging the love-at-first-sight narrative of earlier Disney princess films. As an antagonist, Hans is portrayed as a selfish character who wants to achieve his goals by unethical and inhumane methods. As he objectifies women and sees them as stepping stones to where he wants to be, he also shows a lack of morality. His misogynistic behavior shows the audience that his existence is a representation of toxic masculinity. Other than the character behaviors or representations, the production itself does not portray a variety of female body types but also does not sexualize their characters.

### Social Justice and Equality

Anna, Elsa and Kristoff are all relatable characters. Both Anna and Elsa come from a royal bloodline and even if this quality may not be relatable to everyone, their emotional and mental struggles are relatable. Anna struggles to communicate with her only sister, Elsa. Trying to protect Anna from herself, Elsa shuts herself in her room and does not leave her safe space. She is also struggling to communicate not just with her little sister



Anna but with every person she knows since she is very much afraid of getting “caught”. Elsa’s emotional trauma comes from the time she accidentally hurt Anna when they were very small children. Ever since then their parents, especially the late King Agnarr, have been cornering Elsa to a state of constant fear about her true nature. Even if Agnarr’s intentions were not ill or misogynistic, his teachings and exhortations made Elsa unable to function like a normal person. This disfunction affected Elsa’s relationship with Anna as well as her relationship with herself. Concealing, not feeling, and not letting anybody know about her truth became the sole reason behind all her actions. As well as her upbringing and struggles, Elsa’s awakening and letting her fears go away is also relatable to the older audiences. These empathy-bearing elements also show the existence of emotional trauma and abuse in the film.

It cannot be said that the show is out of violence. To begin with, Elsa causes unintentional physical harm to Anna with her powers, and then the same pattern can be seen as emotional abuse in the form of lack of communication. Later, she shuts Anna out again but again unintentionally harms her physically by striking Anna with her powers. As it is with her relationship with Anna, without knowing her powers were causing harm, Elsa created a heavy snowstorm on Arendelle in the middle of summertime. However, since her actions were unintentional, at the end of the story, she fixes her relationship with Anna and makes the snowstorm disappear. She becomes calm and proud of herself. As soon as she makes peace with who she is, her relationships with Anna and Arendelle are repaired. However, this doesn’t change the fact that Anna is the receiving end of all emotional, mental and physical harm.

The abusive character in the film is Hans. He not only tricks Anna but intends to let her die. He also tries to trick Elsa, making her think she killed her own sister. After that, with a sword, he tries to harm Elsa physically, to be precise, he tries to kill her by doing so. Anna, with her last bit of strength, shields herself in front of Elsa and freezes like a statue on the spot. The sword Hans holds breaks into pieces when it comes into contact with the frozen Anna. In this scene, there is a connotation, deeper meaning that with Anna's love towards Elsa, Anna was able to protect her sister from physical harm. Hans does not refrain from harming both sisters in any possible way. He makes these two women feel powerless and small by his words and his actions. (Sriastuti, 2014)

In terms of the social justice theme in the story, justice is served at the end of the film. Good characters are rewarded while bad are punished. As the antagonist, Hans does all his actions because he feels it is not fair that he needs to wait for the throne in his kingdom. He is one of the younger princes of his kingdom and that's why he knows the throne would never be his. With having unachievable expectations, Hans plans to marry into another royal family to be a ruler/king there. It just happens to be Arendelle and because he knows both the queen and the princess of Arendelle are single, he starts his "evil" plan there. Even if he has justifications to plan such an ill-intentioned plan, it doesn't make him just or right, it just makes him the true antagonist of the film. In the end, justice finds its place when Elsa, Anna and Kristoff let him have his fair share of hardships. That way, it can be said that the happy ending of the storyline provided the need for justice to happen and find its place.

## Conclusion

*Frozen* is balanced in terms of gender representations. There are equal numbers of cis female and cis male characters within the main group of the film. There are no trans characters and the film is bounded to the gender binary. Both Anna and Elsa are active throughout the film and have individual goals to achieve. As male characters of the film have their separate goals, no one falls under another one in terms of gender freedom. The film is safe for children since there are no sexualization regarding characters. The end of the film suggests sisterly love or familial love is greater than any other kinds of love. At the end of the film, the antagonist Hans is not killed but punished unlike many other Disney films, showing a less violent alternative for the consequences an antagonist may have.

### 4.2.3 Pırıl

#### Gender Balance

There are many cis male and cis female characters the series, within the gender binary. Inside Pırıl's family, there are two cis males, Pırıl's father Ali, brother Uzay, and two females, Pırıl's mother Bahar, and Pırıl herself. Other characters in the series are also cis-gendered characters. In her school life, she has male and female friends who are Efe, Cesur, and Deha as males and Nazlı and Ada as females. They are all in the class of 3-B and their classroom teacher is a female, İpek. As an addition to the side characters Mert, Uzay's male friend can be shown. Excluding Mert, there are equal numbers of male and female characters in the leading group of the series. Males are Ali, Uzay, Efe, Cesur and

Deha while females are Pırıl, Bahar, Ada, Nazlı and İpek. Therefore, there are equal numbers of representations of the gender binary within the main group of the series. Each character can be seen in Figure 6.

The student representations of the story consist of Pırıl and her peers as given in equal numbers of boys and girls. They all have different behavior patterns as well as characteristics. Efe, as a character, is athletic and is into sports, especially football. He does not care about his grades much and is a carefree person unless the topic is football. Cesur has a lisp and is associated with food and eating-related activities throughout the series. He is portrayed as having a huge appetite and is exposed to his peers' mockeries. Deha, as it suggests in his name, is the brain of the group and is considered the most hard-working student among the group. He is portrayed as a slightly stubborn genius.

*Figure 6: (From left to right) Efe, Cesur, Deha, Nazlı, Pırıl, Ada, Pırıl*



Nazlı is the feminine representation in the story. From head to toe, she is dressed in pink and is constantly talking about how things should be in more pink color. She acts very fragile in many scenes. For instance, in episode seven, *Paralarımız*, she gets upset over her dress being dirtied by a football ball. Another one would be how she likes to go shopping, and she is constantly caring for her outer appearance as well as her beauty. Ada is portrayed as being very close to Pırıl and she likes to collect cards. She does not have a defining characteristic, unlike the rest of the group. As for Pırıl, she is sometimes the narrator of episodes and sometimes the main center point. The topics revolve around her most of the time, and she is a character who does not reflect a sense of strong femininity. Regardless of her gender, she is a third grader who has good relations with her surroundings.

For the grown-up representations, there are two employed characters; İpek and Ali. İpek is the elementary classroom teacher of Pırıl's class. She is a deliberate teacher who cares about her students. She tends to teach her class in different methods and gives interesting homework materials as her students suggest in different episodes. No student says any statements which would damage her, or they do not mistreat her in any way. She is a well-liked and respected teacher. She is also the only female representation of an adult who has a full-time job. Ali is a veterinarian and is Pırıl's father. No further information is given in detail about him in most of the episodes, however; it can be said that in his limited screen time, he is usually located in the kitchen, sitting and reading the newspaper while having breakfast prepared by his wife. The leading group consists of children,

however; having adult representations also add different aspects to the story in these kinds of didactic animated works.

### Gender Freedom

In the series, girls and boys get to do similar things. Their experiences and so-called adventures depend on their divergent interest areas. That is why their experiences are mostly on different topics. For instance, Nazlı likes generic and stereotypic feminine things, whereas Efe likes everything related to football, a generic Turkish masculinity-related topic. That is why when they share an adventure, it is either about a school project or homework. In episode 7, when everybody, including girls, played football, Nazlı was the only one to get upset over Pırıl's dirtied dress. For other characters, Cesur likes eating and food whereas Deha likes technology-related stuff. Pırıl and Ada stay in the middle ground. They all get to have their own episodes where they are the source of a problem or center of attention.

Even though they get to be individualistic, it cannot be said that every character is uniquely portrayed by the creative team of the series. Nazlı is the most crucial example of not being able to distinguish her femininity from her personality. They are shown to the audience as integrated and it is tough to see Nazlı for who she is when she is all about portraying traditional femininity attributes. She wears a dress to almost all occasions and is carrying at least a pink item on her in every episode. As for other female characters, Pırıl and Ada do not radiate feminine energy like Nazlı, however; they also carry at least

one pink item on them at any time. Boys of the group do not have this kind of color-coded character design. The pink color being apparent in every girl character but blue not being apparent on each boy creates an understanding of underlying traditional mentality on gender subjects. Another color usage in the series is on the breakfast table of Pırl's house. Egg cups on the breakfast table are in two different colors, pink and blue. Pink egg cups are placed in front of female characters while blue ones are placed in front of male characters. In some episodes, they are already placed in the scene and in some others, Bahar brings them over to the table.

Bahar is portrayed as a sweet and loving mother of Pırl and Uzay who is a housewife. She frequently helps Pırl and Uzay with their questions and problems while never getting angry at any of them. In most episodes she is located in the kitchen, preparing breakfast for everyone. Her characteristic traits are not given much other than her being a mother and a housewife. The series shows a lack of grown-up representations in numbers when compared to the children representations. That is why giving more depth to the adult characters might have been a good way to show the audience how a person can have various traits. Adult characters are mainly shown as just doing their jobs or responsibilities in traditional understanding. An example is Bahar doing almost all the housework since Ali is only seen in one scene helping Bahar. In episode 7, he is pouring milk into his childrens' glasses while Bahar is bringing eggs to the breakfast table. It is the only scene where Ali an active part in preparing breakfast. The series does not subvert traditional gender roles.

## Gender Safety

The creative decision and the animation style of the series caused human characters to have oversized heads, bigger eyes, smaller bodies, and small noses. Child characters are designed as such, however; adults have longer and more proportionate bodies. All students and adults have different body types and slight variations in their designs. Pırıl and the rest of the characters are treated respectfully except Cesur. Cesur is the overweight character of the series, and as he is associated with food, he is made fun of by his peers as well as himself. He becomes the victim of fatphobic narration of the series. He is constantly reminded of his weight and appetite. Most of the time, he initiates jokes about himself and the rest of the group would laugh or continue to make jokes about him. The series does not have misogynistic elements. It cannot be said that the series subverts traditional gender roles, however; there is no explicit hate towards women or any females.

## Social Justice and Equality

All characters have their own traits. Since there are 6 students, there are 6 different children representations which automatically create various representations which the audience can relate to. The series is free of materialism and physical violence. Since most of the characters joke about Cesur, it cannot be said that emotional damage and psychological violence is not there. Cesur's weight is a topic that every character talk or laugh about which may make the audience members who associate themselves with Cesur uncomfortable.



The show does try to make the target audience learn mathematics and try to make it enjoyable so it does not have a concern to teach the target audience about social justice or equality, however; it does emphasize the importance of participation in team efforts, working together and respecting others' differences. In episode 13, Efe and Ada conflicts over who has the best card collection. Efe as a football fan likes to collect football cards contrary to Ada who likes to collect other types of cards which include scenery images. The moral of the episode turns out to be respecting each other's differences.

### Conclusion

*Pırl* is balanced in terms of gender representations. There equal numbers of cis gendered characters. There are no trans characters and the series is bounded to the gender binary. The series portray traditional understandings of women representations. Female background characters are limited and there is only one female character who has a job. Rest of the employed people who are shown as background characters, are male. The series is family friendly and safe in terms of unnecessary sexualization of characters. There is a character who is openly mocked and insulted in the disguise of jokes, Cesur. He is portrayed as an overweight character and mistreatment towards him is validated by fat stereotypes. This being aside, other characters are treated respectfully. The series is drained out of materialism and violence and has the sole aim to teach its audience fun side of mathematics.

#### 4.2.4 Avatar: The Last Airbender

## Gender Balance

*Avatar: The Last Airbender* is an animated TV series that has three seasons referred to as books. Each book consists of a variety of characters that numerically and cumulatively increase. In the first book, *Water*, the audience meets with the core protagonist group of the whole series. Aang, aged 12, is an airbender Avatar who happens to be found and rescued from an iceberg that stayed unharmed for 100 years by the last waterbender in Southern Water Tribe, Katara, and her older brother Sokka, aged 14 and 15. The trio travels around the world and have adventures in different locations while being chased by the 16-year-old banished Fire Nation Prince, Zuko, and his crew including his uncle Iroh. As another antagonist, in the name of Fire Lord Ozai, Admiral Zhao also tries to capture the Avatar and along the way, harms other nations in the attempt to conquer them for Fire Nation. Two animals accompany the protagonist group; Appa, a sky bison, and Aang's spiritual companion, and Momo, a winged lemur. The first book's characters consisted mostly of male characters, including important side characters. Some of the side female characters include Kana, Suki, Avatar Kyoshi, Smellerbee, Aunt Wu, Meng, June, and Princess Yue while side male characters include Monk Gyatso, King Bumi, Haru, and his mother and father, the Warden, Jet, Longshot, Pipsqueak, The Duke, Sneers, Avatar Roku, The Pirates, Bato, Jeong Jeong, Teo, the mechanist, and Paku. The first season of the series is highly male dominant in terms of character representations.

In the second book, *Earth*, the audience encounters more female characters who have strong effects and influences on the storyline. At the very end of the last chapter of the first book, the audience gets to see Zuko's little sister Azula as a cliffhanger. The 14-

year-old Fire Nation Princess is entrusted with the task of capturing the Avatar along with her banished brother and uncle by her father, the Fire Lord Ozai. Azula quickly teams up with her childhood friends Mai and Ty Lee while the protagonist trio adds a blind earthbender, Toph to their group. As Admiral Zhao disappears at the end of the first book and Zuko and Iroh try to build themselves a new life in Earth Kingdom, the main antagonist of the story becomes Azula. Stronger than Zuko and Zhao, Azula quickly becomes a huge hindrance to the protagonist group. Some of the side female characters include Michi, Avatar Kyoshi, Ursa, Suki, Sena, Joo Dee, Smellerbee, and Jin while side male characters include King Bumi, Ukano, Tom Tom, swamp folk, Rough Rhinos, Mayor Tong, Xin Fu, Master Yu, The Boulder, Hippo, Lee, and his father, Fire Lord Azulon, Professor Zei, the sandbenders, Long Feng, Dai Li Agents, Earth King, Hakoda and Guru Pathik. Even if it seems as the male presence is dominant in the second book just like in the first book, it should not be forgotten that the females play most parts in important events and have heavier responsibilities compared to most male characters. In the third and the final book, *Fire*, no significant characters are added to the story other than the very main antagonist, the Fire Lord Ozai. The audience gets to see his face for the first time in the first episode of the third book even though his voice and shadow were apparent in some scenes in previous books. While the plot of the story is climbing up to the climax which is the final 2 episodes, some side characters become important while some shift sides. One side character, Combustion Man is introduced to the story as a bounty hunter who gets hired by Zuko because of his desperation to get Aang killed. Some of the side female characters for this book include Lo and Li, On Ji and Hama while side male characters include Hide, Dock/Xu/Bushi, Piandao, Chan, and Ruon Jian,

Fire Lord Sozin, Ta Min, the chief of the Sun Warriors, and the Warden of Boiling Rock. Once again, more male figures are introduced to the audience in this book. Along with the additional characters, Azula and her team are explained in more detail in terms of their behaviors, personalities and choices.

