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OPPONENT VOICES IN THE WORKS OF ROBERT BLY AND
FAZIL HÜSNÜ DAĞLARCA

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YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

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**OPPONENT VOICES IN THE WORKS OF ROBERT BLY AND
FAZIL HÜSNÜ DAĞLARCA**

By

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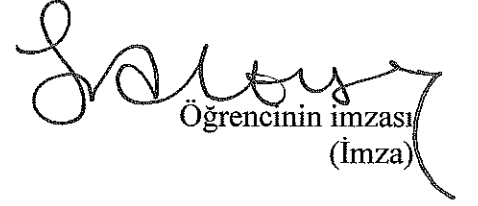
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Tezin Adı OPPONENT VOICES IN THE WORKS OF ROBERT BLT AND
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Tezin Adı **OPPONENT VOICES IN THE WORKS OF ROBERT BLY AND FAZIL HÜSNÜ DAĞLARCA**

Yukarıda adı geçen öğrenci tarafından hazırlanan ^{Opponent voices in the works of Robert Bly and Fazıl Hüsnü Dağlarca} başlıklı bu çalışma **23..09..2010** tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda oybirliği/oyçokluğu ile başarılı bulunarak, jürimiz tarafından yüksek lisans tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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ÖZET

Bu çalışmada Amerikan şiirinde önemli bir yeri olan ve en etkili şairlerden biri olarak kabul edilen Robert Bly ile Türk edebiyatında, şiir alanında kendine has üslubuyla kendisinden sonrakilere yol göstermiş ve Türk edebiyatını zenginleştirmiş olan Fazıl Hüsni Dağlarca şiirlerindeki politik söylemi açığa çıkarmak için, Robert Bly'nin *The Light around the Body* ve Dağlarca'nın *Vietnam Savaşımız (Our Vietnam War, 1967 Müfit Bilyap çevirisi)* eserleri temel alınmaktadır.

Geneldeki savaş olgusunu Vietnam savaşı özeliyle ifade eden iki şair'in, şiirlerinde yanlış devlet politikalarıyla ve teknolojinin insanın yararına değil de yok edilmesi için kullanılmasıyla acı çeken bireyin dramını anlatması şairleri birbirine yaklaştıran en temel özelliklerden birisidir. Şairlerin pek çok konuda ürün vermesi, çok boyutlu olmaları, sürrealizmi eserlerinde kullanmaları, inanç üzerine yorumlar yapmaları gibi pek çok tutum onları birbirine yaklaştıran diğer özelliklerden sayılabilir.

Şairleri politik şiirin kalıplarından kurtaran noktaların vurgulanması, her iki şairin, şiirlerini propaganda aracı olarak düşünmediklerini yalnızca ezilen bir topluluğa (Vietnam halkı) karşı şairce duyarlılıklarını gösteren sözcüler olarak alınmaları gerektiğini ifade eder.

Bu karşılaştırma çalışması, birisi Amerikalı öteki Türk olan iki şairin 'insan' olgusunun baskılarla, istikrarsızlık ve yokluklarla yıpratıldığı, sürekli tehdit edildiği bir savaşa verdikleri tepkilerdeki benzerliklerle, her türlü etnik, dini ve milli ayrımın 'insan' ortak paydasında eritildiğinin gösterilmesi açısından önemli sayılabilir. Aynı zamanda edebiyatların birbirini tanımalarına küçükte olsa katkı sağlayacağı düşünülen bu çalışma, bireyin 'öteki' ile benzer pek çok şeyi taşıdığını doğa ve renk imgeleriyle göstermeyi hedefler ve böylece savaşın anlamsızlığı vurgular.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Robert Bly, Fazıl Hüsni Dağlarca, *Our Vietnam War*, *The Light around the Body*, doğa, renk, imge incelemesi, Vietnam Savaşı.

ABSTRACT

This study tries to evaluate the political and protesting discourse by means of nature, color and death imagery in *The Light around the Body* by Robert Bly, one of the most effective and leading poets of America and *Our Vietnam War* (trans. Mufit Bilyap, 1967) by Fazıl Hüsni Dağlarca, an idiosyncratic voice who has been the paragon of innovation and experiments in Turkish poetry.

The key similarity between Bly and Dağlarca lies in their responses to the sorrows of the individual who is victimized by the wrong, dehumanistic state policies and the misuse of technology. They express the fact of war with Vietnam War in particular. Their prolificacy on various subject matters results in a multidimensional perception in their poems. The integrated use of surrealism in the poems and the questioning of faith can be regarded as other similarities creating a shared attitude.

The emphasis on the points keeping the poets from the boundaries of pure political poetry maintains that the poets do not compose their poems as a means for propaganda, but as poetic words denoting the decisive reaction against the oppressive powers over a group of people.

In conclusion, this comparative study on two poets points out a common response melted in the pot of 'human' without any ethnic, racial or national discrimination to a historical war in which 'human' is threatened by endless worries, starvation, instability and tyranny. The study aiming to contribute to the familiarity of two different literatures, also tries to demonstrate through nature, color and death that the self bears many similar attitudes with the other and thus underlines hollowness of the war.

Key words: Robert Bly, Fazıl Hüsni Dağlarca, *Our Vietnam War*, *The Light around the Body*, nature, image, Vietnam War.

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INTRODUCTION

War has always existed and evolved with the evolution of mankind and cultures. Even the type of battle tactics, weapons and costumes can demonstrate to what extent war is internalized by nations. As a notion and fact it replaces a great part of states' energies –history witnesses the periods of fight more than of peace- by justifying reception of its nurturing its continuity from the base instinctive feeling of destruction. In the psychology of societies it means more than just a definite time of grief and destitution, it has left a confrontation for posterity and the conscience-sense of their precedent decision makers' guilt as well as that of the society supporting those decisions. In this respect Bly and Dağlarca's opposition to Vietnam War is not merely an attitude of not taking responsibility and laying the blame to the society, they believe that war as a human defect or weakness deprives the individual from self-realization and quickens the process of alienation merging into a total despair.

Twentieth century is a period of writers who have struggled against the authoritative powers and for more humanitarian rights by criticizing regimes and inhumane ideologies as Yeats did, or taking part in activities to reflect their opponent voice. The writer of twentieth century finds himself around a social problem in which clash between two opposite poles is inevitable in one way or another. It is also obvious from the works appearing in this century that writers attempt to relate the epic of modern man as Bly and Dağlarca did in their idiosyncratic voices. "Experience", Walter Benjamin puts, "which is passed on from mouth to mouth is the source from which all storytellers have drawn" (12). In a similar way to the attitude of storytellers, the two poets take on the role of bards traveling around to tell the anti/hero's experiences, Bly's organizing poetry readings with some theatrical devices and Dağlarca's putting up his

poems on the window of his bookstore obviously show the degree of conscious and socialized quality of their poems. Accordingly the century has been a long lasting period of fear and instability with the rapid and radical change values and introduction of new destruction technologies such as nuclear bombs or weapons for mass destruction. The experiences and tragedies beginning with WWI are somehow reiterated in the WWII and later on in the case of Vietnam War. For instance, as Harvey points out “the total of battle neurosis cases in the British army in France and Belgium was estimated at 80.000 (as compared to 1,937,364 killed and wounded)” in WWI has repeated itself in America’s Vietnam veterans and the Vietnamese civilians (93). In such situation, poets or intellectuals expressed their political views and suggestions for the problems both through their poems and speeches or by participating to meetings like ‘marching’ against Vietnam War. In other words “the circumstances of the late 1960s and the 1970s led many writers and commentators to speak of democracy in crisis. . . . Such accounts struck a popular chord following the traumas over civil rights and Vietnam in the USA and student radicalism and industrial strife in Europe” (Jefferys 188).

The study aims to analyze the notion of war and its effects on nature and human nature by means of the most typical examples from both *The Light around the Body* and *Our Vietnam War* converging on a similar argument and literary devices. “The opponent voices” in the title reflects the purpose of evaluating the idiosyncratic voices of the two poets interchanging from the context of war into representation of psyche, from darkness into light. Besides expressing the characteristics of Bly and Dağlarca, ‘opponent voice’ conveys both the reaction and protest against a specific war and the obvious manifestation of the belief in that poetry can change the world and contribute to

the solution of the problems on larger scale. ‘Opponent voice’ also stands as the archetype of the response presented on various issues in the preceding and succeeding works of Bly and Dağlarca. This study tries to find out the shared attitude of the poets against an epitome of brutality and violence. In the first chapter of the study, a short background related to the analysis of poems is presented under the name of “Preliminary Concepts”. The definitions stated have enough sophistication to be regarded as ‘concepts’. “Defining Political Poetry” in the first chapter intends to demonstrate the subjectivity and variety of the definition, which places it into the ‘how something should be’ principle of concept. The part stresses upon the understanding of Dağlarca and Bly about political poetry. It also discusses that to what extent their poems can be regarded as political since they are a combination of both public and personal voices. “An Overview of American and Turkish Modern Poetry”, denotes the prolific career of the poets both from the respect of the works they created and the ideas/ideologies they employed in their canon. The part concludes by emphasizing the peculiar place these poets hold in their literatures and the impossibility or wrongness of positioning the poets into certain movements or circles. “Difference between Soldier Poets and Civil Ones” is an attempt of comparing two war/anti-war poetries originating from different wars. Either they are soldier or not, the comparison shows that poets take on a heavy task to articulate the sorrows of the oppressed caused by the self-interest of the administrators or authority in general. Although “Vietnam War: Historical Background” does not wholly present the complexity of the war, it is not a detailed analysis of the war such as America’s involvement, it exemplifies the historical development of events into a more chaotic situation. The ideological nature of the war, destruction of farms and other resources without any care about the protection of

civilians, use of mass destruction weapons, and the protests during war years shapes the individual response of Bly and Dağlarca. In this respect the part is intended to provide a background for the poems analyzed through the study.

In the second chapter of study, thematic comparison of the poems selected from Bly and Dağlarca is employed to denote the 'opponent voices'. Within the borders of a thematic classification, 'nature', 'color', and 'death or praise of death' are selected as main means for conveyance of the situation in which many tragedies reflect the inhumanity caused by war such as natives uprooted from their own land and starving because of the heavy bombardments or the ones who have to hide in jungle for survival.

The first part of the chapter tries to demonstrate comparable the quality of Bly and Dağlarca. This part also intends to cover a titrological (French term for the study of titles) evaluation to clarify the multi/functionality of the titles intendedly selected by the poets to complete the argument of their poems. Both poets use epigraphs in their poems but while Bly prefers to quote from the thinkers he was influenced as a preface for each chapter of his poetry collection except the third, Dağlarca opens almost each poem with epigraphs either from his own monologues, President Johnson's words or Vietnam folk songs. Thus the first part of the study evaluates epigraphs' relation to the chapters they are employed in or to poems and poem titles.

Nature and its elements are always present even in the seemingly unrelated poems. Bly and Dağlarca blend the realistic quality of nature with surrealistic representations. The symbolical use of nature is also functional in demonstrating the creation of grief by means of the destruction of nature. Nature stands as a threat to be annihilated by the oppressors and a harbor or shelter by the ones suffering from fear and fear of death. The color imagery used in the poems by Bly and Dağlarca differs according to the argument

of poem. Although on some occasions colors are given with the traditional negative or positive feelings they arouse in the reader, they are also capable of changing the accustomed response of reader by means of connotative meanings achieved in the use of colors. Besides reflecting the mood of the narrator or the poet in the poem colors create a backdrop for the atmosphere. The second part of the second chapter, thus intends to demonstrate the nature-man relation by assessing images selected from nature and underline the effect of colors as basis for evaluation of the war's violence.

In the poetry of Bly and Dağlarca, multiple meaning is conveyed through ambiguous voices of the images, which gives the opportunity for the reader to recreate the lines with his own reception and background. The two poets do not aim to be understood easily and in some cases they deliberately blur the meaning. The third part of second chapter exemplifies their changing attitudes towards death. In this respect they do not impose only one perspective or argument blindly on the reader, but in the poems their opposition intensifies, they seem to put blame on the outer mechanisms such as economy or politics. Their repeating similar structures in their later poems can be regarded as "a monotonous method" (Gioia 160) or as a peculiarity of the poets to express new arguments merged into the older ones. The poems about the praise of death reflect a similar attitude of repetition, so the typical poems comprising the complex reception of the poets are selected for analysis in this part. In the use of color, black and white are preferred to convey the voices of the intrigue chords vibrating between life and death, inner and outer side of the individual.