In the whole series, there are not only human characters but also animals and spirits that are also a part of the show's gender binary. The most relevant animals to the storyline are Appa and Momo which both are male. Other than these two owned and named characters, other male animals consist of Flopsie the goat gorilla, Fang the dragon, Nyla the shirshu, Slim the catgator, Bosco the bear, and Hawky the messenger hawk where there are almost no significant female animals in the animated series. Miyuki, the herbalist's pet cat is the only female pet in the animated series. There are some other important animals whose genders are not shared with the audience; the Serpent, Unagi, Ran, and Shaw. Since animals play an important role in the plot of the series, knowing their genders also become important for a gender-based study.

As for the spirits, their shapes and qualities completely vary in different aspects as well as their gender. There are some spirits in animal forms along with human and even monster forms. Some known male spirits are Koh the Face Stealer and, Wan Shi Tong while female spirits are Princess Yue as the Moon Spirit and the Painted Lady. Some other spirits whose gender status are not shared with the audience but play a significant role in the plot of the story are Hei Bai, Tui and La. Since Avatars can communicate with their late lives through their spirit connections, Aang communicates with 4 past avatars who

are Avatar Roku, Avatar Kyoshi, Avatar Kuruk, and Avatar Yangchen. Roku and Kuruk are male while Kyoshi and Yangchen are female avatars.

Throughout the three books combined, there are significantly more male representations compared to female representations. However, human characters of the main protagonist group mostly have equal numbers of male and female representations. Different seasons had varying prominent antagonists and gender balance cannot be sustained since there is only one female antagonist, Azula, who stayed in the same status until the end of the series. Overall, *Avatar: The Last Airbender* portrays all kinds of different characters from different backgrounds and gender statuses.

### Gender Freedom

In the series, even if the main protagonist, Avatar Aang is the sole hope of the people who got terribly affected by the 100-year war, the audience see a group of people who help Aang to be better and stronger while trying to end the war using what is there on their hands. In any hardship, they act as a team to find a solution or fight back with their opponents. Aang, Katara, Sokka and Toph, along with Appa and Momo, form the main antagonist group throughout the majority of the storyline. They get to have adventures altogether and as an outcome, experience same events and learn from their actions together as a team. However, regardless of gender, characters get to have their own adventures or side stories as well. For instance, in the first book *Water*, Katara goes into a Fire Nation prison ship in order to keep earthbender prisoners separated from soil or any bendable substance. She chooses to intervene to the lawless arrests against earthbenders

and gives speeches to the prisoners to give them hope for escaping and ending the war. Her efforts do not go in vain and earthbenders riot, fight against the Warden and the rest of the firebenders on the ship. The head of the earthbenders, Haru's father, later thanks Katara for giving them hope and motivation to fight back and be true to themselves as earthbenders. Another inclusive example to the individual adventures of the characters would be book 2 *Earth's* chapter 15, *The Tales of Ba Sing Se*. The chapter consists of different character side stories. For instance, Toph and Katara's tale is about a day in a beauty salon to spend some time together as the girls of the group. Toph ends up sharing her inner deep emotions about body image after some random girls attack her verbally by making fun of her make up. The tale of Iroh is about him commemorating his son's death. The tale of Aang shows the audience Aang's thoughts on captivity of animals and how he playfully finds a way to bring peace to both the zoo animals and the zoo keeper. Sokka's tale is about how he likes to impress and compete in a joyful and persistent way with portraying a poetry event. Zuko's tale is about him going on a date with a girl. These small side stories or adventures make each character more relatable and help the audience to perceive them as individualistic and unique beings. Momo also has a separate adventure in the same chapter where he desperately tries to find Appa. Even for Momo, the audience gets to see a piece of Momo's personality and his needs as well as wish to find his lost friend. Just like Momo, book 3 *Earth's* chapter 16, *Appa's Lost Days* portrays to the audience Appa's personality, memories and needs as well as his wishes. The whole chapter is dedicated to show what happened after Appa got abducted and separated from Aang in Appa's point of view. His fear of fire develops in this chapter and by witnessing his many other traumas including this specific fright from his eyes, the

audience's sympathy grows for the character. The chapter won a Genesis Award which are hosted by the Humane Society of the United States, a nonprofit organization that focuses on animal welfare and opposes animal-related cruelties of national scope. (Fox, 2020)

Regardless of gender, male and female characters experience similar situations and experiences. One of the concepts that is associated with femininity in the visual media is the concept of love and romance. Throughout the story, it is implied that Aang has romantic feelings towards Katara. Sokka has romantic involvements with Princess Yue and after she sacrifices herself, with Suki. Katara has romantic feelings towards Jet and later on the story towards Aang. The audience sees Zuko go on a date with Jin and his involvement with Mai. There was even the portrayal of Azula's flirting skills. Love concept is treated thoroughly in the series using different characters. Both shared and individual chapters for love and heterosexual romance is apparent in the series.

One concept that is mostly associated with masculinity and manliness in the visual media is fighting and being motivated to fight. In the series, main female characters Katara and Toph are eager to fight using their bending abilities and fight for their right to fight. When Katara finds about women not being able to learn how to fight using waterbending in the Northern Water Tribe, she confronts the waterbending master of the tribe, Pakku and duels with him to make him respect her. Even though she lost the fight, she gains the respect of her older opponent and some additional background to the situation, she gets to learn fighting styles from Master Pakku. Similarly, Toph hides her real self from her

parents and refrains from using earthbending in front of her parents but in reality, she participates in underground earthbending contests and fights with muscular, tough earthbenders. When her father finds out about her true self and her talent in earthbending, he refuses to let her continue living as she is. With a life-changing decision, Toph runs away from her home and joins the protagonist team. On the other hand, Azula is portrayed as a very powerful and a gifted firebender. Thereupon, Zuko has a monologue about this matter “She’s a firebending prodigy, and everyone adores her. My father says she was born lucky. He says I was lucky to be born.” As a male and an older character, the audience learns that Zuko is compared to Azula by their father, the Fire Lord Ozai and in later episodes Azula’s talents and confident behaviors are shown to the audience in one of Zuko’s flashbacks. In terms of creative decisions, Azula’s fire is animated in blue color unlike all the other firebenders and she is given the ability to create lightning. Azula is also portrayed as the only person Ozai can trust in any matter as he confides the Fire Nation throne to Azula in the book three *Fire*’s chapter 18 *Sozin’s Comet Part I, The Phoenix King*.

For *Avatar: The Last Airbender* world, gender norms do not matter when a character acts a certain way. Every character, especially protagonists and antagonists have different character developments that progressed regardless of their genders.

Gender Safety



Most of the characters in the series are portrayed between twelve and sixteen. All the characters are bodily designed and animated as children, however; characters who have Fire Nation heritage are drawn more mature. The most prominent example is the physical comparison of Katara and Azula who are both fourteen years of age. Katara has a round face and big eyes. Her physique is drawn as a body of a teen. On the other hand, Azula has sharper features and always drawn with her lipstick on. Even though her physique is also drawn as a teen, with her sharp long nails, red lipstick and pointy features, she looks older than Katara when they are in fact at the same age. The comparison can be made when Figure 7 and Figure 8 are looked at.

*Figure 7: Katara, Avatar: The Last Airbender*



*Figure 8: Azula, Avatar: The Last Airbender*



A location which people can perceive this difference clearly is book 3 *Fire's* chapter 5, *The Beach*. Azula, Mai, Ty Lee and Zuko are on a forced vacation in the Ember Island and they go to the beach located in the area. All characters have their swimsuits on as well as different outfits other than their usual combat gear. With revealing clothes, their

bodies are shown to the audience in this much detail for the first time as in Figure 9.

Synchronously, the protagonist group that consists of Aang, Katara, Sokka, and Toph are shown as swimming in a lake area in Fire Nation, again with their swim wear on as in Figure 10. In the comparison with the two groups, it can be said that Fire Nation people are drawn slightly older than what they are.

*Figure 9: (From left to right) Ty Lee, Mai, Zuko, Azula, Avatar: The Last Airbender*



*Figure 10: (From left to right) Katara, Toph, Avatar: The Last Airbender*



Since the characters are mostly teenagers, some arguments and quarrels arise time to time. Especially the banished prince, Zuko starts and becomes a part of the verbal abuse and fights. Throughout the first book, he insults the protagonist group constantly whenever they come to face to face. His insulting behavior also affect his relationship with his ship crew. Since Iroh knows what Zuko has been going through ever since he was a child, he tolerates the disrespect he shows towards him. Zuko's disrespect towards Iroh continued until he started helping the protagonist group to defeat Fire Lord Ozai. Along the way, he disrespected almost every character he contacted with. In *The Beach* chapter, Zuko continues to be violent towards everyone and his issues become too much for Mai, his girlfriend, to handle which causes them to split as a couple. He also insults Ty Lee, causing her to lose her usual calm state for the first time.

Even though Zuko is portrayed as a rude, confused teen in the majority of the series, Zuko is not the only person who disrespects Ty Lee. Azula becomes jealous of Ty Lee and insults her by stating that she is ignorant to notice the boys like Ty Lee because she makes it easy for them, she is not a challenge but is a tease, the boys do not care who she really is to begin with. Ty Lee breaks into tears as Azula tries to apologize immediately. Other than this incident of Azula, in the same chapter, it can also be seen that Azula is not respectful towards kids who are younger than her and her peers who she does not know. She kicks a sandcastle made by two small Fire Nation children and causes them to cry. Few scenes later she sees a volleyball match and participates to it with the rest of her group with the strong motivation to destroy the opponent team. Azula stays as a disrespectful and arrogant towards the end of the finale of the series unlike Zuko.

Another probable instance of disrespect or inappropriate behavior might be Iroh's interest in June who is shown in Figure 11, however; since June's age is not given in any official source within the Avatar Universe, no solid statements can be said about the encounter of these two characters in the book one *Water's* chapter 15, *Bato of the Water Tribe*.

*Figure 11: June, Avatar: The Last Airbender*



### Social Justice and Equality

The series is diverse in many aspects including culture, gender, and body types. Each character has their own spiritual growth visibly shown to the audience. Culture building of the series is inspired from some Asian cultures which has not been done in American TV before. Additionally, unlike most of the animated series for the same age range, *Avatar: The Last Airbender* portrays disabilities as not as the person's main trait but show them to the audience as who they uniquely are. This approach normalizes having disabilities and makes the audience empathize with the characters. There are two characters with disabilities who are Teo from the book one, *Water's* chapter 17, *The*

*Northern Air Temple* and Toph who first appeared in book two *Earth's* chapter 6, *The Blind Bandit*. Teo is the son of the mechanist and the head of the Earth Kingdom villagers who live in the Northern Air Temple. As the audience learns from the mechanist, Teo was badly hurt by a terrible flood that happened when he was a child and this incident caused him to be physically disabled from his legs. Regardless of his disability, the audience first see him on the air while doing air-gliding with his special gear. His disability does not stop him from being a part of his people and is loved and respected by everyone in the temple. As for Toph, she is said to be the strongest earthbender even though she is blind from birth. Toph tells how she learnt earthbending for the first time in the book three, Fire's chapter 13, *The Firebending Masters*. She says the original source of earthbending is the badgermoles and she encountered with them when she was very little. She says they were blind just like her, and because of that they understood each other so, Toph learned from them how to earthbend as an extension of herself and a way of communicating with the outer world. As a matter of fact, the series show disabilities are no obstacles when it comes to being active and fighting.

Since the martial art element of the series is dominant in the form of bending, fight scenes are quite apparent throughout the show. Different bending styles got inspired from real Chinese martial arts styles such as water from Tai Chi, earth from Hung Ga Kung Fu, fire from Northern Shaolin Kung Fu, and air from Baguazhang (Insider, 2021). Addition to the bending and fighting scenes, the story's plot does not allow the series to be drained out of violence. The whole story takes place in a war era between Fire Nation and rest of the world. Aang, early in the story, learns his people, the whole Air Nation is wiped out

by Fire Nation. His motivation to be an Avatar who brings peace and harmony back to the world lies behind his great emotional trauma and shock when he found out the state of his own people as well as his culture. As Aang understands what physical and emotional traumas are being inflicted on other people by the Fire Nation, he starts to become willing to be an Avatar. As he is the Avatar, he and the rest of the protagonist group get constantly hunted by different antagonists throughout the books and almost each episode portrays the existing fight between the good and the bad to the audience.

The fighting dynamic also points out how the rich and the poor are treated differently. The war that is apparent in the series started by the late Fire Lord, Ozai's grandfather Fire Lord Sozin and since then, the Fire Nation went from different villages to cities to conquer and colonize them. Great damage is given to most of the Earth Kingdom cities including the Capital of the Earth Kingdom, Ba Sing Se. Fire Nation is shown as the villainous community of people, however; as the chapters progress, it is shown that poor fire nation villages suffer as much as the other earth villages suffer from the Fire Nation. It can be said that, regardless of wealth status of a city or a person, Fire Nation gives damage and dominates over whatever the counterpart is.

Another example of how the social statuses are treated into the series is the imbalance and mistreatments in the great city of Ba Sing Se. There are 3 social circles in the city and they are divided by circle shaped high walls. In order to travel from one circle to another, one needs a passport or they cannot pass. Refugees and poor part of the city lives

in the Lower Ring as the aristocrats and the royalty live in the Upper Ring while the bourgeoisie belong in the Middle Ring. Ba Sing Se is a city that values wealth and social status as a capitalist city. In the book 2 *Earth's* chapter 14, *City of Walls and Secrets*, when the protagonist group arrives to the city and start their tour with Joo Dee, Aang states that he has never been to Ba Sing Se because the way they live there is far opposite of how the monks taught air nomads to live. It is clearly stated in the chapter that no one in the protagonist group like or support the way things operate in Ba Sing Se. The Ba Sing Se arc of the storyline is the part where the protagonist group involve themselves with and experience the politics and governmental misconceptions directly.

As the Avatar, Aang is entrusted with the task of bringing peace and balance to the world and he is forced to do whatever it takes to achieve this goal by many people throughout the series. There are high expectations for Aang to become successful at stopping the Fire Lord and ending the war. Near the end of the final arc of the story, Aang faces with the reality of what stopping the Fire Lord means and denies the fact that he needs to kill him in order to put an end to the war. When everybody in the protagonist group, even Zuko supported the idea of killing Ozai, Aang did not want to go along with this plan. First and foremost, Aang saw Ozai as a human and taking his life did not seem fair to him and that is why he found a way to take Ozai's bending away without killing him. Aang's understanding of justice was not parallel with his environment or his past lives, however; he found a less violent way to take power away from the wrong hands.

## Conclusion

*Avatar: The Last Airbender* is roughly balanced in terms of gender representations. There are almost equal numbers of gender representations. The series stay in the gender binary. There are no trans characters. There are characters from different social classes as well as ethnicities who belong to different groups. The series subverts traditional gender norms of females staying passive and males being active. Female characters of the story are as active as male characters. Ages of characters are quite young and no character is openly sexualized. Some characters are rude and make fun of others, however; it is clearly shown throughout the series they are either going through a tough time or are antagonists. There are various representations of kids including disabled people. The series have Asian influences and this reflects to some core points within the series. As for the justice concept, it is stated that every life is sacred and violence is never the answer.

### 4.2.5 Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe

#### Gender Balance

The film's main group consists of six characters who are Akın, Mert, Kamil, Hayri, Hale, and Sevim. Cis male characters are Akın, Mert, Kamil, and Hayri while cis female characters are Hale and Sevim. Every character is created within the gender binary and all of them are cis-gendered characters. Sevim is one of their friends and Hale is Hayri's sister. The gender imbalance in the main group is apparent between the supporting characters as well, including the antagonists of the film such as Veysi, Kuşçu Baba, Kazım, Nuri, and others side characters. These characters are all male representations and



are proof that female representations are lacking. There are only two girls and they do not have much screen time in the film. They mostly are on the supporting side even though they belong to the main protagonist group.

As background characters, some female Göbeklitepe folk are apparent, however; most male Göbeklitepe folk are shown as carrying stuff and working actively. Females carried less stuff and were significantly less when compared to males in their shared scenes. Also, there is lack of originality in terms of these background characters. They are mostly copy-pastes of one another and this creative choice diminishes character differences significantly, letting the audience know they were just unimportant props to the plot of the story. Briefly, there are only two female characters when there are more than ten male characters in the film. These two female characters that are shown in Figure 12, talk only once during the whole film where they talk about ancient people who lived in Göbeklitepe premises and due to this exact scene, the film passes from the Bechdel Test.

### Gender Freedom

The main characters of the film go to Göbeklitepe premises to understand what happened to Veysi and find what importance does the decked round tray, sini, he sent to Akın has. The whole group Akın, Mert, Kamil, Hayri, Hale, and Sevim along with Kuşçu Baba go to Urfa and start their collective adventure altogether. While some other male characters have their own purposes and aims in different parts of the film, Hale and Sevim do not

have their own separate aims or journeys. They all get to be a part of their shared adventure, however; scenes, where a lot of action takes place lack female presence.

Sevim and Hale do not even talk to each other much except the scene where they were sharing their excitement of seeing Göbeklitepe for the first time which is also the same scene where the film passes from the Bechdel Test. Hale and Sevim's existence purpose in the storyline are to support the plot and the main male characters and they are also involved in the decision-making process as supporting characters.

*Figure 12: (From left to right) Hale and Sevim, Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe*



Another aspect of gender stereotyping is the clothes and colors of gendered characters. Şen and Deniz (2019) suggest that in this franchise's television series called *Rafadan Tayfa*, it is seen that the red color as well as red undertoned colors are dominant in both female characters. It was understood that the female characters wore trousers and shorts.

For the series' male characters, it has been determined that they mostly dressed in blue and brown colors. All of the male characters wear trousers and use belts as accessories. These aspects are same in *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe*. Similarities do not end just for these observations. The fact that there are no female representations in work life is also another similarity with the main television series. Since there are only two female characters in the whole film, the audience does not see an employed female character.

All characters of the film get to be involved with most of the scenes and regardless of their gender, they get to be a part of the friend group they have. When it comes to other supporting characters and representations, things get a little bit more traditional. There are some scenes where differences between males and females are somewhat apparent. An example would be when the ancient Göbeklitepe folk carries items and stuff. When male characters carry their packs on their backs, female characters carry theirs with their hands. Another instance is when Hayri wakes Kamil up by imitating Kamil's mother. He makes a high-pitched voice and imitates generic Turkish mothers. Even though there is not a sexist distinction in the scene, small differences still make people question whether these decisions are sexist or not. There needs to be more material to look at or delve into to say that the film subverts traditional gender roles.

### Gender Safety

Hale's and Sevim's ages are 11 and 14 and their shapes are not sexualized. Their body types are different from one another and their heights are also different from each other.

Hale has blond hair and large green eyes while Sevim has brown hair and green eyes.

Hale is shorter than Sevim and seems heavier than her, almost the same body design as her brother. The female characters are not objectified by male characters and are respected as a part of the group. They are not laughed at or criticized in any matter.

Other than female characters, one of the male characters Hayri is objectified to some fat jokes even though his sister Hale's weight is very much alike as well as their outer appearance throughout the film. Hayri is associated with food and constantly teased about it. The hunger and gluttony appear to be associated with Hayri's characteristics and are given as a certainty that he always thinks about food. An example would be the part where the group decides to go to Göbeklitepe in the library scene. At one point, Hale does not want all of the group to go to Göbeklitepe because she thinks if they go all together, the male characters are going to cause unnecessary trouble. Then Hayri gives his own opinion to Hale as "What are we going to do? It is as if we are going to engrave our names on 12000-year-old stones. After all, we're just going to eat 2 portions of "ciğer". The line is an example of how Hayri is reconciled with eating-related concepts and his character is actively contributing to this perception. Up until this scene there (can be said that) were three separate fat jokes about Hayri in different scenes which are minor and seem as "harmless jokes". Another example of Hayri being the center of mockery is again when the group joins a "sıra" night in Urfa. Hale warns her brother about eating his food very fast, Hayri while continuing to eat, responds by saying to mind her own business. It is always implied that he loves to eat and his other personality traits are intertwined with this single fact that he is the "fat kid" in the film.

## Social Justice and Equality

The film's characters are different and unique both physically and behavior-wise. There are age and gender differences within the group, however; it does not affect them being a close friend group. It can be said that there are multiple different representations of 90s children in the film. Variations in representation allow the audience to connect with the film more and affect the film's overall relatability.

The film is not free of violent behaviors and detrimental topics. The main conflict of the story is about historical artifact theft and there are two antagonists one being the Nuri as the main antagonist instigator, and the other is Kazım, the thief. Nuri's ultimate goal is to steal certain artifacts of Göbeklitepe and for his aim, he busts Kazım out of prison to use him as his underling in pursuance of reaching his goal. Nuri bribes Kazım with the diamond he was trying to steal in the previous film of the franchise and he agrees to steal the Göbeklitepe artifacts Nuri wants from him. The film revolves around Göbeklitepe's secrets and mysteries, and one relic which Veysel sends to Akın is the symbol of this enigma, the round tray. The main protagonist group deals with these thieves and constantly tries to protect themselves from Kazım as they know who he is and what he is capable of. The most prominent artifact is a tray and Kazım tries to get a hold of this item throughout the story. Kazım goes to extremes to steal this tray. An instance to it would be Kazım tailing the main protagonist to steal the tray while they all are on the train to Urfa. Even in this dynamic scene, there are no fistfights or actual blood which is a result of causing a character physical harm situation. Theft is the most prominent behavior of the antagonist group of this film. Towards the end of the film, Kazım saves Akın from

getting crushed under rocks and shows to the kids there that he changed in a better direction somehow.

### Conclusion

*Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe* is not balanced in terms of gender representations. There are more cis male characters than any other and characterization is bounded to the gender binary. There are no trans characters. Female characters of the story seem like side characters and do not have an active role in forming the plot of the film. Hale and Sevim do not go to their own adventures and barely talk to one another even though they have multiple scenes where they talk to the boys of the film. Hayri is one character who is overweight and his personality is intertwined with his eating habits, not creating any depth to the character. The film's characters are not objectified or sexualized, so the film is family friendly. The end of the film suggests forgiveness and owning up to mistakes.

#### 4.2.6 She-Ra and the Princesses of Power

##### Gender Balance

*She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*, as understood from its name, consist of many, princess characters. The series lack gender balance since a significant number of characters are cis female. Adora, Glimmer, and Bow form the leading protagonist group. Even though each season has differing understandings of antagonists, for the most time and most prominently, the main antagonists are Catra and Hordak. Within the main

protagonist group, there is only one male character, Bow, who does not have magical powers, unlike his teammates. As his name suggests, he uses archery as his way of fighting with technologically advanced gear and arrows. Adora and Glimmer are both princesses who have different magical sources and powers. Adora, as She-Ra, has a magical and technologically advanced sword along with her multiple magical powers, also is the main character of the series. Glimmer is the princess of Brightmoon, and she draws her powers from the moonstone located in the area. As a team, they are a part of the rebellion, which actively fights against The Horde. The Horde as a military base is located in the Fright Zone and is ruled by Hordak. Each good character and bad character are in a powerful position.

Along with other female representations in the series, it can be said that almost all female characters have some magical or supernatural power. The same cannot be claimed for male characters. While female representations are portrayed as magical and powerful, male representations lack the magic narrative even though they portray being impactful. The series is the only animated series within the scope of this research that goes beyond the gender binary. Along with having trans characters who are Perfuma and Jewelstar, the series also have a non-binary character who is Double Trouble, which makes the series go beyond gender binary.

## Gender Freedom

Within the seasons of the series, men, women and non-binary characters get to have similar adventures and experiences. Regardless of their gender, the good characters fight against the Horde and show active resistance through their actions. Most women within the series fight using their magical or supernatural powers. The leading princesses of the series draw their powers from their “princess stones” located in their castles. Other princesses who do not have a specific source for their magic also have magical or supernatural abilities and it is not stated clearly how they have magic or what their magic sources are. Each uses their powers to achieve their personal goals while being included in the main storyline. Other female characters who are not princesses mostly use their supernatural physical strength to combat.

Men and women subvert traditional gender perceptions in multiple ways, one being the portrayal of LGBTQ+ representations. Most small character groups have diverse LGBTQ+ representations. For example, Bow is portrayed as a child of a gay couple. Both his parents are portrayed as cis male parents. Perfuma, the princess of Plumeria, in Figure 13, is a princess with the ability to manipulate plants, drawing her powers from her princess stone. She was considered as a trans character by the series’ fans and the idea was approved by the creator of the series, Noelle Stevenson when she liked a now deleted Tweet of a fan which indicated Perfuma being a lesbian trans woman (Glimmer, 2020). Another trans character is Jewelstar, a trans man who appeared in the last season of the series. Spinnerella and Netossa are cis female princesses who do not have princess stones. Their love towards one another became sub-topics for multiple episodes in different seasons. They are portrayed as a lesbian couple. In the last season of the series,



the romance between Adora and Catra became canon - making this a flagship in representation (Bacon, 2020). They are portrayed as a lesbian couple as their romance became the series' reality. Going beyond gender binary, the series added a non-binary representation to the last arc of the story. Double Trouble in Figure 14, is canonically non-binary. They are referred to with they/them pronouns throughout the series and also have a very androgynous appearance.

*Figure 13: Perfuma, She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*



*Figure 14: Double Trouble, She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*



Traditional gender perceptions also shift by physical appearances and capabilities of characters. The most notable difference is Adora's She-Ra form. The comparison can be made while looking at Figure 15 and Figure 16. Her appearance and posture are more masculine when she becomes She-Ra since her height increases significantly and her muscles, especially her biceps, become noticeable. Other examples are also apparent through different characters. For example, Frosta, the princess of the Kingdom of Snows, in Figure 17, is a cis female representation who is a very young child. She is significantly

younger than the rest of the characters, but she is one of the most energetic and physically active. She uses her powers to enhance her physical abilities, mostly her punching techniques.

*Figure 15: Adora, She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*



*Figure 16: Adora as She-Ra, She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*



Another example is Scorpia, a princess and the rightful ruler of the Fright Zone, in Figure 18. Her physique is the most masculine of all princesses and female characters with her muscular-seeming, large upper body, and body proportions. Her hair is also shorter, seeming like a pixie cut, which appears to be a more traditionally masculine choice of hairstyle. Her physical strength is another indicator of how she subverts traditional gender roles.

Another instance for subversion of the gender roles is the dynamic between Mermista, the princess of Salineas, in Figure 19 and Sea Hawk, an experienced sea captain. Mermista has magical powers and a strong will to protect her people, while Sea Hawk does not have any special powers and is best known to set ships on fire, which indicates he is an

airhead. Mermista continuously saves Sea Hawk from various hazards and dangerous situations. The damsel in distress narrative is completely switched with this comedic duo.

*Figure 17: Frosta, She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*



*Figure 18: Scorpia, She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*



*Figure 19: Mermista, She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*



## Gender Safety

Differences are celebrated in this series in many ways, primarily by portraying or representing various characters. Both body shapes, traits, and personalities of the

characters vary. Body types are realistic, which means they are not illustrated with exaggeration. There are slim and chubby portrayals and fit and muscular characters, so the silhouettes of characters do not consist of cookie-cutter shapes. To give an instance from the leading protagonist group of the first seasons, Adora has a comparatively normal-standard body with a fit physique, and her She-Ra form is muscular, as explained before. Glimmer is a shorter character with chubbier attributes. Bow has a fit physique and tall build. They all have different skin tones as well as different stances as their characteristics also differ. There are inclusions of different body types and shapes among other characters. A good example would be the diversity between princesses. Each princess has their own specific traits and attributes. Some of them are; Perfuma is slim and tall, Mermista is wider and curvier and has the same height as Adora, Frosta is an average-looking child and the shortest princess, Spinnerella is chubby and tall. Some other differences distinguish characters.

Princess Entrapta is an autistic representation within the series who is openly proud to be herself (Chappell, 2020). Noelle Stevenson once again stated how Entrapta should be understood as an autistic character from her Twitter account in 2020. She does not have any magical powers like other princesses, but her supernatural hair is an extension of her limbs that can help her go from one point to another and be useful for grabbing and grasping, allowing her to have supernatural powers. She is an essential character for pointing out variations in representations in the series.

Regardless of their differences, at the end of the series, every character within the series is treated respectfully, even the antagonists. In the first 4 seasons, antagonists treat protagonists and people on the antagonists' side with disrespect and sometimes, humiliation. They try to humiliate and conquer people's lands in the name of the Horde. The Horde member, Kyle, a white cis male representation, is a victim of his peers' bullying and shaming. No one trusts him with any job or his capabilities in any sense. He is portrayed as a punching bag for the side characters. Along with this, Kyle is also shown as useless to the audience by the series' creators. Other than this exception, everyone in the story is treated respectfully by other characters and the creators.

Even though there are references given to characters' sexualities inside or outside of the plot, no character is sexualized in an ill-intentioned way. There are no sexualization beyond attractions or pairings between characters. Since the main cast is mostly underage, it is an outstanding qualification for the series. Additionally, there is no apparent misogyny throughout the series.

### Social Justice & Equality

There are many different characters that portray various aspects and characteristics of real-life people. Differences in representations also create diversity, enabling more people to relate to these characters. Especially LGBTQ+ representations add more diverse characters and relatability for the LGBTQ+ audience. Among many animations in the American animation industry, Double Trouble stands out as an openly non-binary

character who uses they/them pronouns. Many animated works have been evolving and improving over the last 10 years regarding queer representations (Robertson, 2019).