CHAPTER ONE

Preliminary Concepts

1. 1. Defining “Political Poetry”: Politics and Poetry

Political poetry as one of the poetic types has been discussed for a long time. Therefore it only calls to mind a pure engagement to some, and a real expression of ideas through art and its agencies to others. Since its inclusion of politics, its underlining a political voice in almost every occasion has resulted in a kind of suspicion about its literariness. The question of being political and literary at the same time escalates the arguments around ‘political poetry’ as an ontological entity and scope of it. Dowdy enunciates “centuries-long concerns about political poetry” in three basic points as “the efficacy of poetry as public discourse, the function of poets and poetry in society and the potential for political poetry to remain important across cultural and historical borders” (3). Such an enumeration draws a frame for expressing the attitudes of Bly and Dağlarca towards political poetry. Both poets try to use the power of poem to express the political and social wrongs. They maintain a style which combines the effect of being personal and public together. Their mission is not only to discover the underlying realities kept from the society but to inform and create a humanistic consciousness through the vivid descriptions of inhumane politics. The issue of temporal boundedness discussed as the nature of political poetry is overcome by means of surrealistic and timeless images.

Political poetry is a combination or product of some essential elements such as a poetic structure and existence of political situation or idea, which can be in the form of an ideological advocacy or protest. In some situations as in the case of Robert Bly and *The Light around the Body*, even the use of political poetry as a literary term causes

discussions and needs a plausible explanation. A typical reaction towards the political poetry is exemplified with an experience recounted by Michael Dowdy in his preface to *American Poetry in the 21st Century* as follows; “after being asked about my research interests and responding with ‘American poetry, especially political poetry’, I often received blank stares, as if to say, I know what poetry is and know what politics are, but what is political poetry and who writes it? Who ever thought that poetry was political?” (xi). The last question demonstrates the problem of choosing a criterion in literary criticism and what defines a poem to be political to variety of reception in meaning.

Hans Bertens mentions the importance of “historical situatedness or historical embedment and politics of literary texts” while explaining “political reading”. He maintains his argument through questions broadening the meanings of terms above as follows; “To what extend are literary texts the product of the historical period in which they were written? The world has gone through enormous socio-economic and political changes in the last millennium. Isn’t it reasonable to expect those changes to turn up in our literature?” (79). These two questions form the backbone of a political reading which is categorized into three study fields by Bertens as Marxist, Feminist and writings against racism. It is not a coincidence that those poets interested in political poetry have also an inclination to Marxist theory. The power relations and the place of man laboring in the history, the existence of oppressor and his completing himself with the oppressed are basic subjects embodying the interest of both Bly and Dağlarca. In other words, the two poets express their opinions with arguments reminding those of Marxism. Even to choose a title such as “After the Industrial Revolution All Things Happen at Once” by Bly or “Balance-sheet” by Dağlarca reflects a similar reaction against the deifying of the capital. Although the existence of political discourse is open to discussion, the traces

of a reactionary political understanding display themselves not through the criticism of wrong social and economic politics but also with a rejection of sexist and racist attitudes. In the poetry of Bly and Dağlarca we encounter a mother or woman tortured by “Romans” by excluding whatever belongs to humanistic emotions and Indians slaughtered as if turkeys or ‘black skinned soldiers’ deceived with wrong ideals whose “palms which shook that [the oppressor or U. S. government in this case] hand have been bleeding for years” (Dağlarca 21).

Politics as a study field comprises many areas other than the mechanisms producing and analyzing political actions. “Politics is used in at least two senses, both of which are relevant to everyone’s everyday experience” (Tansey 3). Tansey maintains that narrow meaning of politics is only restricted to the governmental area, but “in the wider sense –people exercising power over others- it is part of all sorts of social relationships” (3). In this respect it is closely related to ‘ideology’, which has also many argumentative definitions. As John Schwarzmantel puts it, “notions of *hegemony* and *opposition* [or contestation] provide the most fruitful tools for understanding the state of ideological politics in the contemporary world” (25) and they draw a general frame for the kind and intensity of arguments for the good of society. He brings a quite embracing definition to ideology as “totalistic” for “it presents, at least in its fullest form, a broad range of views which cover the central aspects of how society should be organized, answering such questions as what the role of the state should be, what forms of difference or differentiation between should be accepted and which rejected” (25). Accordingly, it can be maintained that Bly and Dağlarca are ideological from the respect of the above mentioned criteria. Through their poems they express the idealistic society that they are longing for. Their criticism on a society consuming both physically

and emotionally underlines the political traces in their poetry. But it is also necessary to make a difference between the ideology described by Schwarzmantel and ideology defined by Marx and used in Marxist criticism. As Bertens states, “In Marxist usage ideology is what causes us to misrepresent the world to ourselves” (84). In other words we live in the bubble of an imaginary world which is shaped by our fantasies with a considerable distance from realism. In addition to the descriptions of a society either not reacting to the scandalous news breaking out almost every day, which creates a paradox since as Janos Miklosi Kis argues, “politics is clearly more transparent now than it used to be” (2) thanks to media or manipulated to believe in the rightness of actions in Vietnam again by means of the misuse of media organ, two poets articulate a kind of resistance against the hegemony of an oppressing power.

Politics and political poetry share at least two basic characteristics among other things; being a bundle of complexities making a whole encompassing definition impossible and the tendency to create an argument in which both sides are right and the rightness is changing quite often according to the reception and subjectivity. To exemplify, the issue of naming Bly’s poems as political poems or protest poems or ‘politically protest poems’ creates a fight in which there is no or two winners. Dana Gioia states in “The Successful Career of Robert Bly” that Bly has led “the movement political poetry during the Vietnam War” (148). One of Bly’s critics, William Davis states that “the poetry of *The Light around the Body* is protest poetry more than political poetry. This distinction is an important one, even though not all of Bly’s critics make it” (20) and he implies that political poetry has less artistic and literal value with a continual emphasis on ‘protest’. Davis stresses upon the protesting nature of the poems in *Light* rather than its political connotations in his *Understanding Robert Bly* as follows

“[*Light*] it makes a more powerful poetic statement than it does a political one” (43). Gioia shares a similar assessment with Davis, he maintains that “the political events that cheapened the poetry of so many of his contemporaries invigorated his work” (159). According to Heyen “Bly had found, in *The Light around the Body* a medium to bear the ‘weight of political protest poetically’ so effectively that not a poem in the book is open to the charge that it is ‘essentially journalistic or propagandistic’ pleading” (qtd. in Davis 21). Similar to Heyen, Nelson regards *Light* as “a book of fierce political and social protest” (36). Mostly political poetry is too conspicuous that it leaves no room for a recreation or rewriting of the idea by the reader. But both poets prefer to employ quite surrealistic images in some and multi-faceted in most cases. In this respect Davis’ argument about the overweighing quality of the poems’ literariness does not exclude them totally from the sphere of political poetry and the style created by Bly and Dağlarca changes the genre into an ‘issue’. It can be concluded that every political poem includes a protesting voice to a certain degree, but it does not mean that a poem reverberating the oppositional sounds would necessarily belong to the political poetry and be evaluated within the frame of the genre. Apart from the wrong impression of political poetry and the arguments about the political and the protesting, it should be mentioned that Bly wrote an essay, “Leaping up into Political Poetry” on the nature of and reflections of political poetry. This text can also be read as a self criticism of Bly’s own works since it is assumed that most writers take their own work as a basis consciously and unconsciously while evaluating others’ works. Interestingly, what Bly writes in “Leaping up” is applicable to the attitude of Dağlarca or the statements and ideas in the essay can easily be traced through *Our Vietnam War*. Before enumerating some prominent points in the essay to understand what Bly means by political poetry,

the “leaping up” in the title underlines the relation of political poetry with literariness, contrary to the assumptions about a poem in which political engagement is felt deeply and thus this emphasis suppresses the literary reception of it. “Leaping” is a style employed by Bly while creating a poem. In general it describes the situation of changing from one mood, one place or time to another by means of associations and metaphors. The leaping adds a surrealistic quality to most poems. So even the use of ‘leaping’ with political poetry draws the borders of the political protest and engagement in a period of time witnessing crimes against the inherent right to life as it has happened during every war period in history.

Bly begins his argument with an embedment to the historical background as follows, “Poems that touch on American history usually have political implications” (243) and he adds immediately the prejudice of “most critics” against being political and an ill-disposedness to dealing with “political subjects” in poems. Bly regards representing history as a kind of confrontation with the history of the nation since politics has been marginalized with the monopoly of a certain group deciding on what’s wrong and right in the name of society. In such a system his ironic statement that “Our wise man and wise institutions assure us that national political events are beyond the reach of ordinary, or even extraordinary, literary sensitivity” (243) both argues the immediate value of a piece of art and rejects the exclusion of some ‘serious’ matters such as politics from the topical sphere of poetry. In a similar way, Dağlarca does not abstain himself from trespassing on the ‘forbidden’ areas and thus he does not mute the sound of a creation varying from the most naïve feelings of humanity to the most violent and political arguments through his poetry. Bly explains the firmness in action and idea with a kind of awareness which is persistently suppressed by certain

institutions of the society. When the awareness is “killed” it becomes easier to persuade the people to take part in or support even inhumane and illegal actions. Bly connects why most Americans do not react against Vietnam War although they have some suspicions about “the morality of the war” to the lack of awareness. According to him, “the ‘invisible organs of government’ schools, broadcasting houses, orthodox churches, move to kill awareness. The television and advertising do their part in numbing the sensibilities. Killing awareness is easier than killing the man later for a firm act” (245). If the leading, forming and thus manipulating structures of society serve to a predetermined monotype of human profile, it follows the existence of a robotic society, which stands as a natural consequence of this “numbing” policy. Bly maintains that the situation defining the actions of individuals also “explains why so few American poets have written political poems. A poem can be a political act, but it has not been, so far at least, an illegal act” (246). The situation is the same in Turkish poetry too. Political poetry tradition is either so weak because of the lack of poems in quantity even if not in quality. It is known that poets such as Nazım Hikmet had to continue his life in prisons or exile only for the reason of that his ideology opposed to the policies of that time’s government. What Bly means by the relation of ‘political act-illegal act’ also reflects the one of the factors about the unpopularity of political poetry. Dağlarca too has been criticized bitterly for being an instrument to the actions of anarchist and separatist circles by such Turcology critics as Mehmet Kaplan. Kaplan states that Dağlarca lost the voice of an idiosyncratic and dreamlike world by replacing his atmospheres into a propagandistic quality. Bly’s poetry was subject to a similar criticism by some critics as Calhoun, Smith, Carruth and Leibowitz (see Nelson 34-35). On the other hand, Bly does not dissociate political poetry which is regarded as the voice of public or a commune

from the “personal poetry” and thus opposes to the arguments about sacrificing individuality for the sake of a general voice. Bly explains the mechanisms of the authority have developed a kind of “husk” around “American psyche” which makes it difficult to create an organic bond with the inner side of individual. Poet performs as an innovator to break the boundaries and in this respect “the poet’s main job is to penetrate that husk around the American psyche, and because that psyche is inside him too, the writing of political poetry is like the writing of personal poetry, a sudden drive by the poet inward” (Bly 246). Besides exemplifying the mood of “leaping” in the above expression, he mentions the wrongness of some poets who listen the demands of “political activists” about that if they are writing a political poem they should “abandon privacy” since “the political poetry comes out of the deepest privacy” (247).

Bly maintains that a poet’s “assertion” of being apolitical is not logical or possible since people are considerably affected by the administrations and politics produced by them, in other words “a modern man’s spiritual life and his growth are increasingly sensitive to the tone and content of a regime” (248). The expression calls to mind “It is not consciousness of man that determines their existence but their social existence that determines their consciousness” by Marx in his “Foreword” to *Towards a Critique of Political Poetry* (qtd. in Bertens 81). Accordingly a poet who has the conscience and consciousness of grasping realities and this way, enlightens the society cannot disregard the politics in his time because as Jones describes “what poetry can do for us is to enable us to participate in the poet’s activity of trying hard to capture in words the exact truth as he experiences it” (7). Bly and Dağlarca’s understanding of political poetry is not limited to a propagandistic voice although in some poems the change of protest into propaganda is conceivable. When we regard a poet’s criticism of

other poets as a reevaluation of his own work, Bly's establishing his argument around a historical comparison of the political poems in thirties and sixties positions his 'political poetry' to a different place from the ones in thirties and sixties. He states that the basic failure in the political poems of thirties is their being concerned with only "opinions" and the fate recurs in the sixties by reason of that "we find in sixties many political poems still made up of opinions; they are political all right but not poems" (248). For Bly a political poem does not only lead people to take some actions against the wrongness but makes it possible to return to the inner self and question the existence of the individual. "The true political poem does not order us to take any specific acts: like the personal poem, it moves to deepen awareness" (249). Political poetry does not sacrifice the style and language for the sake of pure conveyance of the ideas/ ideologies. As Bly states, "the political poem needs an especially fragrant language" (250). This pleasant smell of language leads to a creation of a true poem in which the poet expresses his feelings freely by means of literary device and reader rereads through his/her own conception of the world. Bly exemplifies his argument from a poem "The Dictators" by Neruda. Similar to the attitude achieved in "The Dictators", Dağlarca and Bly's poems demonstrate not only the fact existing in a tangible way but also "entangle in the language the psychic substance" (Bly 250) of the events, sorrows and illogical actions witnessed by the two poets during Vietnam War period. In conclusion to the part, Robert Bly and Fazıl Hüsnü Dağlarca are two figures who regard the meaning of political poetry as another expression of the inner reaction against the inhumane political deeds and the genre turns into a personal or lyric poetry merged into the politics, which makes the opponent voices of the poets more audible.