American animations did not explicitly show the sexualities of characters if the character had a homosexual subtext in the past; however, after the legalization of homosexual marriages in the US in 2015, queer representations in animations became visible (Brown, 2021). Queer representations in American animations are of great importance for the LGBTQ+ audience since representation is a problem for many generations of LGBTQ+ communities. Having similar characters to themselves create a sense of acknowledgment through the audience of the series.

The series is filled with non-gore, violent scenes, including war battles and close combat scenes. The antagonists are all a part of the Horde community and actively attack the rest of Etheria. The main protagonist Adora as She-Ra also indicates violence in the series because her full attire and accouterment complement a fighting attire. When Adora transforms into She-Ra, she receives a boost of physical and magical strength. This also affirms the story's violent narrative. Even though violent themes are apparent in the series, the ending concludes by having justice for the protagonists and the good-sided Etheria. As a person or as a symbol, She-Ra represents social justice and fairness for the magical planet Etheria.

## Conclusion

*She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* is not balanced in terms of gender representations. There are more cis female characters than any other gender. The series is not bound to the gender binary and include a non-binary character. There are two trans characters, Perfuma and Jewelstar. There are multiple LGBTQ+ representations. All women representations of the series are actively involved in the storyline. One character is treated disrespectfully and he is Kyle, however; other characters are well respected and most of them are highly relatable characters. Most women have strong bonds with each other, especially princesses. The film is safe for children since there are no sexualization regarding characters. The end of the film shows the independence of Etheria from the Horde Prime and ends with a LGBTQ+ friendly tone. Justice is shown through kindness and the main antagonists from the first four seasons get to have their own happy endings.

#### 4.2.7 Kötü Kedi Şerafettin

##### Gender Balance

In *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin*, the main character is Şerafettin who is a foulmouthed, ill-behaved house cat that is feared by almost every other character in the film. He has a group of friends who he socializes as well as drinks with and they are Rıza, the rat and Rıfkı, the seagull. He lives with his human owner, Tonguç. He is also acquaintances with the street cat Cemil as well as the grocery store owner, Şemistan. Human or animal, Şerafettin's environment is filled with multiple male presences and among his animal friends, he is equally feared and respected due to his "masculine" attributes.

Other than male characters, there are only three cis female characters. Each character in the film is created within the gender-binary and all are cis-gendered characters. The first female character the audience encounters is Pırtav, the female housecat of an artist, referred to in Turkish as “Çizer”. Cemil tells Şerafettin about a female newcomer to the neighborhood and describes Pırtav to Şerafettin in a very sexualized way. A few scenes later, Pırtav dies due to being scared by Şerafettin and in the following minutes, it is understood that her existence, as well as her death, mattered for creating the antagonist of the film. She is merely being used by film writers to help a male character become an important character.

The second female character that the audience encounters is the old lady Hasene, the landlady of Tonguç and Şerafettin. She is seen in some random scenes and her one considerable impact on the plot is when she kicks Tonguç and Şerafettin out of her property. This caused Tonguç to be even more enraged towards Şerafettin and made him disown Şerafettin altogether. She is a supporting character just like Pırtav.

The third female character of the film is Misket, the white house cat. She has the most impact on the plot as well as Şerafettin himself among all the other female characters of the film. She becomes Şerafettin’s first love and solidifies her place in the main group of characters by being so. In the film, it is seen that male representations are numerically more than female representations and unequal roles are distributed. Therefore, the masculine structure predominates the film (Demir, 2021).



## Gender Freedom

Male and female characters are completely different from each other. If it is considered two out of three female characters have supporting roles, it can be concluded that female representation is already lacking in the plot of the story. The two female cats are prone to stay inside their houses. Pırtav's most prominent and only mentioned characteristic is her being a pureblood house cat. It is declared in Pırtav's first scene that she does not leave her house and live a passive life. This was also proved by Misket's first scene. Misket tries to get out of her house for the first time and ends up getting chased by two street dogs. It is conveyed to the audience that females are not safe on the streets of that neighborhood. This pattern is also consistent throughout the film with testimonial follow-up scenes. When the victim is Misket, her savior becomes Şerafettin. She gets to be a victim and does nothing other than wait for Şerafettin. Misket being the only female representation among the main characters of the film makes interpreting and relating this specific fictional female representation to real female humans considerably easy and it leads to false interpretations about reality. Her being the only representation available does convey the idea of the stereotypic female idea of the toxic masculine ideology. While the male characters go on several adventures, as the sole female representation in the film, Misket waits for the males, especially for Şerafettin to appear with him solving the conflicts of the problems.

The one and only human female in the film is Hasene, who is the old landlady of Tonguç and Şerafettin's home. Due to her age, Hasene spends most of her time at her home. In most of her scenes, Hasene is cooking and shopping and in one of them, Şerafettin steals

Hasene's plate of fish she bought for eating with her family. Hasene represents a variety of traditional Turkish mindsets for women. She wants to stay out of action and fulfill a passive, laid-back life, without any trouble.

The male and female representations in the film do not subvert traditional Turkish gender roles. Masculinity is reconciled with physical and verbal violence, rudeness, activeness, and carelessness while femininity is reconciled with tentativeness, fearfulness, hopelessness, and passiveness. The characters' gender is the most prominent constraint for them to have different roles and acts throughout the plot of the film.

### Gender Safety

Even though most of the characters are animals, unrealistic bodies and sexualization of female characters are apparent. It is clear that female representations of the film got objectified significantly by the character designers. Female cats were significantly designed to look feminine and attractive. On the contrary, male characters do not have considerably equal standards of attractiveness in terms of their faces and bodies. Both female cats are described as having good bodies and attractive features. For instance, Misket, in Figure 20, has a slim waist, distinct breast area, a curvy body, small nose, glossy lips, half-open eyes with long eyelashes. Her eyes are also colored green on one and blue on the other. Other than Rıfkı, she is the only character who has colored eyes. Both Misket and Pırtav catch the audience's eyes with their beauty and attractiveness. It is no coincidence that these two female cats are pureblooded and beautiful. The concept

of being pureblooded and beautiful is highlighted as the most important way to influence men (Demir, 2021).

*Figure 20: Misket, Kötü Kedi Şerafettin*



Females are not treated respectfully and it can be understood by the conversing language of the male characters. Along with their designs, females were also objectified by the male characters of the film verbally. The film has foul language and ill manners when talking about or describing females. The ill manners are performed by male animals especially by Şerafettin. The first thing he says when meeting with a new female cat is “Hello dear! I’m Şerafettin, shall we make love?” and continues conversing with the female cat as if he is not performing indecent behaviors. The language of the film is also demining women in general. The slurs, cursing words, and mockeries are spoken in misogynistic tones, as accurate as it is in the real Turkish street language. The masculine profanity of the film undervalues each female character.

Other than females, when it comes to Şerafettin's son, Tacettin, he is also not respected by Şerafettin. Tacettin is not liked or wanted by Şerafettin but Tacettin's curiosity of finding and knowing his father does not stop him from being persistent. He continuously wants to have his father's love and acceptance, however; fails to gain it until either he mentions who his mother is or gets physically violent with Şerafettin. When Tacettin reveals his mother's identity, he piques Şerafettin's interest for a short period of time but Şerafettin chooses to spend time with Misket. The small bit of value he gives to his son is measured by what importance Tacettin's mother had in Şerafettin's life. If it is not for a female with whom Şerafettin had sexual desires or a sexual past, almost nothing and no one matters to him. When Tacettin cannot receive the attention he wants from Şerafettin, after this reveal, he shows violence against him and punches Şerafettin in the face, showing him, he is indeed his son. Then he receives the attention of his father and Şerafettin starts showing respect towards Tacettin.

### Social Justice and Equality

The film is filled with violent themes and actions. A hefty example would be the main antagonist, Çizer's motivation to kill the main protagonist, Şerafettin. Pırtav's death caused by Şerafettin and Cemil, makes Çizer go mad and the situation results in Cemil's death as well as the creation of the antagonist of the story. When Çizer and Şerafettin fight, Çizer ends up dying and comes back to life as a zombie to avenge Pırtav. Filled with rage, the zombie version of Çizer chases Şerafettin throughout the film. Other than the scenes where the antagonist and the protagonist collide, violent language between most of the characters is very common. Between Şerafettin, Rıza and Rıfkı masculine

curses and profanity are frequently apparent. Rıza insults Rıfkı multiple times in various scenes. Along with the ill language, excessive alcohol intake, as well as smoking cigarettes and weed, is clearly shown. In the scene where the group along with Tacettin decides to go and rob a bank, Rıfkı offers to be the observer for the group so they do not get caught in the act by the police. However, the scene shows him smoking something while he relaxes with his reddened eyeballs. Even though it is not named directly that he was smoking weed, he was most probably doing so since other characters who smoke cigarettes did not get such physical reactions.

The scene or theme where they go and rob a bank is also a portrayal of materialism in the film. The first thought that money would solve every problem the group faces, comes from Rıfkı when he was thinking of how fed up with he is with his friends and his way of living. Then he proposes this idea of robbing and everyone goes along with his plan. At the end of the robbing part of the film, Rıza is shot along with Rıfkı. Tacettin is severely hurt and Şerafettin is alone and confused. He understands that money does not solve every problem and throws the banknotes they stole from an apartment roof. The people on the ground as well as the policemen look at Şerafettin in confusion and shock. People start collecting the money falling from the air while Şerafettin aches in agony and sorrow about Tacettin. So, the film shows the theme of having materialistic dreams that do not end well and are not efficient to have but also portrays greedy and materialistic characters such as Rıza.

The characters are not respected and most of the time they become targets of all kinds of abuse. The characters may be relatable since some concepts are available in the reality as well such as materialism or greed, however; there is not much to delve into about the consequences of these kinds of actions. Only Şerafettin faces serious consequences as almost losing his son. Rıza and Rıfkı get shot as well but they do not get injured as seriously as Tacettin, they continue living their lives normally. The show has a theme of “money won’t solve many problems and may even cause serious, dangerous situations” the show is not equal in terms of gender representations of “men” and “women”. The show consists of real stereotypes of people; landlady, poor musician, helpful shop owner, etc.

### Conclusion

*Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* is not balanced in terms of gender representations. There are more cis male characters than any other and is bounded to the gender binary. There are no trans characters. Female characters of the story are passive and mostly sexualized, even for the side characters. There is no depth to the women of the film. The film is not safe for children because of drug use, foul language, bloody and gore scenes which include brutal fighting scenes, and high levels of sexual tension between Şerafettin and his love interest is apparent whenever Misket is on the screen. Verbal and physical violence does not stop until the end of the film. Many characters are treated disrespectfully. The film is full of materialistic messages and lacks tranquility.

#### 4.2.8 Invincible

##### Gender Balance

Since Invincible as an animated series belong to the superhero genre, there are many characters with super human powers. There are super humans which belong to both genders. Men and women in the series are represented in similar numbers. There are some naturally developed groups throughout the first season of the series. The main group consists of Mark Grayson, the protagonists' family. Mark lives with his mother Debbie and father Nolan who is the strongest superhero known as Omni-man. In the first episodes of the series, the family is portrayed as having a stereotypical American family dynamic except Nolan's full-time job is to be a superhero. Debbie is a working woman who loves and adores her family. Mark is portrayed as a high school teenager who is a little rebellious and looks up to his father very much. After he gains his powers, their dynamic slowly changes and the family breaks apart after the reveal of Omni-man's true intentions. He then gets introduced to the audience as the main antagonist of the series. In this first group of characters, both men have super-human powers but Debbie is just a human being. Regardless of being just a human, she has strong influence over her husband and her words she told him long time ago when Mark was a small child lingers and keeps its meaning for Omni-man. Mark as a super human does not have that much of influence over his father, but Debbie has the one and only power of influencing the strongest being on the Earth.

The second group is formed by Marks' friends or social environment which consists of Mark, his best friend, William, his love interest, Amber and a fellow superhero, Eve. The group consists of two high school boys and two high school girls where two have super-human powers and the other two do not. The group is balanced in terms gender representation and power structures. Mark and Eve both have similar powers and are in the similar levels in terms of their strength. Since William is portrayed as an openly gay student, the series is inclusive in terms of LGBTQ+ representations. In terms of race, Mark has Asian descendant from his mother's side and Amber is black while William and Eve are shown as white characters. The group is both inclusive in multiple aspects and balanced.

Other groups in the series consist of superheroes since the whole plot revolves around heroism. All have balanced numbers of gender representations and power distributions. Both Omni-man's superhero group of the first episode, Guardians of the Globe, and Eve's teammates which form the Teen Team are inclusive and balanced in multiple aspects.

### Gender Freedom

Girls and boys or women and men in the series get to do and experience similar circumstances, regardless of their gender. Almost all characters have a stereotypical life and some have the superhero experience as an addition. The plot of the series focuses on two characters' adventures and growth story; Mark and Eve. Both have superhero powers



which let them have the power of flight and super human strength. Mark shows his powers physically when Eve uses rays of pink light to show her powers. Even though their powers differ in presentation, their heroic senses are pretty similar. Continuing their growth journey as superheroes, their usage of powers and their purposes differ in some external ways. After he manifests his powers and starts training with his father, Mark tries to understand himself and who he is as a superhero. Eve, on the other hand, is in another kind of search for herself. She is first introduced to the audience as having a romantic involvement with one of her teammates, Rex. After Rex has an affair with another teammate, Kate, Eve breaks up with him and her questioning of herself starts from that point on. Her heartbreak leads her to try wanting to understand what she wants to do with her life and how she will use her powers and for what purpose. Both characters question their existences over different happenings. Along with their superhero lives, their social environments also have similar turbulences. Mark finds out his father's real intentions and the purpose of his existence on Earth while fighting against him to death. In the season finale fight, Omni-man gaslights Mark to believe every harm that has been done to civilians because of their fight is Mark's fault and the result of Mark's indecisiveness. A comparison can be made when Eve wants to leave her family home to be on her own. Her father tries to stop her by gaslighting her into thinking she is weak and in need of protection since she is a girl. However, her father's method of protecting Eve backfires and she continues to live as a superhero. The difference in these two characters' breaking points is Eve being physically stronger than her father. However, at the end of their disputes and quarrels, both Mark and Eve get to choose their own paths. In these ways, their character developments go aligned with each other. Other than these

two core characters, side characters such as Debbie, William, Amber and others, have their stories integrated to the main plot. They all get to express their likes, needs, values and emotional circumstances.

### Gender Safety

Body shapes are realistic in the series. Since the series originate from a superhero comic series, anatomy of the characters is near to realistic bodies. Neither female nor male bodies are drawn in one stereotyped way and various body types and shapes are included in the series as it can be seen in Figure 21 and Figure 22. Most core characters are underage high school students and their bodies are also drawn as teenager bodies. None of them were sexualized or objectified.

*Figure 21: Eve, Invincible*



*Figure 22: Mark, Invincible*



All characters are respected from the point of view of the creators, however; both Mark and Eve are not treated respectfully by their fathers. Mark's father does not show his real intentions until the end of the season but when he does, he fights with Mark, trying to lure him into his side rather than the humanity. He leaves the scene where he almost killed his own son and departs from the Earth after recalling Debbie's words on parenthood and humanity. Showing no respect or sympathy for Mark, he blames, degrades and gaslights him, making Mark understand he is no match for him. Eve's father on the other hand, does not harm Eve physically, however; he does not lack when it comes to degrading his daughter with traditional gender norms. Her father, Adam admits it was the worst day of his life when Eve got her powers and states that he only wants what is best for her which is having a house, a husband and kids. The fundamental reason why Eve leaves her family home is depicted as because her father's views on her.

### Social Justice and Equality

The concept of social justice in the series is a bit different than general superhero genre examples. During an invasion scene or an action scene, normally it is not expected to see civilians explicitly die, or experience traumatic events. Towards the end of the season, Omni-man gaslights Mark and blames him for killing and harming civilians, while they fight for death. Omni-man's toxic perspective on what is right and what is wrong is unusual for a hero, but very likely to have by a villain which is not surprising.

But the choice of the creator team to explicitly show how people get affected by all the superhero “fights” and “battles” make audiences question the ethical part of these kinds of fights, or happenings. Since the plot is revolving around a limited number of people, especially Mark and Eve, there are not many variations of representations. However, the series managed to include LGBTQ+ characters as well as POC characters.

### Conclusion

*Invincible* is balanced in terms of gender representations within the main group of the series. However, there are slightly more cis male characters than any other throughout the series, including the side characters as well as background characters. There are no specific non binary characters so it is safe to say that the series fall under the gender binary. There are no apparent trans characters. Female characters of the story are highly active and has influence over strong male characters. Characters are not openly sexualized but the series is not safe for children to view since the narrative of the series is violent and consist of brutal scenes. The end of the first season ends with uncertainty. However, it is apparent that violence in the series will continue in the upcoming seasons.

### **4.3 Ecofeminist Elements in Animations**

In this section we have written about characters, concepts, scenes, and illustrations of each selected animation. After the individual observations and comments on each animation, as concluding statements, three figures created according to the codes of the

thesis is given. Overall, which animations have ecofeminist elements and which do not are discussed.

#### 4.3.1 Kral Şakir Cumburlop

*Kral Şakir Cumburlop* has an antagonist which happens to be a variation of ecofeminist thought. The Jellyfish Lady who is referred to as “Denizanası” becomes the villain she is because of the reckless trashing of the ocean by the human kind as it is seen in Figure 23. Her anger towards humanity results in villainy and she decides to destroy the whole planet altogether. The last part of her plan, which is to make Earth explode by using an advanced weapon, points her out as a villain and a ruthless underwater being rather than an angry ecofeminist.

Figure 23: Polluted waters, *Kral Şakir Cumburlop*



Even though the anger of the antagonist is towards human beings, whole character spectrum of the film consists of talking animal-human hybrids. In the universe of *Kral Şakir* series, there is not any fully human character, each one is a hybrid of human and

another animal. The same is valid for this animated film and makes the hatred towards humans quite confusing. Some ecofeminists discuss the ethics of consequences of human actions over non-human living beings (Gaard,2017). This animated film's narrative is an example of how human recklessness can affect non-human animals.

As an underwater non-human hybrid, the Jellyfish Lady wants to put an end to destruction of her habitat and her oppression as a non-human animal. She distinguishes herself from the human concept and detests others who are not her kin. The oppression she faced which is described as the destruction of her habitat, made her seek freedom by getting revenge on beings who destroyed her "home", polluting and trashing the ocean. Her revenge can be interpreted as a war declaration towards negligent and careless humans. Even though she does not state a specific gender she rebels against, from the ecofeminist view, it can be understood that the Jellyfish Lady is in war with the capitalist, anthropocentric and toxic masculine way of living. In some views, women are considered to be more in tune with nature and that being said, they notice the differences in her environment quicker than men (Nyamweru, 2003). If this is considered as a base, Jellyfish Lady would be considered as a leader of an environmentalist rebellion. However, some ecofeminists defend that women are not more aware of such issues, women are in fact just mere humans and men just seem to not care about things they are not directly affected by (Nyamweru, 2003). Now in this case, Jellyfish Lady is a being who is displeased by the way she and her home was getting treated. Both ways, the character finds a relation with ecofeminism approaches and fulfills her duty to attract

audience's attention to the real-life water pollution issues. As a sole cis female character, Jellyfish Lady, is the only ecofeminism element in the film.

#### 4.3.2 Frozen

Elsa is the one character of the film who acts as an ecofeminist, probably without even noticing. As the deuteragonist of the animated film *Frozen*, Elsa steals the spotlight from the protagonist Anna. The King Agnarr's, father of Elsa and Anna, influence over Elsa continues to linger inside of Elsa even after his tragic death and Elsa lives her life inside her bedroom, never leaving or interacting with anyone other than herself, as if she is cursed. As d'Eaubonne (2022) suggests, "the most naïve woman interiorizes and lives in her unconscious, as early as puberty, sometimes even earlier, all the judgements that males have leveled at her through centuries." Her search and confusion about who she is and what she wants to do almost conflicts with Disney's typical princess narratives. As ecofeminists suggest, oppression reigns everywhere for a woman and the feeling of being oppressed is not different from the internalized repression (d'Eaubonne & Hottell, 2022). As Elsa allows herself to show more of her emotions, her relatability spread among wider audiences. A song in the film, *Let It Go* especially helped Elsa to gain the admiration of people and recognition among ecofeminists. In the song, Elsa sings about her freedom and her choices for the first time. Since she has been a captive of what her father taught us over years, to be a good girl and hide her magical self from others, the song makes her let herself be free of these boundaries. She uses her ice magic and builds herself a castle while singing about how she is free for the first time in her life.

The freedom concept goes side by side with Elsa after this song and her close relation with the concept of ecofeminism is revealed at the same time. The song starts with the scene where Elsa is shown in a snowy mountain when a snow storm is apparent. She is situated in a way that audience understands she feels small and powerless towards the situation she is in (Sriastuti, 2014). She seems to be feeling cold at first but with her words “cold never bothered me anyway” the snow storm loses its strength and Elsa is no longer shivering. She becomes cheerful as she “lets go” of her oppressed self and play with her ice magic. When she lets go of her fears about herself in the context of her magical powers, she fights against the oppression by standing up for her true nature. Her dress change in the middle of the song also emphasizes the message of freedom and attracts viewers’ attention, more than the protagonist, Anna (Streiff & Dundes, 2017).

*Figure 25: Elsa in the beginning of song Let It Go, Frozen*



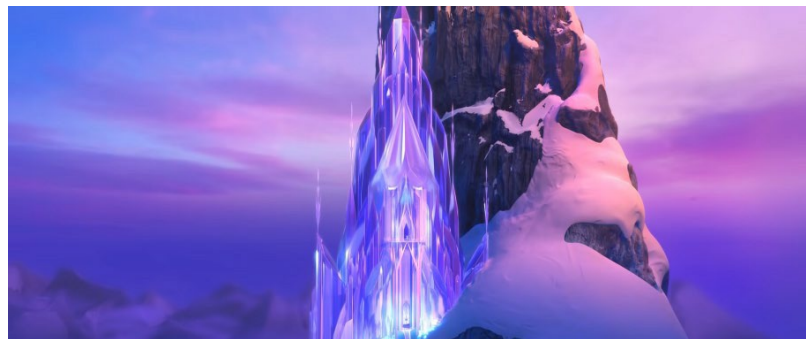
*Figure 26: Elsa towards the end of song Let It Go, Frozen*





Elsa's facial expressions as well as body language change during the song as she frees herself from the oppression she has faced until that point. This change can be seen when comparing Figure 25 and Figure 26. Many ecofeminist scholars defend both women and nature are treated in similar manners and forms by patriarchal society, one being Karren J. Warren. Her views on ecofeminism go parallel with Elsa's case of being oppressed by patriarchy and finding herself by turning her face to the nature as well as her own nature. Her escape is both a self-exploration against rejection and a self-construction from resistance, not a passive avoidance caused by a lack of courage to face reality (Wen, 2014).

*Figure 26: Elsa's ice castle, Frozen*



Human's domination of nature is based on a patriarchal worldview which legitimizes the domination of women (Wei, 2019). Since Elsa's magical powers are her true nature, making her hide this side of her is equivalent to her hiding her identity. Her connection with her environment is cut and so, her confidence is shattered by her father's teachings. That is why, embracing her true self, including the very first thing her father teaches her

to be scared of, makes Elsa connect with her surroundings and become one with nature. It can also be seen in Figure 26, as Elsa builds an ice castle to herself. As she gets to accept herself, she becomes an ecofeminist icon within the animated narratives.

Elsa shows the awakening of female self-awareness in twenty-first century as she becomes free of her bounds to her fears inflicted by her father. She is an example of how women with a clear goal ahead of them gradually become the subject of life itself. These women are no more weakened by their fears and oppressed pasts, but have strong mindsets with unshakable willpower (Wu, 2020). Elsa's connection with her environment and nature is given in an ecofeminist way. She gets to accept herself and be one with her nature as well as the nature of Arendelle.

#### 4.3.3 *Pırl*

*Pırl*, as a series, portrays traditional perceptions of gender and social norms while not underlining any ecofeminist issues. Neither any episodes nor any specific character represents feminism or ecofeminism throughout the analyzed episodes. Most prominent reason is for that is the portrayal of gender roles. In terms of gender roles of the animated series, some behaviors and preferences consist of stereotypical, traditional gender norms (Duman & Koçtürk, 2021). One leading instance to this is the fact that occupational groups within the series being highly populated by men who are canonically accepted as cis male characters. Except from the classroom teacher, İpek, there are no visible women who are employed and has a full-time job. Even though the number of gender

representations are near equal within the main group of the series, side or background characters mostly consist of men who are employed. Women portrayed as side or background characters lack the certainty of having jobs since they are mostly placed on streets, walking or talking. Additionally, Pırıl's mother, Bahar is mostly shown in the kitchen of their house, preparing breakfast for family members. She does not seem to be employed or have any other business other than involving herself with household chores. While the mother is portrayed in such ways, father of the family, Ali is employed and works as a veterinarian. He is not seen in one scene where he prepares the breakfast or involve himself with household chores. His scenes with his children Pırıl and Uzay are also limited compared to the screen time Bahar has with them. Boys in Pırıl's class seem to be interested in traditionally acceptable topics for boys such as sports, science and eating food while girls, especially Nazlı, seem to be interested in fashion, beauty and being feminine.

Addition to the characters, there is a transition scene that can be a part of ecofeminist analysis. The transition scene is portraying an Istanbul view which consist of mostly green areas and small houses, which shows a very eco-friendly Istanbul. It can be seen in the Figure 27. The scene can also be interpreted as an illustration since the only moving object on the scene is a ship that is sailing in the Istanbul Bosphorus.

Figure 27: Istanbul view, *Pırl*



Even though scenes where characters show, Istanbul is not depicted as green as such. The whole story of the series takes place in our current time, which means Istanbul depictions except this transition scene, reflects the real Istanbul more. Even though Istanbul as a crowded city is full of tall buildings and concrete, the depiction of a greener Istanbul is a nice touch in terms of eco-friendliness. However, this does not change the reality that *Pırl* as a series do not portray ecofeminist elements.

The only ecologically aware episode is the 47<sup>th</sup> episode called *Sıfır Atık* which is an episode that introduces the Zero Waste Project run by the First Lady of Turkey, Emine Erdoğan. The episode gives information on what the project is about and how can people be a part of it by simply decomposing daily wastes. Even though, through this project, the episode creates an aura of ecological awareness, the episode lacks feminism as rest of the series.

#### 4.3.4 Avatar: The Last Airbender

*Avatar: The Last Airbender* is in fact an animated series that is directly related with Eastern and Asian beliefs and teachings. This close relation with real philosophies and ways of living add the series a way of appreciation of nature and spirituality. The base concept of the series, “bending” is portrayed as a way of interacting with one’s environment and a culturally passed tradition. Benders of each nation may have the ability to bend regardless of their gender or status since it is a trait some people have and some not. Only the Avatar, the bridge between the physical and the spirit worlds, can master all four elements to maintain the balance and stability to the people. As the era’s Avatar, Aang is a cis male airbender as well as an air nomad who has a gentle and forgiving soul. Since he learned the teachings elderly air nomads taught him, he lives his life as a vegetarian, thinking that every life is sacred. Aang is respectful towards the nature, spirits and all living beings. That is shown in the last arc of the series when Aang faces the Fire Lord Ozai and rejects to kill him in order to end the war. Instead, he shows great courage and determination to take Ozai’s bending ability rather than his life. Considering the cruelty and harm that the Fire Nation and its rulers caused to the world, everyone expected Aang to put an end to the 100-year war by ending Ozai’s life. The disrupts that Fire Nation caused was not only limited to the genocide of Air Nomad folk but extended to colonization of many Earth Kingdom cities and invading indigenous lands of the Water Tribe communities. As some ecofeminists suggest as long as expansionism, separatism and capitalism go hand in hand, peace will not be achieved (Gaard, 2017). Since most characters thought the same way about Fire Nation, even Ozai’s son Zuko suggested Aang to kill Ozai to stop the era of imbalance. When

everyone expected him to take a life, as going accordingly to his beliefs, Aang refused to do so and use the technique he just learnt from a lion turtle, a hybrid animal unique to the Avatar universe, to take Ozai's firebending ability away. Aang's respect towards life itself has great examples, one being this final instance. Other than his respect for life, his bond with nature and spirits complements his relationship with animals, especially with the flying bison Appa and lemur Momo.

Treatment of Appa and Momo are mostly positive in the series however, characters' status within the series can be understood by how they treat Appa. Good people love and care for Appa while ill-intentioned people lack sympathy against him. This animal cruelty pattern is engraved to multiple antagonist of the series throughout three seasons for not just Appa, but for other animals as well. In the first season, Zhao slays the Moon Spirit which is in the physical world, in the shape of a koi fish. Another instance is Appa's kidnap by capitalist sandbenders and then the deep state of Long Feng along with Dai Li agents. A circus master's and Azula's cruelty against Appa is again shown in the second season's award-winning episode, *Appa's Lost Days*.

Among ecofeminism, it is discussed that the interdependence among human, animal and environment is a knowledge legacy of the feminist theories (Gaard, 2017). Appa, as a flying bison is loved by the protagonist group, but at the same time he is used as a transportation instrument. He is portrayed as the animal guide of Avatar Aang and is given a responsibility no other human is given to. As some ecofeminists who deal with

animal-human interactions suggest, people sometimes instrumentalize their companion animals or pets, as they do to all of their relations with all sorts of beings (Emmerman, 2014). Even though Appa is dearly loved by Aang who he is connected with on a spiritual level, human characters of the series, including Aang utilize Appa as a transportation tool. However, it shouldn't be forgotten that their friendship is a prominent side topic in many episodes.