1. 2. An Overview of American and Turkish Modern Poetry

American and Turkish poetry after fifties witnessed besides many chaotic events, a combat fatigue of the World War II and the following ones such as Korea and Vietnam Wars. The years of Cold War and competitive relations with Soviet Union gave a total desperateness and feeling of a sustaining fear over the psychology of the individual. To some it is also the beginning of a new peaceful world and the optimistic air after the war represents itself in the creation of new structures and styles. The reception of post-war effects is a quite controversial issue which conveys the existence of a change starting in the forties and continuing through seventies. In both American and Turkish poetry we meet with new movements and also the duration of those movements in certain periods. In a cause and effect relation the two poetry nurtures its literary background with oppositions to the precedent style and understanding. In other words, the suggestion of a replacement or alternative enriches the universe of poetry.

American and Turkish poetries create and develop new ways of expressions through various poetry circles and ideologies. In stead of expressing the superiority of one over another, it is more functional and beneficent to state their value individually to detect to which degree they influence the tradition/s. Besides summarizing a historical development of the poetries in a certain time, the part also intends to demonstrate the connection between the periods developing over decades and the two poets; Bly and Dağlarca.

It is known that American literature and poetry has developed under the influence of British literature until the late 19th century. The forming of a national consciousness and identity, the resolution of a new a society by means of original sources led to a literature totally local and national. As Sanders, Nelson and Rosenthal

put it, “Modern American poetry began to emerge in the last century whenever the idiom became familiar and the tone was derived from an immediate state of mind rather than English literary models” (II-1). The period beginning with Emerson, Whitman and Dickinson established the origins of modern American poetry. According to Sanders, Nelson and Rosenthal, Dickinson stands as the first poet of the modernity for her free use of theme, meter and stanza (1).

American poetry represents a change after two world wars from the respect of the subject matter, attitude and style. The first decades of the twentieth century in U.S. did not only witness a total war in which the traditional heroic values and style of battle gave its way to mass destructions realized by means of technological developments- as Shaw ironically demonstrates the change in the notion of ideals and war in his plays-, but experienced an unprecedented wealth and prosperity which led to a ‘great depression’. As Beach states, “The first generation of American poets to respond to this modern world included Robert Frost, Wallace Stevens, Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, T. S. Eliot, E. E. Cummings and Marianne Moore. Although there are some basic differences in their styles and attitudes they share a common heritage or lack of heritage that feeds their imagination. As Bly puts it, “they support certain ideas with great assurance” (8). Their appearance especially Eliot’s and Pound’s on the stage of American poetry formed the basis of an understanding within the limits of “New Criticism” and “Formalism”. “It was with this generation –all of whom published their first books between 1908 and 1923- that the artistic achievement of American poetic writing was clearly established” (Beach 2).

In “A Wrong Turning in American Poetry” Bly divides modern poetry into two periods, one of which is called as “the generation of 1917”, Eliot, Pound, Moore and

Williams as its members. He criticizes the movement's stressing upon the "objective correlative" by changing everything into physical entities that is, objects; "These men have more trust in the objective, outer world than in the inner world" (8). For him the poetry produced in thirties and forties tries to exist in its own hard crust without any awareness of the latest poetic developments in the world. The poets in those years "forget that the German expressionist poets ever lived, forget the experiments in language represented by French poets and later by Alberti and Lorca" (19). The second generation is "that of 1947- the war generation, including Karl Shapiro, Robert Lowell, John Berryman, Delmore Schwartz, Randall Jarrell and Howard Nemerov" (23). But according to Bly the second generation could not produce their own ideas and there is a "reluctance to criticize ideas handed to them" (24). In this respect Bly summarizes the poetic development of modern age from "objectivist generation to metaphysical generation to the hysterical" (24). The reception of historical process by Bly reflects the desperateness about finding a basis for poetic quality. But the same process can also be taken as a colorful parade of "the academic formalists following the tenets of the New Criticism", "the 'confessionals' with their more intensely approach to the poem", "Beats and other countercultural movements which sought to liberate poetry from what they saw as the rigidity of academic verse", which functions as a preparatory stage for the social criticism developing in fifties (Beach 3).

Unlike American poetry, the world wars do not trigger the creation of modern Turkish poetry in the same degree that the declaration of the Republic. As Kıbrıs puts it, "The radical structural change that Republic aims to form, the political and cultural progress has led to a textural change in Turkish literature" and the considerable variety in the rate of poets dwelled in Istanbul and Anatolia –the place is significant in the sense

that poets from Anatolia reflect the sorrows of oppressed and neglected farmers and workers in a vivid and realistic way- has established a basis for more socialized understanding of poetry by causing a change in subject matter (84). To Ünlü and Özcan, the period between 1940 and 1960 can be classified according to the poets' works and activities as follows; "The First New Movement (Strangers), Social Realism Movement, The Anatolian Reality action, The Blue action, The Second New Movement" (27). The First New rejects all old traditions and styles of writing, the forerunners, Orhan Veli, Oktay Rifat and Melih Cevdet define the movement as a renewal in the understanding of poem. The 'elite' reception of poem is refuted with attempts denoting that every being in the world can be subject matter of a poem. Their rejection of the form and ornamented style led to purity in their poetic language. They recreate the poems in classical forms with alterations or by means of intertextuality.

The second movement, The Social Realism represents a sensitivity towards the criticism of social life and working conditions. As Turgay Fişekçi states, "the peace and democracy after the World War II led the poets to have closer look at the social problems" and he continues that Dağlarca attracted his attention from the intuitional poems to the examples dealing with social criticism such as *The Mother Earth* (71-72). The movement enriches its subject matter by including the Anatolian realism in it. Dağlarca combines the influence of two traces in his works as *The Ant from Sivas* (An Anatolian city). With the appearance of Nazım Hikmet it is observable that Turkish poetry has gained a new political voice centered on the criticism of the economic systems and social structures.

The Blue action appears in a magazine with same name by Atilla İlhan and has lost its efficacy before it evolves into the quality of movement. According to Özlü, "It is

an action of a romantic literature” He maintains that the poems within this action are full of nostalgia, love and dreams. There is a fluctuation between being dreamy, surrealistic and realistic in the poems. Symbolical expressions are abundantly employed” (qtd. in Ünlü and Özcan 30). In some ways Blue calls to mind the style of The Second New and shares the same fate of having a short duration on modern stage of Turkish poetry although they continue to exist with alterations and in new forms.

The Second New Movement introduces surrealism and ‘strange’ associations to the modern poetry. To some poets such as Oktay Rıfat, it lacks a systematical thinking and coherence. Cemal Süreya, Turgut Uyar, Edip Cansever, Ece Ayhan represent typical poems defining general features of this circle. The Second New belongs to an intricate style in which the meaning sometimes disappears without a trace. In this respect it creates a kind of artificial fog consciously disguising the meaning. The movement stands as the binary opposite of the First New since one is suggesting the representations of events or feeling in utmost simplicity, the other creates symbols creating ambiguity and paradoxes.

According to Turgay Fişekçi, in fifties Turkish literature experienced an “unprecedented intensity of imaginative expression” by leading to discussions about the meaning of writing so-called meaningless poems and he expresses that The Second New poets’ real aim is not to blur the meaning and vision of poem but “to take the reader to different worlds by trespassing over the discernable boundaries of the meaning” (72).

The question lies in the place of Bly and Dağlarca in their literatures’ poetic developments and they can be positioned to certain movements or attitudes mentioned above. A Turkish critic, Orhan Burian describes Turkish poetry and the movements or

fluctuations in it with an analogy to the scales in his “The Two Scale Pans of Our Poetry”. He states that in the efforts of these pans to outweigh the other, on one side “some poets speak with the language of society’s simple language, some express the hidden tears and smiles, some produce folk songs out of the joy of labor and these poets, no matter where they are, in the streets, docks or fields, allege that they sing the poem of the common man” (61). He exemplifies this attitude with such poets as Cahit Sıtkı, Necati Cumalı, Sabahattin Kudret and Rıfat Ilgaz.

On the other side, Burian demonstrates poets who reflect a world in which dreams and real life are intermingled to alleviate the heaviness of hopelessness and if they are harassed by the people, this real-dream combination functions as a shelter for the poets as Ahmet Muhip Dranas and they take a child, beloved or the God with them to accompany their journey. But Burian’s classification, as he accepts, is a flexible one and some poets such as Dağlarca and Orhan Veli force these patterns (62). The vibrations between the two scale pans result in the enrichment of the poetic tradition. The criterion for Dağlarca is also applicable for the poetic nature of Robert Bly since both poets do not only represent the most idiosyncratic and intrinsic grief and joys of ‘every man’ with a sheer determination but also reflect the conflict and combination of inner and outer voices on a metaphysical level. In conclusion, Dağlarca and Bly carry some traces from certain periods, it can be said that these poets have melted the experience in their different poetic phases in the universal pot of poetry. Their originality does not allow them to be dependent upon only one understanding or movement. In each different period of sensibility, they recreate themselves and their views within their characteristic reception; their rewriting poems again and again – Dağlarca regards the process as the creation of poem- is the most obvious example.

1. 3. Difference between Soldier Poets and Civil Ones

Robert Bly enlists in the Navy in 1944 after being graduated from high school and till 1947 he takes military education about “a special radar program” (see chronology of Nelson xxviii). Within this short period of time, “Bly became interested in poetry” (Davis 3). Dağlarca’s experience in military is longer than that of Bly but they share some similar fates such as gaining a resolution rather than a pure interest for creating a career from poetry and productive experiences shaping later works during this period. In fact Bly decides upon a poetic career beginning forties, and Dağlarca produces first examples of his originality, he attended to Kuleli Military School and Military Academy between 1933 and 35; as Soysal points out his first book, *The World Drawn on the Air* was published when he graduated as lieutenant from the Military (101). He retired from the Army Forces after working fifteen years. In “Conversation with Dağlarca in 86”, Mahir Ünlü asks a question to Dağlarca about the influence of his military life upon the universe of his poetry and adds that some students enrolled at the military schools began to write poems in those years. Dağlarca connects such an interest to the loneliness firstly felt there and his answer represents his inherent capability about writing poetry since he alleges that he learnt to compose poems before learning how to read and write and also knew what loneliness means before enrolling to the military school (57). Dağlarca’s military period is very beneficent in the sense that he witnessed the Anatolian reality and the real sorrows of men trying to survive in inhumane conditions. Dağlarca mentions this period as a phase when he found principal answers to why he should write social poems (Ünlü 57). Robert Bly and Dağlarca can be described as civil poets writing about war. In this respect the value of their voices and attitude gain a paradoxical vividness. Although they have never been in the battle field

in Vietnam War, they present the bloody scenes and events in a quite realistic way. It can be said that they recreate the scenes they witness by means of media with a humanistic reaction. It is obvious that they did not experience self-destructive battle scenes in deafening bomb sounds and soldiers dying with their bloody mouth in mud. They were not subjected to the torture of anachronic personal (physical pains and) sorrows during war or in after war period as it happened to such poets as Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, Edward Thomas and Rupert Brooke in the World War I. But as Tim Kendall puts it “the history of the twentieth century has demonstrated how generally valid the war poet’s experiences continue to be (3) by implying that this war’s being only a prelude and twentieth century would endure sorrows of upcoming wars. Within this context, Bly and Dağlarca share the same fate of soldier poets by reflecting the sensitivity of a universal reception of war as being non-combatant members of it; in other words, they try to articulate the realities in Vietnam War as being outsiders attempting to penetrate into the heart and underlying reasons in the existence of war. As a matter of fact they do not exclude themselves from the responsibilities and crimes burdened on the shoulders of mankind by the war. In the poetry of Dağlarca and Bly, ‘soldier’ is not the suffering one as he is depicted by the war poets of WW I. Since he is a means for the realization of political decisions, he loses the humane side of him and turns into a death machine. As Bly describes in “Driving through Minnesota during the Hanoi Bombings”, we come across with a soldier talking about a Vietnamese, “tortured with telephone generator” on helicopter board and making a favor for him; “I felt sorry for him / And blew his head off with shotgun” (37) or the ones using “thousand of soldiers and policemen-The moonshine is to witness/ They cut through guts, tear away limbs” from “Shame Zone” by Dağlarca (29).

1. 4. Vietnam War: Historical Background

Vietnam War or Second Indochina War (1957-1973) is one of the longest wars in the twentieth century and covers a period of time longing twenty years with its precedent reflections. The war is also a civil war for the north and south fought for the predominance over each other. The place and influence of ideology form the basis for the reasons of the outbreak. Vietnam's social and political history witnesses many chaotic events originating from the ideological conflicts. Sharing the same fate with Spanish Civil War, Vietnam War becomes gangrenous by the persistent manipulation of the super powers; two enemies, US and USSR, which represent the embodiment of capitalism versus communism. The inclusion of allies or supporters of these two sides makes the situation more desperate. US take the war as a matter of life and death since any failure or defeat will be resulted in the beginning of a communist era in the whole countries of Asia (Domino theory).

As Hall points out "it is ironic that Vietnam and the United States engaged in such a long and bitter war. They had collaborated during World War II, and US officials listened as Ho Chi Minh [founder of Indochinese Communist Party and Vietminh] quoted Thomas Jefferson in the Vietnamese Declaration of Independence" (1). Vietnam always played the primary role in America's Far East policies. By means of its internal affairs US tried to balance or decrease the influence of Communist administrations such as China. In this respect, the US governments' policies remained the same although the events gradually turned into a predicament which is not easy to handle. The notion 'independence and nationalism' is essential in the long lasting conflicts appearing both inside and outside of Vietnam. Indochina that is, a union established by the combination of Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam under the rule of France was broken after World War

II and as Hall puts it “the events of World War II had a dramatic influence on the course of Vietnamese history” (3). In 1945 Ho Chi Minh declared independence of Vietnam. While America was advocate of an independent Vietnam after post-war period, it began to support a reestablishment of French colonial administration with the fear of expanding communist influence. The actions of Indochinese Communist Party and Vietminh for free Vietnam led to the outbreak of First Indochina or The Franco-Vietminh War in which “the United States offered mediation but viewed the communist-dominated Vietminh as an unacceptable replacement for French Colonialism” (Hall 5). For this reason, US supported France economically but French forces had to sign Geneva Accords in 1954. After this period, America’s involvement in Vietnam increases. Ngo Dinh Diem’s government in South Vietnam exists with the great support of US with its economic and tactical/educational help. “President Eisenhower had pledged in 1954 to assist the Diem government in ‘developing and maintaining a strong, viable state capable of resisting attempted subversion or aggression through military means’” (Butwell 112a). Even from the above short expression it is understandable that US government employed Diem government as a barrier for the expansion of communist forces. Diem’s pressure on the Buddhist community results in a large demonstration in which one Buddhist monk burns himself to protest the oppression of Diem government (the event deeply influenced Dağlarca and Bly, it is possible to find some traces of this event in the poems such as “Here are Those Who Burnt Themselves for Their Country by Dağlarca. In “Leaping up into Political Poetry”, Bly criticizes the reaction of *Time* by uttering “*Time* is very upset that Buddhists should take part in political activity” (246).) Since the formation of Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) in 1962, America’s military existence in Vietnam changes into a

gradual Americanization of the war. The attack of North Vietnamese patrol boats to *Maddox* and *C. Turner Joy* ships triggers America's physical involvement in Vietnam War in 1964 and the following first troops are landed to Vietnam shores. With the "Operation Rolling Thunder", heavy and long bombardment of air force, Vietnam witness many scandalous and inhumane events such as the casualty of many farmers in the villages bombed and these actions of America give an opportunity to Vietcong (National Liberation Front) to propagate against its presence. As William Tuohy states, "it is a brutal war in Vietnam, but the men fighting it try not to become brutalized" (195), which seemed impossible for the US increased its military force and demolition of a whole village because of two Vietcong snipers continued. Operation Rolling Thunder ends in 1968 by bringing a temporary atmosphere of peace but one year after Nixon orders the bombing of communist points in secrecy. In 1969 US government confronts mass anti-war protests at home. In seventies the reliability of war lessens, the last troops leave Vietnam in 1973 and congress does not approve the demanded monetary aids or any military aid to Indochina in the same year.

Vietnamization of war results in failure for central cities passes to the control of North Vietnam forces and such operations as "Ho Chi Minh" campaign of South Vietnam results in defeat and in 1975 Saigon falls to North Vietnam by ending a twenty year long war. To conclude as Fredrik Logevall points out "that the American decision for war in 1965 was wrong decision is today taken as axiomatic by large majority of both lay observers and scholars, who see the US intervention as, at best, a failure and a mistake, and at worst a crime" and his quotation from McNamara's 1995 memoirs as "we were wrong, terribly wrong" (85) both justifies the resistance of Bly and Dağlarca and underlines the accuracy of their arguments about politics and war in general.

CHAPTER TWO

The Opponent Voice: Comparative Study

2. 1. Comparative Analysis of *The Light around the Body* and *Our Vietnam War*

The Light around the Body and *Our Vietnam War* are highly original works in expressing the ideas which are generally thought outside the subject matter of literature. Although what is comprised in the study of literature and what not is an evasive and quite subjective area still argued, such an uncertainty in defining the borders has led to some prejudices against the political poetry.

Before mentioning the presupposed fears for losing literariness, the problem of ‘engaged’ should be described. In which conditions do we name a work of art as ‘engaged’ and does this word carry only negative connotations? The word ‘engaged’ is usually used when a work of art is not an artifact of art but that of some other disciplines such as politics or religion. But if we are to consider this word as a purpose meant to be achieved, no one can allege that an author does not have it in his mind and thus in the works he produces. It is also possible that a poem may implement the provisions of being literary and be also ‘engaged’. Such a situation does not lessen the artistic quality of a work. As Sharp points out in his comparison of Whitman and Merville, the question of “to what extent may a realistic treatment of war or war protest, be thought a ‘poetic’ theme at all, one worthy great artist?” (9) expands the boundaries of argument into the areas of propaganda, literariness and the conflict of public and private voices.

The above mentioned argument is felt more overtly in the works of Robert Bly and Fazıl Hüsni Dağlarca. In other words, we cannot evaluate or name their political poems as purely engaged. Since there is always a dominant ambiguous voice in their

poems, the subjectivity achieved in them both hinders the harmful effects of engagement and keeps the poems of these two poets away from being temporally bound, thus makes them lasting through years in spite of the elimination of the reason such as Vietnam War. In Vietnam War's most fervent days Robert Bly attended poetry readings against the war. During such a meeting's question part "someone from the audience asked Bly if he felt that his poetry had become so topical that it would be forgotten as soon as the war was over" (Unterecker 18). Bly's response was a quite populist one and received a flood of applause. He was deliberately relating to the person asking the question that he had been only writing for the present society in that period and not apprehending for the future. Unterecker thinks Bly is right in his response by uttering "the future would have to take care of itself; he was writing for us, now, here, and against the slaughter of Asian villagers that American bombs, American defoliants, and strafing American planes and pilots were responsible for" (15). But besides the immediate value and function of the poems written against Vietnam War by Bly and Dağlarca, the universality aimed at by two poets is achieved with their emphasis on the basic human nature and their criticism to the system created by expansive and colonialist ideologies. Bly's writing about the Iraq War in his *Insanity of an Empire* exactly 38 years later from 1967 when *The Light around the Body* was published demonstrates his decisiveness and integrity in conviction. Moreover, his writing on and against war in the 21st century indicates a bitter reality, that is the notion of war has been and will be fed by the basic human instincts.

The Light around the Body and *Our Vietnam War* are topical works but this does not necessarily mean that these works will be forgotten. Homer wrote about Trojan War but his work was not forgotten nor did Shakespeare's historical plays hinder him from

expressing the joys, pains and whatever belonging to human being. What Dağlarca and Bly achieved is a similar sort of universality created by the great poets; relating within the boundaries of the context to surpass it. In other words, Bly and Dağlarca use current issues to express timeless worries. Their employing some news and data from papers and making collage of the factual details with egalitarian reactions show their reaching the present and future at the same time. The dichotomy of occupying a place in this world and reacting to its paradigms always felt in the works of Dağlarca and Bly.

The structural analysis of the poems leads to an evaluation including their form and sense. But what is meant by structure needs definition in advance because of the arguments around the difference between structure, form and texture. John Crowe Ransom categorizes these conceptual terms. For him structure should be judged as being different from texture. Ransom claims that “the structure of a poem is its central statement or argument (its logical structure) while everything else is texture” (qtd. in Cuddon 871). Everything else here comprises formal elements such as the choice of the words and length of sentences/ lines, indentation, versification and partition of the stanzas. So he takes structure thematically and as being a means for the meaning aimed.

Holman defines structure as “the planned framework of a piece of literature” (513). He also accepts Ransom’s categorization by stating that contemporary criticism does not apply the term structure only for “verse form and formal arrangement but also the sequence of images and ideas which unite to convey the meaning of the poem” (514). When we regard poetry “as a kind of language that says *more and more intensely* (the authors’ italics) than does ordinary language” (647) as Arp and Johnson states, then the functional quality of structure becomes clearer. For a structure which has the capability and capacity of defamiliarization in formalist terminology ascends the poetic

language from the boundaries of ordinary language and thinking, thus intensification in feeling is achieved.

Finding differences between form and structure calls to mind the ‘content- form’ relation. As Peck and Coyle puts, “content is what a poem says, what it is about, its subject matter. Form is the way in which it says it, how it is written, the language it uses, the patterns it employs” (15). If we take this definition as basis, we can conclude that structure is an umbrella under which many other elements function. Among many others, one of these elements is the choice in the titles. ‘Titrology’, a French term, examines the styles of titles and the reason for the word choice and sentence or phrase patterns. Bly and Dağlarca weave their works with scrupulous care by beginning from their titles. The careful choice of titles gives them the opportunity of conveying their arguments clearly even from the beginning. But the ambiguous word choice in titles indicates that the reader’s response in rereading the text is quite essential too. In this respect Robert Bly’s *The Light around the Body* reveals important arguments with three words; ‘light’, ‘around’ and ‘body’.

The noun ‘light’ has always carried deep connotations in Bly’s canon. In *Light around the Body* too, it conveys spiritual and abstract meanings in accordance with concrete implications. *Oxford Connotations Dictionary* suggests such words as “bright, harsh, intense, strong, blinding, gentle, soft, watery, mellow, beam, burst, flash, gleam, twinkling” (463) for the word “light” and it is interesting that all these words given above are implied in one way or another in the collection of poems, *The Light around the Body*. The traditional meaning of light as a source of knowledge and general truth that is logical and immediately accepted entity maintains its weight in Bly’s work. The word light also brings to mind that it has represented the spiritual power through the

ages and religions. In some mythologies and religions, sun and thus light are the beginning of the life and also a means for punishment. When we turn to the first meaning of light as 'bright', it leads us to a structure with two meanings; one is the above mentioned reconstructive meaning and the other is the opposite, deconstructing power. For instance, in the classical mythology, Zeus is always depicted as super power with thunderbolts in his hand. He uses his unique 'air' force to arrange the events according to his will and a threat against the prospective mutineers. Thor, equivalent to Zeus in North European mythologies, carries similar lightning above the fields of corns, implying the possibility of both abundance and destruction.

The word light combines both physical and metaphysical qualities. The metaphysical and deistic feature of knowledge turns into a power of technology and intelligence. The wish of knowing and having everything has led to the use of technology illogically and brutally. This misuse of technology which is criticized bitterly by Robert Bly and Fazıl Hüsni Daglarca in their works, blows off the candle's light, and leaves the humanity in darkness in the brightness. The two poets seeing the irony create their images as light with multiple meanings and messages. For there is an absolute reality separate from the others, the light image leads us to another spiritual dimension while showing a material quality; the light can also be regarded as the representative of the soul. The ephemeral feature of light resembles the abstract soul and both of them need to fill and occupy a place to be functional. In this case the word body functions as a container keeping something inside and as it is combined with the light, it fills the material side while the other forms the spiritual.

Obviously, the 'body' which is very concrete in quality when compared to 'light' does not carry its material structure in the title of *Light around the Body*. The

tangible, individual and thus idiosyncratic body turns into a universal quality, representing everyman or woman. From the title it is understandable that the definite body because of 'the' article also makes it indefinite. When it is read for the first time it draws the immediate question of 'to whom this body belongs' and whether it is the embodiment of the poet himself creates another ambiguity. As it is thought in the context of war as phenomenon, it also reminds the ones losing their lives in the battle field. If it is read with the preposition around, it can imply a body-centered world. The notion of events happening around the body creates both individualism from the beginning and a kind of egoism. This egoism is a reflection of the self-centeredness of the modern man. It is emphasized with the word 'around' that the human being is always dependent upon the outer world and there is a road with two directions creating the interaction between the inner and outer side of the individual.

In *The Light around the Body*, Robert Bly does not only comment on the present situation of modern man in the context of American society, but also demonstrates from where the problems he criticizes are originated and tries to find suitable remedies or solutions. Such a mission leads him to find an appropriate means for the presentation. Because he puts forth a thesis or hypothesis, he applies a scientific form calling the style of articles or essays. Firstly, he divides his poems under five sub headings. The reason for this penta-partite structure lies in his aim to classify according to the arguments of the topics. Each subheading is an implication for the part's critical weight. The poems written under each sub heading are not equal in number. But this does not necessarily mean that one part is more essential than the others.