Katara, the Southern Water Tribe's last waterbender and Toph, the greatest earthbender of her time, are the two important cis female characters of the series. Katara starts as a rookie waterbender and develops her powers until she becomes a master. Her gratitude and deep love for her bending makes her connected with her water tribe roots as well as the nature around her. Since there is water in almost any situation, Katara is reminded of how she is constantly connected to her bending ability by another waterbender, Hama, when the group is in Fire Nation territory. The information that she has the power to manipulate humans by bending the water inside them is transferred to Katara by Hama in the same episode, *The Puppetmaster*. Feeling it is unethical and unfair to people, Katara refuses to learn the technique, however; Hama forces Katara to learn it in order the technique to be transcended to next generations. Katara is highly traumatized the fact that she had to learn the technique and the scene clearly shows how Katara has a caring, gentle soul. The possibility of stripping someone from their freewill is wrong for Katara and is against her justice seeking spirit. An instance where Katara seeks for justice is when she is not let to learn waterbending in the Northern Water Tribe because of her gender. The traditions of the tribe suggest that women can't use bending to fight but to

only heal. Katara does not understand the mentality and insists to learn how to fight by using waterbending. She challenges a great waterbending master, Master Paku and seeks equality for herself. Similar rights are also demanded by Toph. Since Toph is blind and physically shorter than most of the characters, most characters do not expect her to be a successful earthbender including her parents. Her parents, especially her father cannot fathom the fact that Toph is a very strong girl who loves to fight. Her relationship with her bending ability is denied by people near her and Toph finds the solution in searching for her salvation which is running away from her home to travel with the Avatar's group. She teaches Aang how to earthbend and later finds a new earthbending technique, metalbending. Both of these girls, Katara and Toph struggled to prove themselves to people however, they got to improve their connections with nature and their roots. They became the best of the best at what they do and gained respect of people from all over the world at the end of the animated series. As Gebara (2003) suggests, we as humans, stop alienating ourselves from the nature that we all originate from. Our cultural structures all have same ancestry, the nature. Cultures do not exist in opposition to its native nature. This parallel is given as bending in the series and it is clearly seen, who does not respect bending, have unfortunate events happen to them.

As opposed to Aang, Sokka is a character who learnt to respect bending, nature and women over time because of his good and bad experiences. He started as a sexist, careless and a sarcastic big brother who did not take Katara seriously and was captivated by the toxic masculinity he had to face from a very early age. Since the tribe's men left to fight in the war, their father, the chief Hakoda entrusted the whole tribe's safety to Sokka.



Stressing under the pressure of being the only “man” of the tribe, he develops a kind of power complex which can be simply explained as toxic masculinity. After he meets certain love interests as Suki and Yue, his personality starts to shift. When he encountered the Kyoshi Warriors and met with their leader Suki, he understood for the first time that there are strong women outside of his tribe and he can learn from stronger people regardless of their gender. Through the first season finale, Sokka encounters with the Princess Yue of the Northern Water Tribe and falls in love with her. Yue’s connection with the Moon Spirit, Tui, is shown to the audience when Zhao brutally harms Tui, a spirit who chose to have a physical form of fish and helped Yue gain life spirit when she was a small baby. As Zhao performed animal cruelty on the scene, he got blamed for killing Tui, destroying the balance of all people, including his country, Fire Nation. To bring balance back and save the Moon Spirit, Yue gives the life spirit she took from Tui back and sacrifices her life as she becomes the next Moon Spirit. Yue’s transformation and sacrifice shook each person in the scene, leaving Sokka in utter misery and guilt. However, Yue’s sacrifice is seen as an honorary and selfless act by her people, including her father, the head chief of the Northern Water Tribe. People are proud of and thankful to Yue for her selfless act.

With Katara’s improved waterbending skills, Toph’s addition to their group and the antagonist group of Azula, Sokka becomes less and less sexist and his sarcasm shifts to being more gender neutral, more situation and event based. An example would be chapter 4 of book 3 *Fire, Sokka’s Master* where Sokka acknowledges the abilities of the group and saddens with the thought that he is the only one in the group who does not know how

to fight in his own way. Along with his love interests Suki and Yue, he became a respecting character towards women. Even with all his increased levels of respect which is demonstrated by lower levels of insults and sexist comments towards female characters, his disbelief in nature's greatness is also punished throughout the series. The episode *The Swamp* is an example for how Sokka gets instant punishment from the nature itself for disrespecting it. For many traditional societies, masculinity is connected with dominance, strength, power, hunting and elite consumption, however; it was not always defined in such capitalist ways and in opposition to ecology (Gaard, 2014). In Sokka's case, it can be said that he redefines his masculinity and continues to become a sarcastic young boy, but this time respecting people and nature.

The concept of "bending" introduced in the series are a way of celebrating nature and culture, bringing the dualism of nature/culture and reconstructing the dynamic. Heavy influence of Asian culture as martial arts and belief systems are portrayed in multiple angles throughout the series. Bending is influenced by various martial arts styles while philosophies and living ways of characters are mostly based on belief systems and theories. One of the influential Asian beliefs which has visible patterns on connection between nature and human is Shinto belief. Shinto disintegrates dualisms of the West related with nature and offers an ecofeminist and respectful societies for anthropocentric humans (Maruyama, 2003). An example is second book's fourth episode *The Swamp* where a description of how we are connected to each other are given right below the tree that connects everything in the Figure 28:

“You think you’re any different from me or your friends or this tree? If you listen hard enough, you can hear every living thing breathing together. You can feel everything growing. We are all living together even if most folks don’t act like it. We all have the same roots, and we are all branches of the same tree.”

*Figure 28: The tree that connects everything, Avatar: The Last Airbender*



Fire Nation is portrayed as disconnected from their natural roots and core cultural beliefs even though within their borders they are the “greatest nation” and the “most civilized” one. Instead they are shown as the most capitalized and industrial one among the four nations. The Fire Nation not only gives harm to other nations and its environments, but also its own villages and poor regions. Book three, episode three, *The Painted Lady* portrays the degeneration of Fire Nation soldiers and ecologic carelessness of Fire Nation government. In the episode, a fishing village of Fire Nation is constantly harassed by Fire Nation soldiers who reside near a Fire Nation factory that pollutes the river in which the village is built on the center. Katara, disguising herself as the village’s care taker spirit

each night, heals and nourishes villagers. As an indigenous young woman and a motherly figure throughout the series, Katara does not let villagers suffer because of the factory or the soldiers, and towards the end of the episode, causes the factory to blow up and the river to be cleaned. In the very last scene, the spirit she disguised herself as actually appears in front of her and thanks Katara for what she has done for those people in the Fire Nation village. In a way, the spirit of the area can be interpreted as the nature and this shows the ecological bond Katara has with nature. This specific part of the series stands with some ecofeminists' thoughts about modernizing societies and the toll they bring on unadvantageous groups such as women, indigenous communities, marginalized and exploited peoples (Mellor, 2003).

#### 4.3.5 Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe

*Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe* does not have feminist or ecofeminist values in it. The film is a product of the TRT Çocuk series *Rafadan Tayfa* (2014) and is the second film of the franchise. The series is said to be preserving traditional values of the Turkish society and norms (Özsel, 2018). The same is valid for the film as well. The film portrays traditions of Şanlıurfa as well as the traditional social structure of Turkish culture. "Sıra Gecesi", one of the most important local cultural elements featured in the film, was included in the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List in 2010 as part of the "Traditional Conversation Meetings" (Baş & Halaç, 2021). Importance of ancient structures of Göbeklitepe and Şanlıurfa are stated throughout Şanlıurfa scenes. However, there are no conversations regarding gender concept. Two girls of the film, Sevim and Hale do not have as much lines as their cis male friends who belong to the same protagonist group.

When they have lines, they are about the main plot which help the scene to proceed, rather than their own concerns or thoughts. Male characters in the animated film are enthusiastic problem solvers, intelligent and, interrogators while female characters are helpful with anxious personality traits (Şen & Deniz, 2019). The two cis female characters of the film do not concern themselves with ecology and its relation with gender issues. Additionally, the plot of the film does not involve ecofeminist issues and concerns.

#### 4.3.6 She-Ra and the Princesses of Power

*She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* consists of multi-dimensional characters who are mostly cis gender women. Two characters stand out in terms of ecofeminism which are Adora, a cis white woman and Perfuma, a trans, non-white woman. The protagonist Adora is at the same time She-Ra, the princess of power. She has personal responsibilities aside from her role in keeping Etheria safe. Adora fights against oppressive forces as well as her personal enemies, mostly her future love interest, Catra. Adora and Catra are two orphans who grew up in the Fright Zone under the Horde. They were raised to become strong soldiers who must battle against “evil” princesses of Etheria. When Adora gains her She-Ra powers and learns the truth about the lies the Horde have been feeding them, she dedicates herself for the greater good and turns against her past. She wants to include Catra to her new reality, however; Catra refuses as she thinks Adora is abandoning her. The two best friends turn into enemies as Catra continuously tries to capture Adora and destroy Etherian cities in the name of Lord Hordak. Catra becomes a mere tool for the evil kingdom Horde and loses what her way of what is more important to her. Adora has

to fight against both Catra's attacks and Horde forces. Adora's connection to the planet and to princesses make her the most ecologically connected character. Even though she does not know how to be a proper She-Ra, she trains hard to be enough for people, defeat the Horde and, stop its expansionist conquer and as a result she connects with Etheria's magic, representing her reaching a strong bond with the environment.

Etheria as a planet, is portrayed as a magical place which is full of magic powers. At the end of the series, it is understood that magic of Etheria is tried to be harvested. At the end, Adora as She-Ra prevents it from happening and the audience can see a very bright, green Etheria that reached its full potential as the occupant forces are defeated. Etheria is portrayed as an eco-friendly place which has wide areas of green fields and trees. At the very end of the series, the planet is even brighter and greener than it ever was as it can be seen in Figure 29.

*Figure 29: Etheria in the series finale, She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*



Adora's bond with Etheria's magic did not happen suddenly, but was a process. One of the first things Adora accidentally manages to do is turning a horse she was fascinated with to a magical, talking winged unicorn. The magical creature, Swiftwind supports Adora in many situations and battles, even giving her assistance with her figuring out how to be a competent She-Ra. Adora and Swiftwind's companionship and friendship is not portrayed as other friendships Adora has. When Swiftwind gains consciousness, it was decided at that moment that they would share an inseparable bond and understand each other's feelings. A human and a non-human sharing a beneficial bond is truly beneficial for the human companion (Emmerman, 2014).

Another character that has deep connection with nature is Perfuma, the princess of Plumeria. She uses the magic stone of Plumeria as her source of magic hence, has the ability to manipulate plants. From her outfit to accessories, it is visible that she likes flowers and cares for plants. She constantly seeks inner peace and harmony, even in stressful situations she manages to keep her composure. Her deep connection with plants makes her ecologically aware regarding soil.

Even though he does not have a connection with nature as his friends, Bow is portrayed as an eco-friendly character. His interest in science and technology does not stop him to be caring and gentle towards Etheria's environment. Many ecofeminist philosophers offer diverse yet mutually reinforcing critiques of Euro-Western cultural constructions of masculinity. These understandings mostly revolve around themes of self-identity,

maturity-as-separation, dominance, strength, having achievements and economic accumulation (Gaard,2017). These traits are considered to be achieved by respected, high-power, wealthy men in today's capitalist understanding. This stereotyping of "successful men" show up in several media works. However, in an American animation, Bow does not fit into the depiction of such men. He is an emotional, caring, fun, accepting and a friendly character who is also brave, strong, clever and. He is not a stereotypical male character that needs to be continuously strong, emotionless or rich. Bow's existence certifies the thought that men are not biologically disconnected to the nature as women are assumed to have a ready-made connection with environment. "Men are not inherently destructive, however: it is patriarchy not men per se, that is the enemy of the nature." (Eaton & Lorentzen, 2003). He is connected to the nature by showing his care and affection to Etheria, similarly to his female friends.

#### 4.3.7 Kötü Kedi Şerafettin

*Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* as an animated film does not portray any feminist or ecofeminist values. Turkish society has a hegemonic male structure in the construction of Turkish sense of masculinity (Demir, 2021). Since this structure manifests itself in almost every aspect of society, the audience comes across to it in the animated film *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin*. In this context, Şerafettin, the protagonist of the movie, undertakes the duty of being the brother of the neighborhood or the bully (Demir, 2021). Most characters are billingsgates who use women centric slurs that objectify or degrade women. Love interest of the protagonist, Şerafettin is highly sexualized in order to emphasize Şerafettin deserves and gets the "best" woman and the definition of that is being sexually attractive.



The other cat, Pirtav, which attracted Şerafettin does not even have one line in the entire screen time of her. She is introduced to the audience just because Şerafettin and his friend feel attraction towards this highly sexualized female cat.

#### 4.3.8 Invincible

The first season of *Invincible* introduced feminist characters to its audience. Amber, the love interest of the protagonist Mark and Eve, the tritagonist of the series as a well-known superhero. Even though there is not much information given about Amber other than the fact that she dates Mark, Eve's storyline is thoroughly shown. Eve is first introduced as a part of the superhero team Teen Team. She has the power of subatomic manipulation which allows her to manifest her ability in different areas with using various ways. She has a relationship with another team member, Rex who later cheated on her with Kate. After this betrayal and Teen Team's disbandment, Eve starts questioning her whole life and even if she wants to be a superhero in years to come. The inevitable changes in her life leads her to take action for herself in the middle of the series, the fourth episode *Neil Armstrong, Eat Your Heart Out*. In the fifth episode *That Actually Hurt*, Eve is seen for the first time with her parents in their living room, arguing about Eve being a superhero. Eve's father Adam is furious because Eve broke up with Rex over infidelity and wants her to get back with him. Adam thinks Rex is the one that protected Eve from something bad ever happening to her until then and feels threatened by the thought Eve can get hurt if she continues being a superhero on her own, without a team to protect her. However, Adam goes as far as almost calling his daughter stereotypical misogynistic profanities while saying "all guys make mistakes" The whole

argument leaves Eve in tears and makes her furiously leave her home. Adam is the “man” of the household, the whole rule set of that house is the will of Adam. Since the moral codes of patriarchal societies are written and executed by men, it becomes inevitable for women to obey and cease to please the dominant male structure (d'Eaubonne & Hottell, 2022). This tour de force of Adam backfires causes Eve to distance herself from the notion of family. Gebara (2003) suggests that privileged people define what are proper behaviors for the rest of the people. Just like in the Middle Ages, men still continue to create ethics and write moral codes for whom they try to control. In this context, what Adam does is an act of “normal fatherhood” while Eve seems like a rebel for standing up for herself in front of the bully her father is.

The same episode, few scenes later, Amber’s words “Make the world you want to live in.” resonates with Eve and the next episode *You Look Kinda Dead*, she decides to leave her house to find who she is and what she wants to achieve in her life. Her father still tries to stop Eve by addressing her with her first name “You can’t save the world, Samantha”. Adam’s persistent behavior only proves Eve’s points and fails to impress her. Before she leaves, she visits Mark and explains why she does not want to go to college as;

“When I was at the community center with Amber, something clicked for me. I think I can help more people by just helping them, you know? I don’t have to wait for some alien invasion or the Lizard League’s next attack. I can irrigate desserts, stop natural disasters, bring food to the starving. You know, make a real difference.”