The beginning part entitled as 'The Two Worlds' consists of seven poems. The poems in this part function to establish an intellectual basis for further argument. Even

before reading the poems themselves, we feel from the titles selected that some kind of political criticism and protest are involved in the first part. ‘The Two Worlds’ attracts the attention with immediate questions in a similar way it happens when reading the title of the book. The question of what are these two worlds needs an answer and this answer is granted by the mystic thinker Jacob Boehme, with a quotation from him on the first page of the first chapter. The quotation which has been quoted by many Bly critics dealing with the dichotomy of inner and outer worlds is as follows;

“For according to the outward man, we are in this world, and according to the inward man, we are in the inward world . . . Since then we are generated out of both worlds, we speak in two languages, and we must be understood also by two languages.” (Jacob Boehme, qtd.in Bly 1).

Although Boehme definitely divides the notions of ‘self’ and outer world by emphasizing that the two notions are only understandable by their own languages, he also implies that a place between these two worlds is possible, even inevitable for the self realization, tolerance, and interaction both with the self of the individual, the society of that individual and with the other societies culturally different. In Boehme’s words it is also stated that equilibrium between the inner and outer worlds is essential for achieving a moral wholeness. Robert Bly, as he does in many of the titles and subtitles of his poetic works creates a thematic frame by choosing such a subtitle as ‘Two Worlds’ and adapting the ideas of Boehme into his first part.

The order of the poems in the first part justifies the dichotomy of Boehme, for the first three poems is related to outer world, the one between the first and last three belongs to a hybrid place between the inside and outside. The following chart visualizes a logical relation between the titles of the first part.

Outer WorldInner-Outer WorldInner World

The Executive's Death

Watching Television

Smothered by the World

The Busy Man Speaks

A Dream of Suffocation

Johnson's Cabinet Watched by Ants

Romans Angry about the Inner World

Bly begins with a title "The Executive's Death" which is a vestigial image completed with other poems and parts. This title is followed by another related one, "The Busy Man Speaks". Even the titles in the parts realize the contradiction and irony achieved in *The Light around the Body* and the first two titles can exemplify the kind of irony sustained in the book. 'Death' is connected to the speaking and 'Executive' to 'The Busy Man'. 'The executive' is a 'busy man'. So he can not catch the real beauties of the life and can not grasp the real meaning of the world. According to Bly, he is the accomplice of the capitalist system. His existence paradoxically influences his environment although such kind of occupying a place does not mean anything but destruction. His death is not such a great event as his existence and in spite of the negative image of death, it connotes positive meaning when the executive involves. As Bly expresses in the first poem of *Light*, the tragic reality is that the death of executive is not real but an artificial death. He can not even really die for Bly gives the death in a dreamy atmosphere and executive is not aware of that he has died. Another connection is revealed with the first two titles. In "The Executive's Death", we hear the voice of the executive speaking hysterically. As before mentioned, the definite article 'the' cannot perform its role here and this too causes contradiction. Bly mentions and criticizes a group by employing the most typical images related to them. "Johnson's Cabinet Watched by Ants" changes the situation by giving a real name. But this does not affect the contradiction; a special name and government structure with the traces of

verisimilitude is presented with an illogical but at the same time very rational image of 'ant'. Besides its multiple connotative meaning, ant changes the realistic atmosphere into rather surrealistic one. The inequality between the forces is embodied with a cabinet and ant. The difference in size also emphasizes such an imbalance. Moreover, the choice of this title leads to the rethinking of the meaning of democracy. Ants only watch and probably support the decision taken by the cabinet. In this way they can not participate in administration. So there is no difference between watching a cabinet or television. 'Watching Television' follows the cabinet. The media's role in veiling or unveiling the truth is especially meaningful for such a war as Vietnam. The administrations' misusing the media for gaining personal interests is bitterly criticized in *The Light around the Body* and the tone of the criticism in the first part changes between the deliberate and implied arguments.

The well-known image of the outer voice, television is combined with a personal choice; although television attracts the attention of the individual with many different strategies and thus manipulates him or her, its effects are a result of the one who has preferred to watch it. Watching television was not an enjoyable experience in the Vietnam War period. As Bly suggests "there's a strong hunger in the country for something besides television, a hunger for the spiritual- which talks about a connection between daily life and the spiritual" (qtd. in Harris 18). The individual wants to be aware of what is happening around him and also tries to listen to his deepest side. As Bly shows in his poem 'Watching Television', television creates a kind of invisible wall by reflecting only the conflicts and cruel events of the world. In this way, it fragmentizes the psyche of the self. It is also a mirror for human nature's evil side as well. So the poet or the narrator becomes 'Smothered by the World', the following

poem. This pseudo real world is a threat for his survival. The consciousness of the realities is so hard that he feels himself suffocated. In such a world he breathes physically but not psychologically.

“A Dream of Suffocation” follows the “Smothered by the World”. These two poems have been placed consecutively to complete a common message. The images used also create a logical cause and effect relation. Even from the titles, Bly maintains that if the self is harassed by the world and its forces, it will find the solution only in death and in ignoring the realities. In this respect a dream stays as a harbor for the restless nature of the individual. “Romans Angry about the Inner World” both closes the first part and summarizes the thematic arguments of the chapter. Bly commences his argument with an image from the outer world and closes it again with a historical image. But he adds to the last title ‘the inner world’. Here the quotation related to the two worlds from Boehme becomes more meaningful. The two sidedness of the world is connected to source of the conflict, the self. The last title also brings to mind why Romans are angry about the inner world. Externalizing side of the human nature is apparent when the ultimate mannish power involves.

The second chapter or part fluctuates between the personal and impersonal. The dichotomy of inner-outer world is maintained too. The title of the second chapter is “The Various Arts of Poverty and Cruelty”. We are immediately drawn into an ironical debate between two groups. By uttering ‘poverty’ and ‘cruelty’ Bly expresses his criterion in categorization; the power. In one part poverty dominates and hinders this part to become powerful. Bly’s example is the Vietnam folk. But he also means his own society. According to him while Vietnam people was suffering from the physical poverty, American society had to experience a psychological one.

The other part, symbolized allegorically with cruelty, is so powerful that it becomes merciless to the suppressed side. Bly gradually enlightens why Romans are so angry about the emotional side of the human being. Bly also uses the word 'art' ironically. In this case, art turns into a way of living and handling the problems. Both sides try to survive in the system comprising both of them and they realize their aims by applying their own defense or aggression mechanisms strictly. In this chapter Bly employs three quotations, one from Boehme again, and the others from 'Old Liturgy' and Freud. The first quotation is as follows;

When we think of it with this knowledge, we see that we have been locked up, and led blindfold, and it is the wise of this world who have shut and locked us up in their art and their rationality, so that have had to see with their eyes. Boehme, qtd. in Bly 11

Boehme's tone is very clear and accusing. By using 'we', he classifies or at least emphasizes a difference between two groups. When he utters 'we', he also implies the other. As Bly suggests in the title of the second part, for Boehme 'the wise of this world' is the ones monopolizing the power for converting the heathen to their faith. The meaning of the art in the title is clarified with Boehme's words. To him the dominant side tries to neutralize the oppressed with different methods such as media and politics. Here a kind of deadlock seems to continue without a compromise. For he alleges that the rational and worldly side stays as a threat and an enemy to the other side and regards the other side as an enemy because it thinks differently from them.

The second quotation is "our fathers ate manna in the wilderness and they died" (Bly 11) from Old liturgy. Bly quoted this verse from John 6:49, but while in the translations 'your' possessive pronoun is employed, Bly uses 'our' instead of it. New

International Version, New Living Translation, World English Bible, English Standard Version, New American Standard Bible, International Standard Version, King James Bible, American King James Version, God's Word Translation, American Standard Version, Webster's Bible Translation, Weymouth New Testament use 'your' in their translations. When Bly changes this possessive pronoun, he changes the addressee of the narration. The first use with 'your' creates a certain distance but 'our' expresses how the addresser has accepted and internalized the reality of death. Catholic encyclopedia suggests for the meaning of 'manna' as follows;

The food miraculously sent to the Israelites during their forty years sojourn in the desert (Exodus 16; Numbers 11:6-9). It fell during the night in small white flakes or grains which covered the ground and presented the appearance of hoar frost. These grains are described as resembling coriander seed and bdellium, with a taste like 'flour with honey', or 'bread tempered with oil' (Exodus 16:31). <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09604a.htm>

The physical existence of the manna also denotes the body of Christ. As the above mentioned encyclopedia maintains according to Christ this food is the "bread of life" that will provide life for people. Besides its nourishing nature, it is also the symbol of spiritual satisfaction. Bly quotes this verse from Bible for achieving something different in effect. He combines a mythological or historical event with his argument of 'Poverty' and 'Cruelty'. When rethought within the context of Vietnam, rice takes the place of manna. Because of the lack of another great amount of food for a group of people in desert, Israelites had to eat only manna. This kind of hardship has been experienced by the poor folk of Vietnam. They had to survive in the wilderness too.

It is known that Israelites could eat some wild animals such as quail. “One day some worthless foreigners among the Israelites became greedy for food, and even the Israelites themselves began moaning, ‘We don't have any meat! In Egypt we could eat all the fish we wanted, and there were cucumbers, melons, onions, and garlic. But we're starving out here, and the only food we have is this manna’” (11:4-11:35). According to Bible when the folk wanted quail not manna, God gave what they want but the ones eating quails died. This event can also show the symbolical reaction against the act of killing and the punishment following it.

The verse Bly placed to the beginning of his second part contradicts with another verse, John 6:58, it says “he who eats this bread will live forever” (<http://bible.cc/john>). The verse quoted by Bly reflects a logical contradiction too. For how can foods as the “bread of life” cause death? In this respect manna turns into a kind of poison and a trick. Manna symbolically shows the unchangeability of death and completes the second part’s hopeless atmosphere.

Third quotation in the second part belongs to Freud. He underlines the difference between a child and an adult by suggesting “what a distressing contrast there is between the radiant intelligence of the child, and the feeble mentality of the average adult” (Bly 11) The difference is related to thinking. ‘Radiant intelligence’ is threatened by ‘the feeble mentality’. The second one always tries to dominate over another way of thinking. As Bly criticizes such kind of change in his essay “The Wheel of Intelligence”, “the typical child of a hierarchical society looks down on what is beneath him or her, on the ‘inferiors’. By a process of association the child, now an adult, looks down on his ‘inferior function’, whatever that might be” (Bly b 263-264). According to him, Child loses his or her light even in childhood and they are alienated to their

compassionate side in a society in which success myths are worshipped. The rich imagination leaves its place for a fruitless and monotonous thinking. Bly also denotes with the quotation from Freud that the main cause of wars is losing the brilliant dreams of children and despising the so called weak side. As manna can not provide a possibility of survival physically, 'radiant intelligence of a child' does not save the mankind. To Bly, for both of these heavenly nourishing sources have been neglected, poverty and cruelty are continuing to exist and imagination is used by the cruel powers to make others poorer. The first poem's title is "Come with Me". The poet tries to take someone to somewhere. He behaves as if begging from that person, not knowing whether he or she will come or not. Despair prevails.

The titles used in the second part are as follows; "Those Being Eaten by America", "Written in Dejection near Rome", "Listening to President Kennedy Lie about the Cuban Invasion", "The Great Society", "Suddenly Turning Away", "Three Presidents", "Hearing Men Shout at Night on MacDougal Street", "Current Administration", "Andrew Jackson's Speech", and "Sleet Storm on the Merritt Parkway". The second part forms a basis for the third part, "The Vietnam War". The titles draw that time's daily issues and events. The voice of opponent poet is heard clearly in the titles. The most personal and impersonal go through a broad frame including the hopelessness, the hypocrisy of the administrators, the protesting voices tried to be suppressed, egocentric mentality displayed with 'great society' and conflicts in almost every area.

"After the Industrial Revolution, All things Happen at Once", the first title of the third part, "Vietnam War", creates a historical background for the reason of Vietnam War. Bly begins this part firstly by questioning why 'all things happen at once.' He tries

to find when the capitalist forces started to change the shape of world. It is interesting that Bly does not prefer to quote from the thinkers he is influenced. As if he hurries to convey his ideas to a group of people. “Asian Peace Offers Rejected without Publication” again emphasizes the hopelessness. The inescapability of war is reflected with an event in which the other side is ready to sign peace treaties. “War and Silence” shows a relation resembling to poverty and cruelty. “Counting Small-Boned Bodies” demonstrates dehumanizing effects of the war. The media’s daily broadcasting the death numbers as if keeping the balance sheets also visualizes the dehumanization. “At a March against the Vietnam War” immediately follows “As the Asian War Begins”. This parallelism denotes the time of protests begins with the war. So a certain group of people instantly react to the war. “Driving through Minnesota during the Hanoi Bombings” leaves the apparent distance between two societies or countries. Bly maintains that the ones feeling can share the same sorrow with the others in Vietnam. “Hatred of Men with Black Hair” has an ambiguous meaning. Bly does not exclude these two meanings. The hatred felt by the people of Vietnam is placed near to the hatred of a group feeling for the ones from different ethnicity or nationality. The third part forms the spine of Bly’s argument. The real and surreal are combined within this part. The real events are collaged to the surreal images.

The fourth part of *The Light around the Body* is entitled as “In Praise of Grief”. Such a title brings to mind the enduring mood of the Stoics. But Bly believes that after the darkest night the sun rises, the best events will follow the worst events. In this respect so called negative feelings are functional to reach the good ones, and paradoxically the praise of grief is in fact the praise of happiness. Bly puts a quotation

from Boehme for the beginning. With Boehme's praise of death, he supports the notion of 'touching the bottom' to rise again as follows;

O dear children, look in what a dungeon we are lying, in what lodging we are, for we have been captured by the spirit of the outward world; it is our life, for it nourishes and bring us up, it rules in our marrow and bones, in our flesh and blood, it has made our flesh earthly, and now death has us. qtd. in Bly 38

The 'spirit of the outer world' threatens the spirit of the self. Boehme maintains that the system of this world has always dominated over our cognition. It transforms our celestial side into the transient one. He also emphasizes that the problem lies in internalization; when we accept its domination, it prevails not only our spiritual side, but also our body thus death becomes an unwanted experience for the people.

"In Praise of Grief" is the part in which Robert Bly turns to his inner side after the protesting poems of 'the Vietnam War'. He needs such kind of backward movement for rebirth or refreshment. But the only feeling is harassment. "Melancholia", the first poem of the section reflects the poet's mood. "Turning Away from Lies" suggests a solution for reconstruction of the humane side of the individual. "Looking at New-Fallen Snow from a Train" and "Looking at Some Flowers" show the role nature plays for a romantic revolution of the self. "A Home in Dark Grass" stands as an alternative for the 'dungeon' of Boehme. "In Danger from the Outer World" denotes the fear felt against the physical world and "The Fire of Despair Has Been Our Savior" explains why Bly chose such a title as 'In Praise of Grief'. Hopelessness evolves into the hope.

"A Body not Yet Born" is the last chapter of *The Light around the Body* and as the body denotes, Bly closes his book by leaving an intrigue to be solved. "A Body not Yet Born" calls to mind "The Second Coming" by W. B. Yeats. Bly provides that a new

beginning is apparent but the quality of this change is doubtful. The fluctuation between the hope and despair is also maintained in this chapter as in the fourth one. The melancholia of the previous chapter is conveyed in a surrealistic style. Bly quotes from Boehme at the beginning of the chapter. He reflects his own conflict in Boehme's words; ". . . In consequence I grew very melancholy, and what is written, though I knew it well, could not console me" (Bly 51). The conclusion that Boehme thought is the result Bly takes from what he has written. The poems he wrote about the Vietnam War can not cure the scars in his soul. "Looking into a Face" is a title poem. For the 'light around the body' is the last second line of this poem. Bly turns to the body of some one and tries to find an answer for the questions and conflicts in his mind. "Riderless Horses" criticizes the illogical mechanism of the outer world and questions the system created from the point of practicality. "Evolution from the Fish" and "Opening an Oyster" convey the surrealistic atmosphere of the chapter. "Wanting to Experience All Things" shows the desire to leave one's own body as if waiting for being set free from a 'dungeon'. The title also emphasizes how the poet narrator is exhausted and dissatisfied by the world. "Hurrying away from the Earth" reminds him a probability in same way a "Hermit" does. When he tries to seek an outlet in the maze, he discovers "A Journey with Women" will lead him to "Moving inward at Last". But Bly suggests the weakness of this wish by uttering "When the Dumb Speak". He supposes that when the roles change, the order of the world will alter too. His dichotomy of hope and despair which is kept especially in the last two chapters is summarized with this conclusion poem. He mentions an apocalyptic end in which death will dominate.

Robert Bly's choice of words in titles justifies what a Bly critic, Davies points out, ". . . *Light*, like *Silence*, is carefully unified structurally and thematically. And it

makes a powerful poetic statement than it does a political one” (43). The crucial role of titles is emphasized with Bly’s keen unification. Bly achieves an organic unity from the beginning by employing titles essentially for conveyance of meaning. Titles draw a frame to be filled with meaning when the poem is reread. Even in some poems, when titles are omitted, the meaning loses/looses its effect and becomes ambivalent. The titles of the poems in *The Light around the Body* become images which function for creating a special impact. In this respect the literariness of the titles is felt more than the political discourse. For some poems the titles summarize the main argument and sometimes they create an ambiguous voice for multifunctional quality of the meaning.

The original poet of modern Turkish poetry, Fazıl Hüsni Dağlarca shares a similar style and aims in choosing the titles of the poems in *Our Vietnam War*. Bly selects a line from “Looking into a Face”, the first poem of the last chapter for the title of his book as mentioned before. However Dağlarca does not take his book title from a line in his book. Instead he creates an ironical title, *Our Vietnam War*. It is understandable to some extent when an American poet uses such a title because of national bonds, but even in that case, the suggestion is deficient and overgeneralizing. The history of the resistance movement (Vietnam Anti-war activities) shows us that there was a considerable amount of reaction against the Vietnam War in sixties. Americans such as Robert Bly did not even see any reason for such an unreasonable war. He advocated for the human rights of Vietnamese war sufferers.

Unlike Korean War, Turkey did not involve in Vietnam War neither by supporting its rightness in world arena nor by sending soldiers as she did in Korean War. Then how can it be ‘Our’ Vietnam War? Here Dağlarca presents his own nature and writing style. In his perception nationality is not so defining in human relations.

When a person from a different nation or belief suffers, the suffering is crucial there and his/her suffering is not superior or inferior to the suffering of his own nationality. As Bilyap points out “in his poetry he deals with the inner and the outer world, from the cave man to the modern human being, with the man as a citizen of a country and as world citizen” (4). The universal responsibility that he devotes himself shows itself in Dağlarca’s use of possessive ‘our’. For him ‘Our’ does not belong to a definite group but to all nations which have developed a kind of sense and consciousness against brutality.

The third reason for Dağlarca’s choosing ‘our’ can be based on his finding some similarities between Turkish Independence War and Vietnam War. It is obvious from his epic poetry, *Üç Şehitler Destanı [The Epic of Three Martyries]*, *İstiklal Savaşı [Independence War]*, *Anıt Kabir [Mausoleum of Ataturk]*, *Yedi Memetler [Seven Memeds]*, *Çanakkale Destanı [The Epic of Dardanelles]*, *19 Mayıs Destanı [The Epic of May 19]*, *Kitap Dışı [Out of Book]* that he is a resolute supporter of Republican revolutions and Ataturk. As Yaşar Nabi points out Dağlarca could not help connecting the freedom wars that Turkish nation experienced in the first decades of twentieth century to the endeavors of Vietnamese people (35). In both struggles the innocent folk had to suffer from political instability, the fear of being occupied and killed by an insidious enemy, rape, and starvation. While one side was using the hi-tech weaponry to seek and clear the guerilla force, the other side tried to take advantage of forests and primitive traps. In this respect, another similarity is the unbalance in strength and facilities. The enemy forces’ being supported by the imperialist administrators and adherents led to the mass destruction of common people and to a wrong mentality; if

one lives in country side and is a farmer, s/he is a guerilla member thus needs to be eliminated.

Unlike Bly, Dağlarca does not fit the same form he creates about the criticism of Vietnam War. Bly prefers a more implicit analysis by separating his poems into chapters. He openly criticizes Vietnam War in the third chapter. His placing this chapter to the center of his collection and others to circulate around the chapter about Vietnam War suggests that he logically establishes his argument not only applying to the experience of war itself but to the factors causing its relevance and thus increases the acceptability of the work. But the first title of Dağlarca, “Coasts of Vietnam” openly places us to the war field. He “Where even Tigers Halt and Stare” calls to mind Bly’s “Those Being Eaten by America”. Here Dağlarca tries to understand inhumanity of man with tiger image. He creates irony and personification in the title. Dağlarca defamiliarizes the wildness of an animal by uttering ‘even tigers’. He implies that the situation of Vietnam is so harsh that even an animal famous for its brutality is flabbergasted and behaves as a conscious civilized person.

“To Be Blood mouth” is an inevitable experience “At a March against the Vietnam War” as Bly and Dağlarca demonstrate through their poems. The pressure of authority against the protesting voices resembles to the “Whom they called Brigands” and “Black Skinned Soldier” reflect a kind of prejudice in “Hatred of Men with Black Hair”. In “Napalm Bomb”, “Black Night (X) Gun”, “Phosphorus Bomb”, “Gillette Bomb”, “Quick Killer”, “Poison Gas” visualize the sorrows of Vietnam people and the unbalance between two forces. “Forest Zone”, “Electric Zone”, “Stars Zone”, “Hypothalamus Zone”, “Shame Zone”, “Elephant Zone” and “Resistance Zone” fluctuate between the reality and the surreal. These zones also create an atmosphere and

a room for Dağlarca's multi lateral argument. "Balance Sheet" reflects the harsh criticism of "Counting Small Boned Bodies" with vestigial images. "Before Bombs Touch Dark Breasts", "Reality of Sick People", and "Here are Those Who Burnt Themselves for Their Country" are all together expressing to what extend Dağlarca internalizes the pain felt and lived in Vietnam. "Life is Equal to Earth", "To live", "Here to Shine Suddenly", and "Here, Shining" show Bly's hopeless hope by combining the black and white. For Dağlarca, "Poverty" and "Shame" are two essential results gained from war.

As Bly does, Dağlarca also employs epigraphs from the sources he was influenced and his own monologues. The sources are generally from the speeches of the presidents, newspapers and Vietnam folk songs. The epigraphs adapted from folk songs of Vietnam and newspapers depict the sources nurturing his imagination; nature and daily life. The excerpts from newspapers, administrators of the time carry the main arguments in a concise manner. The epigraph is visualized, approved or refuted in the poem. But his style in placing the epigraphs is different from that of Bly. Bly prefers to quote from the thinkers and Bible at the beginning of each chapter except the third. The poems under each chapter explain or exemplify the epigraphs. So the number of excerpts is less than Dağlarca's epigraphs but for their symbolic density they are capable of completing and carrying out the argument in the poems.

Dağlarca employs short epigraphs placed to almost each poem as if first lines. He does not categorize his poems under chapters. In other words, he creates a cluster of images without a thematic title for the related poems. He provides the unity with this kind of formal closeness in the poem. But this does not necessarily mean that Bly failed in creating a thematic unity by separating the poems into groups. Paradoxically both

poets utter their ideas in a fragmented style. But in the end their message is a single combination of multiple assumptions. Although Dağlarca's quotations are more than the ones that Robert Bly uses, the function stays the same; they combine the imaginative world of the poems to the physical world. The epigraphs of Dağlarca try to find a logical reason for the illogical war. They reflect the inferior side of the human beings and also their relation to the nature. Verisimilitude is achieved with quotations from the president of America or the resisting forces. Dağlarca seeks a way for communication with the resistance force of Vietnam. His questioning tone in almost each epigraph changes the quotations into a kind of chorus judging or expressing their own ideas and forming a basis for the tragedy. Moreover, his idiosyncratic attitude embodies itself in combining his own words with that of newspapers, and other individuals. Traces of the war and its effects on both sides are conveyed by means of epigraphs.

What Bly and Dağlarca share in expressing the sorrows, hypocrisy, interest centered thinking and weakness of human being when material issues are involved in general, is also felt in their composition of titles and epigraphs in particular. The similarity lies in their implicit relating and criticism.

For the epigraphs are placed organically to the poems in Dağlarca's *Our Vietnam War*, it is more appropriate to analyze the epigraphs with the poems. The determination of their value and to what extent they change the meaning make their role obvious.

Although structure is not confined to the use of titles and epigraphs, in the case of Bly and Dağlarca, titles are the opening expressions and attitudes of *The Light around the Body* and *Our Vietnam War*.

2. 2. Nature and the Color Imagery in *Light around the Body and Our Vietnam War*

Robert Bly and Fazıl Hüsni Dağlarca represent the romantic tradition in a world approving all materialistic and artificial qualities and excluding the most humane feelings. These two poets could not help responding to such a notion to which 'even tigers halt and stare'. Nature plays a great role in expressing their opponent voices. Colors employed in the poems do not only support the atmosphere created but also make the setting of the poem symbolically functional.

Nature is apparent with its almost all elements in the poems of Bly and Dağlarca. They combine the effect and meaning of weather with that of an animal. The colors both disguise and unveil the meaning. Thus the basic dichotomy of light and darkness is maintained in a dreamy line. The place nature occupies is between the line of white and black. But most of the time the influence and appearance of the color black are dominant in some poems particularly when turning to the inner self. In this respect, nature functions as an umbrella covering different but at the same time component elements and paradigms.