The urge to find what she needs to do, sets Eve free from society's perspective on what a woman can do or not. Her powers allow her to be who she wants and what she wants to do. After rebelling against her father, Eve concludes seeking for acceptance and appreciation from her family in a micro perspective. She sets herself free and focus on what can achieve on a macro level. As d'Eaubonne (2022) suggests, feminism as we understand today is no more about longing economic and social evenness between sexes. It is an issue of survival, whether the humanity will rise or fall. Words of Eve when she leaves "That's what's best for you dad, not for me." defines the biased perceptions against young women in traditional households and portrays the lack of freedom these girls have over their own lives. Eve chooses to rise and become her own person rather than living in her oppressed state with her traditional, toxic family. Liberation of Eve symbolizes the defeat of her father and toxic masculinity.

Eve, then flies across a forest and builds herself a treehouse, seeming to be consisting of fully sustainable materials as in Figure 30. After settling down, she puts a forest fire down and enhances the growth of the burnt trees, making the burnt area disappear in few seconds. She saves two hikers from a landslide by solidifying the earth mass and enhances the growth in farm lands. She continues to help people, additionally she starts to help nature itself. She starts living and experiencing to be a part of the nature by helping it regenerate and sustain itself. People she helped are appreciative of Eve and show their gratitude from their social media platforms. When Eve sees the thanking posts, she happily continues her day while drinking the coffee she prepared. However, Eve's choices continue to be questioned by men, specifically by Mark. He thinks the reason of

Eve's change is her shaken relationship with Rex. Without noticing, Mark makes a hurtful statement caused by his own confusion about not knowing where he stands within his life. Eve, once again, explains to a man she is her own person and she is proud of what she has been doing. Women need to constantly fight for appreciation and acceptance of men if they want to be revered in the patriarchal world order. Even though cis women give birth to men, the same men become against women that gave birth to them (d'Eaubonne & Hottell, 2022).

*Figure 30: Treehouse Eve has built, Invincible*



The way some action scenes were portrayed to the audiences underline the violent and brutal part of the concept of oppression. The season finale revealed who the real antagonist of the season was and why. Omni-man tried to make humanity vulnerable by destroying their superhero forces, leaving space to make his people conquer Earth. Even before his intentions were revealed, Cecil orders a weapon to be activated on Omni-man, showing the audience the devastation, this weapon causes. The small wild animals such

as rabbits inside the forest burn altogether with the force of the blow that landed while different kinds of birds fall to their death from above. As the target, Omni-man only receives a nosebleed but the ones which really got affected are the nature, non-human living beings. The scene confirms the claim that a man would use destruction of environment as a solution to a problem caused by another man (d'Eaubonne & Hottell, 2022).

#### 4.3.9 Conclusion

Codes of the thesis are equality of gender representations, equality of social status, gender stereotypes, sexualization, respectful and disrespectful treatment, violence, and justice in order to find ecofeminist elements within the selected animations. Using these codes, we have created three figures that depict where each animation stands compared to one another.

The Figure 31 looks at equality of gender representations and gender stereotypes. Each animation is placed on an approximate point in the figure accordingly. The figure shows which animations have high levels of equality of gender representations and high levels of gender stereotype as well as low levels of equality of gender representations and low levels of gender stereotype.

## Gender Balance and Gender Freedom

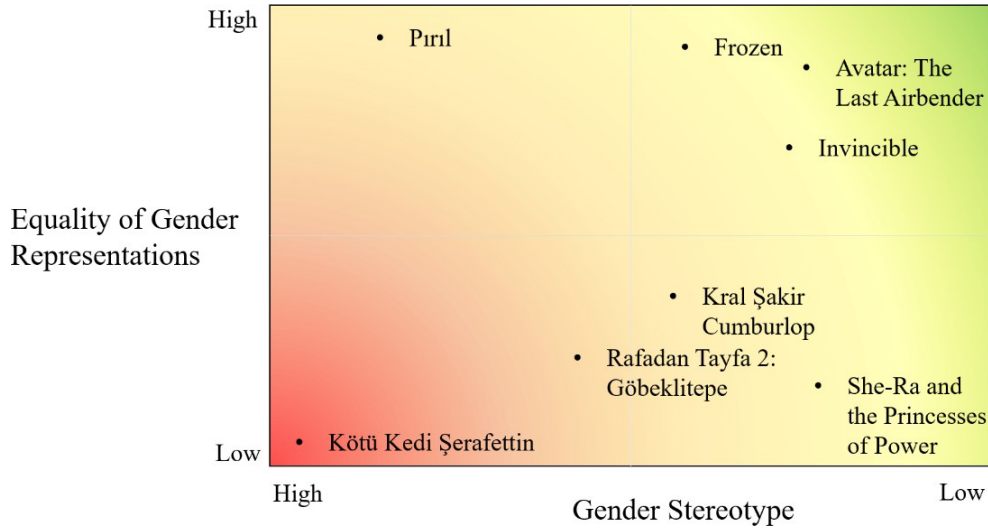


Figure 31: High rate of equality of gender representations addition to low rate of gender stereotype is the wanted situation, shown with green area and low rate of equality of gender representations addition to high rate of gender stereotype is the unwanted situation, shown with red area. In between red and green area is depicted by yellow.

*Kral Şakir Cumburlop* has low equality in gender representation since female characters of the film are less than males. When it comes to gender stereotypes, female characters of the film are active and feisty, including the antagonist. *Frozen* has equal numbers of female and male representations within the main characters. As for gender stereotypes, the film has active female characters that are the main characters. The film subverts traditional views. *Pırl* has quite equal numbers of male and female characters. *Pırl* also has high gender stereotypes. To give examples, the mother figure is a housewife that almost never leaves kitchen and prepares breakfast. There is only one female who is employed. *Avatar: The Last Airbender* has equality of gender representations. The show has many characters throughout 3 seasons, male and female ratio is always near to each other. As for gender stereotypes, the show subverts traditional gender stereotypes. Some

male characters have toxic masculine traits that fade out and some males who are never toxic masculine. All female characters, whether being girly or not, are active characters, unlike the perception for women in traditional views. *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe* has very low equality of gender representations. There are only two female characters. As for gender stereotypes, female characters of the film are active but they look like side characters and have no importance or cruciality in any stage of the film. *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* has more female characters in numbers than male characters. The ratio of women is very high. So, equality of gender representations is very low. The series is also the only animated work which has a non-binary character, not inside the gender binary. As for gender stereotypes, the series has the lowest rate of gender stereotypes. *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* has low equality of gender representation. There are only 3 female characters while the rest is male. As for gender stereotype, the film has highest rate. *Invincible* has high rates of equality of gender representations. The series has low gender stereotypes, since women are just as active and influential as men.

It can be understood that animations that are near the green area are *Avatar: The Last Airbender* and *Frozen* which mean they both embody greedy and privileged male characters that are the source of a problem. The two animations also subvert traditional gender stereotypes about women and portray active women female characters. On the other hand, it is clear that *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* is in the red area, indicating that the animated film does not have equality between their characters and show highly stereotyped characters from both genders within the gender binary.

## Gender Safety

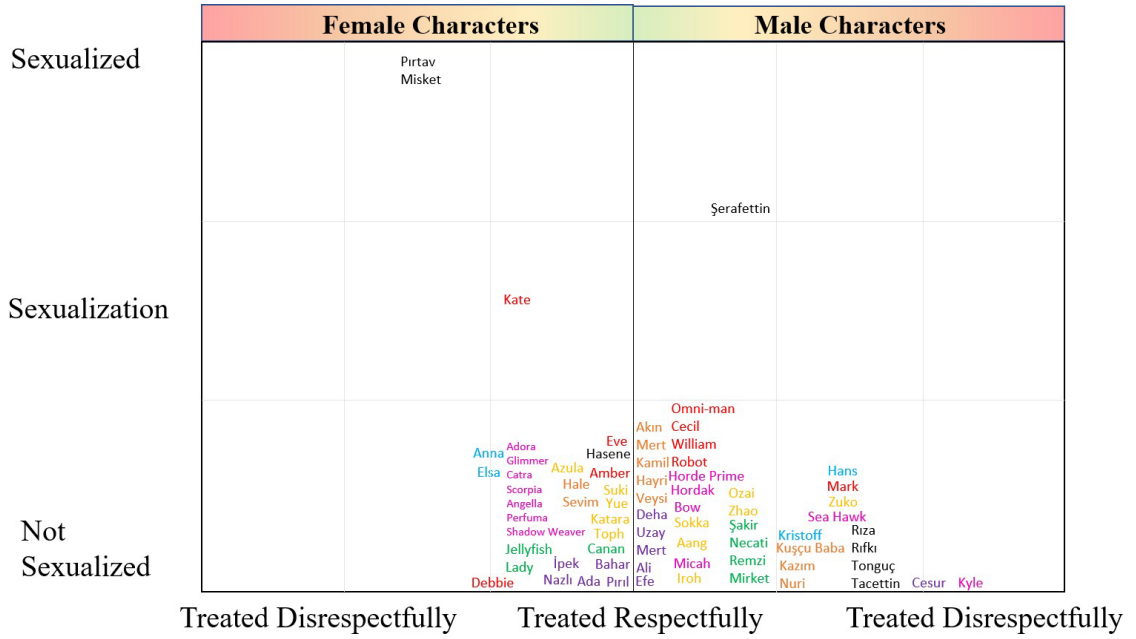


Figure 32: Placement of color-coded characters of each animation. Characters are divided into two groups are female and male. Low levels of sexualization which is shown as “not sexualized” and respectful treatment is the wanted situation. High levels of sexualization which is shown as “sexualized” and disrespectful treatment is the unwanted situation.

The character names written in the Figure 32 are color-coded. Most characters are not sexualized and they received respectful treatment and that is why only mistreated or sexualized characters will be delved upon in this section. When it comes to color-codes, *Kral Şakir Cumburlop* characters are shown with green. *Frozen* characters are shown with blue. *Pırıl* characters are shown with purple. *Avatar: The Last Airbender* characters are shown with yellow. *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe* characters are shown with orange. *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* characters are shown with pink. *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* characters are shown with black. *Invincible* characters are shown with red.



It can be seen that there are four characters who are outliers to the majority which are Pırtav, Misket, Şerafettin and Kate in terms of sexualization. Three characters out of these four belong to *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin*, making the animated film the most sexualized animation out of the eight selected animations. Two of these characters, Pırtav and Misket, are two females out of three while Şerafettin is a male character out of many throughout the film. *Invincible* follows as the second place when it comes to sexualization of characters however, there is only one character, Kate from the female characters' side who is shown as a sexually active woman in episode three, *Who You Calling Ugly?*.

Another aspect that becomes clear with this figure is, even though disrespected character numbers are very low, most characters that were disrespected are from male characters. Two characters who were disrespected more than other characters are Cesur from *Pırıl*, and Kyle from *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*. Cesur becomes the target of fatphobic jokes and commentary both by his friends and himself. Kyle is the one character who is seen as a weakling and is constantly mocked for his incompetence in any mission he has.

According to these observations about characters of the selected animations, *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin*, *Invincible*, *Pırıl* and *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* have characters that are not fitting to ecofeminist representations. Characters Pırtav, Misket, Şerafettin, Kate, Cesur and Kyle should have been treated more respectfully and should be less sexualized.

## Social Justice and Equality

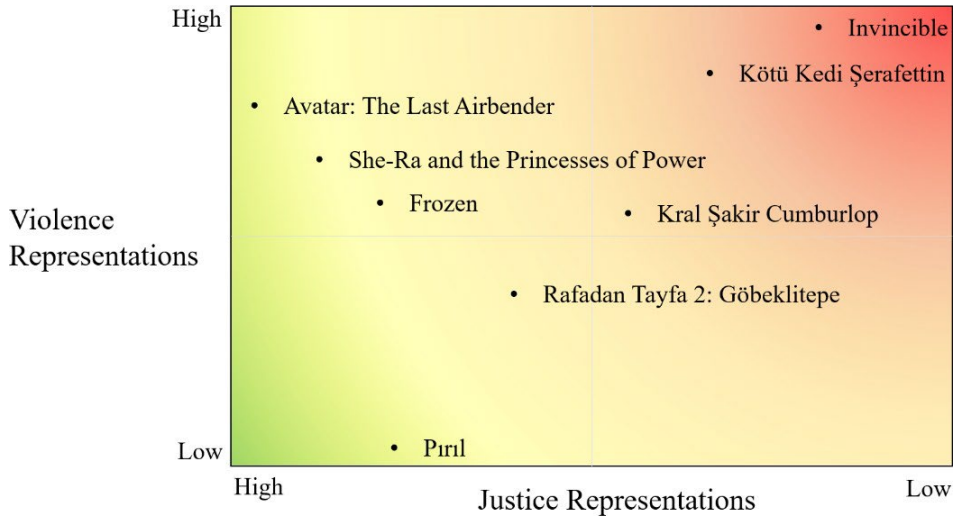


Figure 33: Low rate of violence representations addition to high rate of justice representations is the wanted situation shown with the green area and, high rate of violence representations addition to low rate of justice representations is the unwanted situation In between red and green area is depicted by yellow.

According to Figure 33 *Kral Şakir Cumburlop*'s violence level is moderately low and on the middle when considering there is harmful intent but no one gets hurt. As for justice level, at the end of the story, the antagonist does not receive a punishment, so it is lower than middle. *Frozen*'s violence level is almost same as *Kral Şakir Cumburlop*. There is harmful intent but no one gets hurt or no one dies at the end. The antagonist gets punished at the end by the protagonist group so justice levels are higher. *Pırl*, out of all other animations, is the least violent animation. As it is a didactic animation, there are some episodes that teach the audience about justice and consequences. *Avatar: The Last Airbender* has the highest justice level but also has a very high rate of violence. Even though there are no bloody scenes, the whole concept of "bending" comes from different fighting styles. Justice representation is very high since at the end of the series justice is served. All bad characters are punished and good got rewarded. *Rafadan Tayfa 2:*

*Göbeklitepe* does have chasing scenes but violence level is very low compared to other animated works. At the end of the film, antagonists got punished but he falls to the magic realm he meddles with so an institutional justice is not apparent. *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* has the same violence level as *Avatar: The Last Airbender*. At the end of the series justice is served. *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* has very high rates of violence levels. There are scenes of robbery, foul language, and physical fights as well as death of characters. Justice level is very low in the film. *Invincible* has very high rates of violence levels. There are scenes of physical and verbal fights and combat. There are many bloody scenes and deaths throughout episodes. Justice level is low since the main antagonist flees Earth and is not punished. The protagonists are not rewarded. It can be understood that *Pırl* is closest to the green area while *Invincible* and *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* are in the red area.