Bly begins his *Light* with a natural event, death. He unites two different results into one. In "The Executive's Death", the executive is a product of the society in which he completes the circle. In this way the executive, a symbolic member of a certain group becomes an artifact. He is the unnatural one in nature but is also subject to the same process of the nature. According to Bly this kind of paradox makes his situation tragic. "Merchants have multiplied more than the stars of heaven" (Bly 3) is a clear judgment deduced from the system of the society Bly observes. As he did in executive- death comparison, he compares a group of people with an element of nature. Bly shows a change from wildness to domesticity with merchants and stars. The irony in

exaggeration is achieved with the comparison of countable and uncountable entities. Bly also expresses a second industrial revolution in the poem. The increase in the number of merchants denotes an economy extending its scale. Bly uses the verb 'multiply' for both showing the radical increase and unbalanced reproduction calling to mind that of microbes. In this respect, the action of merchants is away from a human behavior.

Half the population are like the long grasshoppers

That sleep in the bushes in the cool of the day:

The sound of their wings is heard at noon, muffled, near the
earth. Bly 3

Bly creates a symbolic opposition with surrealistic images in "The Executive's Death". He resembles a group of people without uttering their social identity to an insect. Here nature's animate and inanimate elements are employed to relate the qualities of the society. 'Grasshopper', 'bushes', and changing weather are functional in conveying the criticism against the society and Vietnam War. By referring to 'half the population' Bly seems to separate society with a notion of 'we and others'. He deliberately emphasizes the destructive role of grasshopper. The negative image of grasshopper, its harm on productivity is closely given with this group. The simile visualizes how this 'Half the population' lives and acts. Bushes provide a kind of shelter for survival of the grasshoppers. In the same way this group keeps itself from any threat in a society in which they share the same ideals. The ambiguous group starts to action when the means are most available as a grasshopper waits the most suitable time of the day for destruction.

When the lines above are reread within the context of Vietnam War, the depiction of a military landing can be considered. It is known that helicopters are

heavily used during the war for landing of the soldiers, carrying the ammunition to the war field and infiltrating to the guerilla camps. After Vietnam War the functionality of them in military operations has been accepted in world arena. The American soldiers used defoliants and other herbicides for clearing the possible shelters, forests used by the Vietnamese Guerilla force. So from the respect of destruction their actions remind that of grasshoppers'. Grasshopper image turns into a helicopter in the last line for the sound of propeller is "muffled, near the earth" as the "the sound of their wings".

"The cool of day" and "at noon" strengthen the military meaning of the lines. "The cool of day" refers to the night and at night all the forces get into their shelters as the grasshoppers "sleep in the bushes". In the day time they take into action again. Another meaning appears in the day-night comparison; according to Bly, the American society did not react against the war properly. They either could not find a right means to utter their ideas or simply underestimated that the harmful effects of Vietnam War would be deeply felt by the American society itself. His granting National Book Award money to a resistance group against the enrollment for Vietnam War is one of the best examples showing Bly's sincerity.

The crane handler dies, the taxi driver dies, slumped over
 In his taxi. Meanwhile, high in the air, executives
 Walk on cool floors, and suddenly fall:
 Dying, they dream they are lost in a snowstorm in mountains,
 On which they crashed, carried at night by great machines. Bly 3

Bly observes two kinds of death by emphasizing the artificiality and the difference in understanding the death. Firstly he takes an image from daily life and working class. While Bly is describing how the crane handler or the taxi driver died, he does not mention their emotions or what they felt while dying. He emphasizes the action

of dying with taxi driver's slumped over appearance in his taxi. He suddenly falls as if a tree drops. Nothing seems to be unnatural or artificial. The serenity in the death scene creates an opposite situation for the executive's death. As being a part of nature they accept the reality of death. But their death means nothing to others; it can not influence someone or something.

On the other hand, the death of an executive is a great event which is visualized with "great machines". The death of workers and executives are almost the same from the respect of their realization, one slumps over and others "suddenly fall". However unlike the death scene of workers, Bly tells not only the realization of the event physically, he also explains what executive felt or could not feel while dying. Here Bly relates a plane crash scene. He employs natural elements such as air, mountain and snowstorm. The earth and the heaven underline both the different receptions to the death and surrealistic images. The workers stay as the embodiment of the real life. But the executives are so isolated from the real life that they even can not understand that they have died. They are so optimistic that they feel themselves in a dream. Their dreaming of being lost in a snowstorm in mountains reflects the degree of their being lost in real world. They never consider the possibility of death and behave as if they are immortal demigods. In this way they do not accept the advent of death and try to find out a compensation to deny it. The color employed in the narration of the executive's death is white. Whiteness of the snowstorm maintains the dreamy atmosphere created with the surrealistic images.

Being "lost in a snowstorm" shows their confused mood. The snowstorm image places the executives into a chaotic atmosphere. But nature tells them the truth. "As he lies on the wintry slope, cut off and dying, / A pine stump talks to him of Goethe and

Jesus.” Bly completes the description of the executive’s death with an image on the verge of vanishing off the face of the earth. The exhaustion of executive is reflected with pine stump image.

In the lines following the dream of executive a parallelism attracts attention from point of surrealism. Bly makes a pine stump reveal the relation of man and nature. The executive is resembled to a stump while dying for he has been cut off as the remaining part of the tree. Pine stump visualizes a kind of resistance against being lost. Although tree has lost almost all of its parts, it keeps the roots in the soil. In this way pine stump turns into the opposite image of the executive. Bly combines the effect of both personification and animism. Pine stump’s talking to the executive of Goethe and Jesus creates a symbolic doomsday. Pine stump also functions as a priest or prophet trying to bless the soul of dying executive. The executive can not find anyone to help him but the pine stump. Bly particularly chooses two figures from history, Goethe and Jesus. These figures are symbolic representatives of certain movements, trends and notions. One’s originating from art and other from theology support the contrast created between the executive and nature. The romantic Goethe and the symbol of innocence in Christian mythology, Jesus Christ emphasize the most humane side of man which has been ignored by the executive. Thus pine stump lectures the executive by reminding him of the emotions he suppressed.

Commuters arrive in Hartford at dusk like moles
Or hares flying from a fire behind them,
And the dusk in Hartford is full of their sighs;
Their trains come through the air like a dark music,
Like the sound of thousands of small wings. Bly 3

Bly broadens the function grasshopper image with mole image. In these lines there is a similarity with the second line. “The cool of the day” changes into the “dusk”.

Commuters who need to travel long distances everyday to work find a shelter in their city, Hartford. It is emphasized with moles and hares that the working conditions of the workers are so threatening that they behave as if they run away from a fire. The fear felt by the workers recalls the scary movements of hares in a forest fire. The color employed in these lines supports the white and black contrast. At dusk, in blackness commuters or travelling workers are likened to moles digging holes in darkness. In the same way workers do not need to see what they produce for their being alienated by their jobs. “Flying from a fire behind” strengthens the meaning of a hectic life which workers are subject to.

Although fire and coldness are conceptual/binary opposites, they denote the same influence in “The Executive’s Death”. According to Bly the executives who “walk on cool floors” are the ones causing the workers to struggle in the middle of a fire. Since in the day time workers have to work mechanically, they only can turn to their feelings at dusk. What overrides in their emotions is the desolation. The gloom in “their sighs” is related to the dilemma which is represented by dusk. The sigh does not reflect a psychological suffering but also a physical exhaustion. The dilemma lies in permanentness and unchangeability in their situation. Bly resembles the movement and sound of train carrying the workers to a dark music. The image of train and dark music reminds industrial revolution and Greek mythology.

Thomas Hardy, one of opponents of industrialism creates a scene calling the train moving like a dark music. In *Tess of D’urbervilles*, when the animals are drinking water from the lake in a misty weather, a train coming from nowhere appears and destroys the harmonical atmosphere with its sound.

The transportation vehicle changes into the small boat of Kharon who carries the dead to Hades in Greek mythology. Hades can be combined with the fire that workers try to evade from. Kharon plays a kind of lyre or horn while carrying the dead. Dark music relates the viciousness in the atmosphere. “The sound of horns” explains the meaning of dark music by extending it. Train whistle calls to mind the sound of a horn. The crude and alarming sound of horn refers to a battle field in which the workers should always be watchful. The sound of “small wings” leads us to the grasshopper image and to a contradiction. Bly tells the paradox of producing while destroying in these lines. When the sound of small wings and that of horn are compared, the paradox is supported from a different dimension. The sound of small wing means nothing but if it is “thousands of small wings”, it produces the same hoarse sound of horn. So the sound of train is also the sound of the workers in the train.

Dark music in “Executive’s Death” and thus darkness mean not only pessimism but a hope that will be a sparkling part of a future renewal. When the workers listen to the dark music of train, they begin to voyage in their inner self. The image of train supports the bilateral meaning of darkness. While it is carrying the workers to work, it functions as Kharon, but in this case it becomes a means for the spiritual satisfaction of the workers. They find a kind of power for clinging to life. Otherwise, the commuters would become lost in hard conditions that they endeavor to run away from. In this respect the train carrying them summarizes their life and their unrecoverable situation.

“Executive’s Death” is quite organic poem in expressing its argument. It enumerates the reasons creating the main problem of the poem. Fluctuations felt by both the authority and the subjects are conveyed with the balanced lines including either

executives or workers. “Merchants, the crane handler, taxi driver, executives, and commuters” appear in a logical order. Bly begins with merchants and ends with the commuters. By this way he visualizes a cause and effect relation. So in “Executive’s Death”, kinesthetic, visual and auditory images contribute to the creation of interdependence between the classes and the use of images illustrates the place of nature in this correlation although it is blindly denied by the higher class of executives.

Fazıl Hüsni Dağlarca begins to his *Our Vietnam War* with “Coasts of Vietnam”. Similar to the voice of “Executive’s Death” this poem emphasizes the underlying economic reasons for the distortion of the normal humanistic life and sets a basis for the outbreak of Vietnam War. As before mentioned, both Bly and Dağlarca employ epigraphs from certain thinkers, songs or their own monologues. But their placing the epigraphs differs. In “Coasts of Vietnam” Dağlarca quotes from Johnson’s speech appeared on a newspaper as follows;

Nguyen- Tien- Larg’s eyes smarted, on reading a reality on the newspapers: “The needs which will be increased by the war in Vietnam will enrich American economy. In 1966 we expect a period of prosperity unequalled in history” Johnson. 5

Dağlarca obviously alleges that the capitalist expansion and economic interest of US policies are the basic reason for this war. Even from the quotation Dağlarca creates two opposite poles. The ambitious voice of American president is balanced with the shocked and disillusioned Vietnamese. The contrast is between the suppressing and the suppressed one as reflected in “Executive’s Death” by Bly. Moreover the paradoxical result of war is also conveyed in the quotation from Johnson. While the war causes one side to be totally destroyed it results in flourishing conditions on the other side.

“Tonkin bay is a blue moon, in bright daylight,” (Dağlarca 5) is the opening line of “Coasts of Vietnam”. In this romantic atmosphere Dağlarca begins to a harsh criticism of America’s policies. He deliberately chooses Tonkin bay which has been the start point of many naval offensives. The contrast between night and “daylight” is felt with the creation of a dreamy atmosphere. The serenity of Tonkin bay is reflected in the color blue. However the color blue also serves to the ambivalent situation Vietnam is in.

Whilst “blue moon” represents the freedom, hope and positive feelings it also carries the heaviness of wrath and gloom. “bright day light” supports the positivity of the atmosphere. But the second line destroys all the brightness and functions as the messenger of a dark power that will imprison the daylight forever.

A new cannibal song is heard while trees touch the grass
Americans, the greatest barbarians of the age,
Have poured the latest discoveries of science

on an Asian land. Dağlarca 5

The angry voice of poet against the Vietnam War is heard so powerfully that it brings to mind he cannot keep his objectivity to evaluate the argument in a sane manner. But what he understands from “Americans” in the poem is only limited to the misusing soldiers and politicians of America as he explained in “Guilt”, another poem in *Our Vietnam War*; “When I say the American is cannibal, / I don’t mean you, the little house in Texas” (Dağlarca 39).

“A new cannibal song” covers the silent shore of Tonkin bay and replaces the cozy air of natural setting. Cannibal image calls the African cannibals dancing and singing songs hysterically around their victim caricaturized in most cartoons. The destructing nature of cannibal can also be combined with the grasshoppers of “Executive’s Death”. But what makes cannibal’s situation more tragic is related to

eating his own kind. The sound of horn in “Executive’s Death” and cannibal song are auditory images both reflecting the war itself and sufferings of the victims.

The beginning of an offensive is described in the lines above. The soldiers’ voices mingle with the sound of falling trees. They destroy the forest as grasshoppers to open roads for themselves and their war machines. The scene also reflects a reality, the considerable physical destruction of nature during Vietnam War. “Trees touch the grass” resembles the line of Bly, “As he lies on the wintry slope, cut off and dying, / a pine stump talks to him of Goethe and Jesus” (3). But in both situation the mankind can not take the message from the nature, thus brings his own tragic ending. If the “cannibal” image is rethought with suggestion of ‘man is a part of nature’, the image gains a more general meaning. The man destroying the nature in general and the soldier setting fire the forests in particular become a cannibal eating his own kind.