According the codes used and the above analysis, one concrete conclusion can be made which is, *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* is not an ecofeminist animation. Similarly, *Invincible* also fails to consist of general ecofeminism narrative. If we consider there is an ecofeminism scale within these eight animations *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe*, *Kral Şakir Cumburlop*, and *Pırl* are in between *Invincible* and the rest of the animated works. The ones which are considered as ecofeminist animations are *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, *Frozen*, and *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*. The codes allowed analysis of ecofeminism in a general sense through all selected animations. The analysis made using codes combined with character close readings finalize the ecofeminism analysis. The animations which have ecofeminist elements are *Kral Şakir Cumburlop*, *Frozen*, *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*, and *Invincible*.

#### 4.4 Comparisons of Turkish and American Animations

Animation pairings of this section are *Kral Şakir Cumburlop* and *Frozen*, *Pırıl* and *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe* and *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*, and *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* and *Invincible*. These selections are made with age groupings.

##### 4.4.1 Kral Şakir Cumburlop and Frozen

*Kral Şakir Cumburlop* and *Frozen* are both animated films that appeal to the age five and more. Stories of both films do not have similarities, neither most of the characters. Two outstanding characters from each film are Jellyfish Lady from *Kral Şakir Cumburlop* and Elsa from *Frozen*. Both animations have strong portrayals of ecofeminist cis female characters through different ways. Jellyfish Lady takes action because her environment is polluted and is forced to leave her home. Elsa takes action because her powers are exposed to the crowd, not leaving a reason to hide herself anymore. Both characters feel frustration over oppression which cause them to act in similar ways. On one hand, there is Jellyfish Lady who acts evil and plans the whole destruction of the planet, almost agreeing with d'Eaubonne's thoughts on there will be death if there won't be feminism. On the other hand, there is Elsa who unintentionally dooms her kingdom to a strong snow storm while alienating herself from the rest of the people. Even though both animations' ecofeminism interpretations are different, both characters become villains at some point of their story lines because of their ecofeminist sides. At the end, when they were given

reassurance from the protagonists, they become good and films have good endings. When both films are compared, it is evident that both have ecofeminist elements.

#### 4.4.2 *Pırl* and *Avatar: The Last Airbender*

*Pırl* and *Avatar: The Last Airbender* are both animated series that appeal to age seven and more. The Turkish animated series *Pırl* has the purpose to teach elementary school students, elementary school level mathematics while the American animated series *Avatar: The Last Airbender* does not have any didactic purposes. The sole reason for *Avatar: The Last Airbender*'s existence is entertainment. While *Pırl* animation uses episodic narration, without dependence on previous episodes, *Avatar: The Last Airbender*'s story has continuity and every detail connects to the end of the series. Having their differences in genre and content, their character portrayals have similarities and differences.

*Pırl*'s character profile consist of third grade students who are around the age of nine. The group of friends are balanced in terms of gender portrayals and the same group does not change in terms of members throughout episodes. *Avatar: The Last Airbender*'s character profile consist of children and teens within the age range of 12 to 16. Within three seasons, the main group consistently expands. The group starts as three people in the first season and expands to four people in the second season. The last season's last arc has the protagonist group consisting of three cis male and three cis female characters, in total six characters.

*Pırl* does not have ecofeminist portrayals in the analyzed episodes unlike *Avatar: The Last Airbender*. Ecofeminism is becoming more relevant with each passing day when environmental instabilities increase with each passing year. Even though *Pırl* is a much recent animated work, because of its main purpose being a mathematically didactic tool, it does not delve into other topics than third grade mathematics subjects. On the other hand, *Avatar: The Last Airbender* convey the importance of respecting nature in almost every episode. When both series are compared, it is evident that the American example has ecofeminist elements unlike its compared Turkish example.

#### 4.4.3 Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe and She-Ra and the Princesses of Power

*Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe* is the animated film and *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* is the animated series that appeal to the age range of 13 and more. *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe* and *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* have more differences than similarities. One of the few similarities between the two are conserving and protecting a specific area. *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe*, as understood from the title, mostly takes place in Göbeklitepe, Şanlıurfa. The protagonist group prevents the antagonists to steal from Göbeklitepe site. In *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*, the protagonist Adora has the responsibility to protect and save Etheria from the antagonists Hordak and his forces along with Hord Prime who gets revealed as the main antagonist of the fifth season.

Unlike *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*, *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe* portrays culturally traditional values. The events in the film take place during 90s and most characters are cis male with the exception of two cis female girls, Sevim and Hale. These

two girls have no lines or indicator acts regarding nature, ecological awareness, equality of genders or feminism. In *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*, there are more women compared to other genders and almost all women have connections with nature, especially the princess group of the story. Princesses are all connected to the magic of Etheria, which is the natural state, ecologic status of the planet, either with their magical stones or by themselves. They have a strong connection with nature and the most prominent characters are, as mentioned, Adora and Perfuma. It is once again, when both series are compared, it is evident that the American example has ecofeminist elements unlike its compared Turkish example.

#### 4.4.4 *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* and *Invincible*

*Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* is the animated film and *Invincible* is the animated series that appeal to the age range of 18 and more. *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* is a film that has clear sexist connotations and sexually highly active male characters. “In patriarchal society, masculine symbolism is dominant even when representing the female body. The body is depicted emphasizing the most desirable or detestable features, from the male perspective.” (Gebara, 2003, para. 29). The film highly sexualizes its limited female characters, going opposite to the core of ecofeminist thought. Unlike its Turkish counterpart, *Invincible* does not objectify its female characters at the same level. Even though women of *Invincible* were not explained throughout, among one of them, Eve, completely contemplates ecofeminism. As mentioned before, Eve portrays a superhero who becomes an ecofeminist in order to find her purpose and what she wants to do with her life. When characters of both animated works are compared, *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin*’s

character's fall flat when *Invincible* characters have depth in terms of ecological awareness and oppression of women. When both series are compared, it is evident that the American example has ecofeminist elements unlike its compared Turkish example. *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* is ranked the lowest among all eight animated works of this research in terms of being incorporated with ecofeminism.



## CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

The aim of this research was to analyze ecofeminism in eight selected Turkish and American animated works. Before the start, I predicted that Turkish animations would lack ecofeminism theories or ecofeminist representations compared to American animations. The animations from Turkey are *Kral Şakir Cumburlop*, *Pırlı*, *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe*, and *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* while the animations from the US are *Frozen*, *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*, and *Invincible*.

First of all, I did close reading on each animation and watched them carefully as I took relevant notes about character representations as well as environment portrayals.

Secondly, I conducted the Bechdel Test to the selected animations and the results are apparent in CHAPTER IV, 4.1 The Bechdel Test. There is only one animation which did not pass from the test and failed completely, without showing any female or women interaction which is *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin*. I continued with the Maisy Test analysis and written down the appropriate answers to the question sets of the Maisy Test in again CHAPTER IV, 4.2 The Maisy Test. Lastly, I have written down in CHAPTER IV, 4.3 Ecofeminist Elements in Animations, the ecofeminist representation I have encountered while watching these animations in the light of the results of the Bechdel Test and The Maisy Test.

After analysis parts are finished, each Turkish animation is compared with its age group counterpart American animation. There were four age groups which were five and more,

seven and more, 13 and more, 18 and more. That is why I have written four different comparisons in CHAPTER IV, 4.4 Comparisons of Turkish and American Animations, each concluding which country's animation is better in terms of ecofeminist representations.

Throughout the thesis, characters, concepts, scenes, and illustrations were analyzed, mostly as integrated. Characters are analyzed on their own in terms of ecofeminism while concepts, scenes and illustrations are analyzed in an intertwined way. The characters we have mostly defined and analyzed are women representations who are; Jellyfish Lady, Elsa, Adora, Perfuma, Katara, Toph, Yue and Eve. Not just these characters but also men are analyzed in terms of ecofeminism who are; Aang and Sokka. Some other ways other than character analyses are also depicted in this research. Animals and specific groups are also mentioned in the scope of the ecofeminism analysis. It shows that not only femininity is a part of ecology related topics but masculinity can also be discussed in terms of ecofeminism. Masculinity should not be understood as the “antagonist” of this research but a part of ecofeminism issue. Characters who are rude, violent and toxic to humans and non-human living beings such as animals and plants are mostly not portrayed as ecofeminists and doomed to fail. Characters who are ecofeminists or portray ecofeminist elements on the other hand, symbolize change, solution, and rebirth.

Even though *Kral Şakir Cumburlop* is imbalanced in terms of gender representations, ecofeminism elements are apparent especially in one female character, Jellyfish Lady.

Audience understands the main topic of the film through the antagonist's pain and anguish along with ecofeminist view on the water pollution topic. The film's counterpart *Frozen* is balanced in terms of gender representations and has ecofeminist elements. Again, ecofeminism is showed through a single character in this film as well. Both films address to similar audiences in terms of age even though their genres and storytelling ways are different. In conclusion, both films consist of ecofeminism. Both animation examples show if creators and producers want to make ecofeminist animations, they have the potential and resources to create ecofeminist animations, regardless of location.

Both *Pırl* and *Avatar: The Last Airbender* are roughly balanced in terms of gender representations however, only one of them has ecofeminist elements in it. Both series are targeted at similar audiences even though their aims are different. *Pırl* is a didactic animation while *Avatar: The Last Airbender* has pure entertainment value. *Pırl*'s cultural values are highly influenced by today's Turkish society while *Avatar: The Last Airbender*'s is a hybrid of multiple Asian teachings mixed with American culture and humor. The biggest reason why only *Avatar: The Last Airbender* contain ecofeminist elements out of the two is because the Asian and American influence of the series. Combining readily existing thoughts and philosophies of different Asian cultures with the expanding understanding of American feminism perception, the series respect women and nature. Not only women and nature, but antagonists are respected and given second chances. Peace is the ultimate solution to each conflict and peace comes from respecting in the *Avatar: The Last Airbender* narrative and it separates the series from its Turkish counterpart.

The Turkish film *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe* and the American series *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* belong to the same age group in this research, however; their contents and messages are completely different. The only similarity between the two are gender imbalances within their storylines which skew in the opposite direction. The Turkish film has more cis male characters than other genders when the American series has more cis female representations than other genders. *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe* has a traditional characters and narrative in the Turkish sense rather than having a narrative that would subvert traditional depictions as *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*. The two counterparts are very much different from each other because of the cultural and social foundations of their target audiences. This version of *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* is already a remake of a more traditional narrative of the similar plot and as a new point of view, the storyline is inclusive in terms of gender, disabilities and psychological situations. *Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe* does not concern itself with representations but is only focused on telling its story to the audience while *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* is highly involved with the concept of representation and ecofeminism as a side element.

*Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* and *Invincible* has both violence element in both animations and are not suitable for children's viewing. Both animations are targeted for audiences older than 18. While *Kötü Kedi Şerafettin* do not portray any ecofeminist elements, *Invincible* have a cis female character, Eve, who makes the series have ecofeminist narratives. Unlike the Turkish animation, the American counterpart for this age group have cis female representations who have more depth than just being someone's love interest. Audience

can witness in *Invincible*, the character developments main female characters have, especially in the case of Eve. Eve, herself manages to portray a very positive character development, moves towards to an ecofeminist narrative. The American counterpart in this age group successfully portrays ecofeminism while the Turkish counterpart fails to even portray basic feminist elements.

These comparisons aim is to understand why and how differences in ecofeminism portrayals occur. The results showed the variations may occur because of the country's cultural values and current social structure, the differences of animations' main goals along with the capability of storytelling techniques. For Turkish animations, if a traditional message is wanted to be given, there are no ecofeminism elements. If a topic concerning nature and environment is given, female representations are depicted and are involved with the stated environmental problem. For American animations, ecofeminism portrayals mostly come from character-based narratives. As the characters become powerful and strong in different ways, they become self-aware and can be said that they become close to ecofeminists. Since the characters' inner journeys are intertwined with equality and feminism, ecofeminism becomes a part of their identity with the help of events or narratives in the animations.

This research proved my initial prediction true and showed how out of four, three selected Turkish animations are ecologically unaware and lack female and women representations. Even though overall generalizations should not be made just by

analyzing four Turkish animations, it shouldn't be forgotten that three out of four animations passed the Bechdel Test, yet failed to portray feminist views or ecofeminist elements. Among the four, only one both passed the Bechdel Test and portrayed ecofeminist elements in its storyline. When it comes to American animations, all of the four selected animations passed the Bechdel Test. All four animations included various female and women representations along with ecofeminist elements. It can all be seen in the Figure 34 as a summary of the results of this research.

	Animations	Age Groups	Type of Animation	Bechdel Test	Ecofeminism	Animation Comparisons
1	Kral Şakir Cumburlop	5+	Film	Passed	Apparent	Both Win
2	Pırlı	7+	Series	Passed	None	Lose
3	Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe	13+	Film	Passed	None	Lose
4	Kötü Kedi Şerafettin	18+	Film	Failed	None	Lose
5	Frozen	5+	Film	Passed	Apparent	Both Win
6	Avatar: The Last Airbender	7+	Series	Passed	Apparent	Win
7	She-Ra and the Princesses of Power	13+	Series	Passed	Apparent	Win
8	Invincible	18+	Series	Passed	Apparent	Win

*Figure 34: A summary of the research's conclusion. Green filled cells represent positive outcome. Orange filled cells represent negative outcome. Blue filled cells represent positive outcome for both animations in an age group.*

In order to make detailed analysis about both countries' animation industries and their relation with ecofeminism, more examples from both Turkey and the US must be analyzed. Ecofeminism and media are integrated subjects in our ecologically decayed, capitalist lives. To be able to have a sustainable future that can handle to exist years after this era, we must not ignore the importance of ecofeminist studies.

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## APPENDIX A

### List of Relevant Characters to the Research

Animations	Cis Female	Cis Male	Trans Female	Trans Male	Nonbinary
Kral Şakir Cumburlop	Canan	Şakir			
	Jellyfish Lady	Remzi			
		Necati			
		Mirket			
		Mirket's assistant			
Frozen	Elsa	Kristoff			
	Anna	Hans			
Pırıl	Pırıl	Deha			
	Ada	Cesur			
	Nazlı	Efe			
	Bahar	Uzay			
	İpek	Ali			
Avatar: The Last Airbender	Katara	Aang			
	Toph	Sokka			
	Azula	Zuko			
	Suki	Iroh			
	Yue	Ozai			
		Zhao			
Rafadan Tayfa 2: Göbeklitepe	Hale	Akın			
	Sevim	Mert			
		Kamil			
		Hayri			
		Veysi			
		Kuşçu Baba			
		Kazım			
		Nuri			
She-Ra and the Princesses of Power	Adora	Bow	Perfuma	Jewelstar	Double Trouble
	Glimmer	Hordak			
	Catra	Sea Hawk			
	Scorpia	Micah			
	Angella	Kyle			
	Shadow Weaver	Horde Prime			
	Entrapta				
	Frosta				
	Mermisa				
	Castaspella				
	Netossa				
	Spinnerella				
	Razz				
	Huntara				
	Mara				
	Lonnie				
Kötü Kedi Şerafettin	Pırtav	Şerafettin			
	Misket	Rıza			
	Hasene	Rıfki			
		Tonguç			
		Tacettin			
Invincible	Eve	Mark			
	Amber	Omni-man			
	Debbie	Cecil			
	Kate	William			