“The greatest barbarians of the age” is also connected with the soldiers damaging the nature. Dağlarca draws the soldiers’ behaviors as reminders of the barbaric tribes expanding in full destruction. The contrast created in the beginning line with daylight in darkness is conveyed with a different dimension in these lines. Whilst the soldiers’ behaviors are primitive, they “have poured the latest discoveries of science on an Asian land” (Dağlarca 5).

Dağlarca questions the notion of primitiveness and its closeness to the nature by asserting that living in forest does not necessarily mean barbaric and primitive attitudes. The ones defining themselves as the representatives of civilization can easily prefer to the most primitive and inferior actions in the absence of accustomed social life. Paradox lies in the primitiveness and latest technology. “And faced with the most loathsome

kind of mass annihilation and war” is the following line which supports the argument put forth in frame of ‘primitive- modern’ (Dağlarca 5).

Both Bly and Dağlarca observe some sort of misanthropy in state affairs. “Hatred of Men with Black Hair” by Bly and “Coasts of Vietnam” by Dağlarca are two voices emphasizing the dehumanization. But “the most loathsome kind of annihilation and war” can also be read from the respect of nature. The US soldiers fighting in the depths of forests in Vietnam had to struggle with the wildness of nature besides the guerilla factor. So the easiest way to deal with nature is to annihilate it totally. It is a reality that American soldiers used defoliants and herbicides to clear out the jungles. Thus ‘loathsome’ destruction of nature implicitly represents the will of man’s ignoring the most naïve part of himself and shows the struggle of keeping off the whole traces with the sentimentality and genuine feelings and in a way with past as Robert Bly emphasizes with his most poems in *The Light around the Body*.

The man having the utmost power of technology behind himself and his acts regards the right of changing his world and the world he is endeavoring to capture physically. “Death itself is repulsed to suck the blood of / these teatless women and lipless children” (Dağlarca 5) visualizes the degree of destruction aimed by the superior side. Dağlarca questions the nature of death by creating powerful surrealistic images in these lines.

“Teatless women” and “lipless children” defamiliarize the mother-baby relation, besides these images construct and deconstruct the notion of nurturing a new life with the combination of death, blood and milk. What Dağlarca achieves is the logical contrast employed in the second line. Death sucking the blood of mother and baby together is placed to the same level of baby sucking milk from the nipple of his/her

mother. Personification of death supports the same contrast created in ‘sucking blood’ for the subject of the act described realizes its duty with repulsion and anger. The accustomed negative meaning of death changes too. It appears as a victim in spite of the act it is forced to do.

Similar to the behaviors of executives unaware of their death and assuming “they are lost in a snowstorm in mountains” the sucking of blood from a woman who has no nipple and lipless children forms a basis for the harshness and absurdity of war (Bly 3). War and death hinder the mother to nurture her baby so they impede the relation between them. As Arthur Miller points out the relation of nature with nature of human laws by making a character in *A View from the Bridge* advise to another one with these words; “The law is nature [. . .] When the law is wrong it’s because it’s unnatural” (66).

Tonkin bay is a blue moon, in the dark,
Its coasts smell of burnt flesh.
The earth hadn’t seen anything like this since

thousand years, Dağlarca 5

Tonkin bay loses its serenity and bright color with the appearance of the enemy forces. The “bright daylight” of the first line has to leave its place for a total darkness. However Robert Bly uses the color black for both affirmative and negative meanings in “The Executive’s Death”, Dağlarca prefers black’s negativity by employing the traditional meaning of white-black dichotomy. The covering heaviness of dark reaches to the coasts and calls to mind the ashes after a great fire. This way in these lines the picture of a “mass annihilation” is drawn with impressing olfactory images. The lines above function as a refrain for the beginning line. They complete and support the message given in the first lines. Dağlarca uses ‘earth’ instead of ‘world’. He emphasizes

the physical entity of the world with its landscape and nature. As it happens in every mass destruction in history, the earth has to witness man's disgusting acts.

Dağlarca creates a parallelism with earth and Asia in the line "Neither had Asia, hoary-headed brave Asia" (Dağlarca 5). He cannot keep his objective voice in this line. "hoary-headed" image refers to the age of Asia and its existence beginning from the early ages of earth. Asia is on the verge of an exhaustion and harassment for the experiences it subjected to are too heavy to carry over the future ages.

Its honest winds blowing from the yellow mountains

Do not smell green, do not smell civilization,

they smell skeleton. Dağlarca 5

Nature and civilization is one of the main issues Dağlarca argues in his most poems. For him "the latest discoveries of science" is not a criterion for civilization. In his depiction of battle field, nature gives way to barbaric wildness due to the burning bodies. The smell of nature and greenness coming from mountains change to stinking "burnt flesh" because of the heavy bombardment carried out in the mountains for clearing the forests and murdering the alleged guerilla forces.

The color of darkness expressed in "Coasts of Vietnam" resembles Bly's "Listening to President Kennedy Lie about the Cuban Invasion". Even from the title Bly underlines the politicians' hypocrisy with President's lying about the Cuban invasion, which shows the expansive politics produced and their neglecting responsibility before the society. The passive nature of the act 'listening' reshapes the role of society in political issues too. But as it is obvious in every poem of Bly and Dağlarca, the text created by the two poets makes a reconstruction possible for the readers with their own understanding and background.

There is another darkness,

A darkness in the fences of the body,
 And in moles running, and telephone wires,
 And the frail ankles of horses; Bly 16

As mentioned before Bly uses the color black with its connotative meanings. In the first line he defines the logical frame of this poem and supports his argument in the following lines by exemplifying “another darkness”. With “another darkness” Bly gives the impression of that he will employ the negative meaning of black. The darkness he mentions reflect the black color of Dağlarca’s “Tonkin bay is a blue moon, in the dark” (5). With “A darkness in the fences of the body” Bly combines the negative and positive meanings by creating a deeper paradox awaiting a clear explanation.

“Fences of body” illustrates how the man limits himself to the situations of unwanted experiences and a great destruction. The fence entraps the man into fear and despair. It stands as an antagonist to the ‘light around the body’. What Bly achieves here is to create an intrigue by presenting both sides of human being together. The catastrophic atmosphere is supported with “moles running”, which is a recurrent image as seen in “The Executive’s Death” with one slight difference; “Commuters arrive in Hartford at dusk like moles/ Or hares flying from a fire behind them” (Bly 3).

“In moles running” a similar effect of “smell of burnt flesh” (Dağlarca 5) can be observed with the images expressing a huge fire covering the whole land. With mole image Bly employs hyperbole for underlining the evil covering almost every part of nature. As it displayed in Dağlarca’s poem “Coasts of Vietnam”, darkness turns into the ashes and a derelict that remained after fire. Bly stresses upon “telephone wires”. For they carry the bad news and death coming from the war. It also refers to the media manipulating the ordinary people. This image is one of the modern representatives of the changing world such as television in Vietnam War years. It is also possible to find a

similarity between the fences and telephone wires. Both of these images visualize bars placed around the 'body'. Their horizontal and vertical placement reflects a total surrounding superior power. This encaged situation of man makes him to resemble a mole escaping from danger.

"And the frail ankles of horses" obviously combines the nature with the color black. Freud and especially Jung's influence over Robert Bly can not be disregarded in his canon. In Jungian terminology 'horse' symbolizes the soul and freedom of the individual. It also refers to the energy of life with some sexual connotations. Bly uses horse to express the inner free side of individual. "Frail ankles" denotes an anomaly in the system or procedure. In other words Bly defines the pathological dismal of man. Darkness and frail ankles show the evident fate of a horse having weak ankles, that is death. Thus Bly constructs a parallelism between a horse and man. The wounded soul of man can not realize itself in willingness and eagerness just as a horse can not run properly. The weak horse image creates a similar response in Dağlarca's "these teatless women and lipless children" (5). Due to such defects as ankles of horse, it cannot function according to its own nature; similarly it is impossible for a mother to feed her baby without nipples and for baby to be fed without his/her lips.

Darkness of dying grass, and yellow willow leaves;
 There is the death of broken buttonholes,
 Of brutality in high places,
 Of lying reporters,
 There is a bitter fatigue, adult and sad. Bly 16

Although "Listening to President Kennedy Lie about the Cuban Invasion" does not contain any word related to Cuban Invasion or Vietnam War, the lines written under this title always refer to the situation in Vietnam. So the lines implicitly describe the

atmosphere with vivid and surrealistic images. In spite of poem's being written in mono partite form it can be divided into two parts logically completing each other. The line containing "frail ankles" ends with a semi colon which gives the impression of that Bly will explain what he means by 'darkness' in the poem.

"Darkness of dying grass, and yellow willow leaves" visualize an autumnal atmosphere. The colors used are black and yellow in this line. Both colors reflect a moody and gloomy situation in which the notion of death overwhelms. When the line is reevaluated with Vietnam War in mind, it reminds the first and last lines in "Coasts of Vietnam" such as "while trees touch the grass" and "Its honest winds blowing from the yellow mountains. / Do not smell green, do not smell civilization, / they smell skeleton" (Dağlarca 5). A catastrophic scene achieved in the repetition of darkness in "Listening to President" is conveyed with surrealistic image "broken buttonholes". The image of torn buttonhole points to the fact that it will not function properly as expected from its nature. The separation of life and death is expressed with the image.

Darkness of "brutality in high places, / Of lying reporters," can be regarded from two perspectives by excluding the second line from the first one or combining the two lines. Bly refers to both the brutality experienced in the mountains of Vietnam and the administration of America. It is crucial to note that brutal administrators and a lying media are basic signifiers for the degree of deterioration in society.

For Dağlarca and Bly the loss of the light in children causes greater problems and destruction than any other power. For that reason Dağlarca wrote books about children and is also a prolific poet in children's literature. Bly finds a relation between the raising of children and the humane side of man in a competitive system. He underlines that a child's understanding should be sustained for the development of

humanity. He believes that when the childlike perception and innocence are lost, the result would be “a bitter fatigue, adult and sad”.

“In Suddenly Turning Away” Bly continues to describe the loss of intimacy and in this respect how the man deprives himself gradually of the inner feelings. As mentioned before, Bly tries to find out the underlying reasons for a complete perception of Vietnam War. In this poem too he combines different dichotomies such as shadow and light, love and hate, ignorance and knowledge, innocence and crime.

Someone comes near, the jaw
Tightens, bullheads bite
The snow, moments of intimacy waved away,
Half-evolved antennas of the sea snail
Sink to the ground.

The fear in nature echoes the fear in mankind as “someone comes near”. It disturbs the harmony everywhere. The narrator of the poem tells when “someone” approaches to him, the anxious mood is visualized with “the jaw tightens”. A kind of instinctive self protection takes place the act of a tightening jaw. After the cause, that is the arrival of a person in this case, we come across a more striking image with an effect of “bullheads” biting “the snow”. It is notable that Bly tries to set a balance between the innocence of man and nature. Bullhead’s biting the snow symbolically shows the loss of innocence. And this kind of loss creates another effect, antennas of sea snail does not function as it happens in the “buttonholes” of “Listening to President”. The discommunication is illustrated with the communicative organ of an insect. The severity of despair in the atmosphere suits to the slow endeavoring motion of a sea snail “sink[ing] to the ground”.

The sun
Glints on us! But the shadows

Of not-love come.
 It cannot be stood against.
 And we suffer. The gold discs
 Fall from our ears.
 The sea grows cloudy. Bly 18

The positive light image of sun is deceptive in these lines. The sparkling sun just mocks with the situation of man. “Not-love” neutralizes the hope of sun. The light of sun leaves its place for “another darkness” as stated in “Listening to President”. In Jung’s terminology shadow is regarded as negative. Moreover as Davis states “the most overt use of Jungian sources can be seen in Bly’s treatment of Jung’s notion of the ‘shadow’” (14). But as Davis maintains “shadow” can not keep its negativity in Bly’s poetry for it represents the “dark side” and according to his understanding “literature describes efforts the shadow makes to rise” (qtd. in Davis 14). Shadow is equal to darkness in these lines but a counterbalance and dependence are emphasized with shadow because it needs light to exist. So the color yellow and black support each other to achieve a kind of negativity that Jung defines. “It cannot be stood against” is the voice of exhaustion and fatalist perception. The viciousness of situation forces people to understand the slight details of suffering. The “gold discs” of apostles are lost too and falling gold discs also represent the fallen man. The loss of innocence is embodied with an ecclesiastical image. Sea’s growing cloudy denotes the advent of a thunderstorm and thus Bly closes the poem with an apocalyptic warning that would be realized with the outbreak of Vietnam War. Such a prospective total change in picture and anachronic longing forms the basic skeleton of Dağlarca’s “Yellow Water”. Even from the title a parallelism turns out to be in these poems. The emphasis on the color yellow is given with the contrast of past and present.

From a Vietnam song:
 “A big piece of fish”

Yellow water used to flow,
 Not because of the yellow heaven,
 But because yellow was the will of heaven. Dağlarca 36

Dağlarca begins the poem with an epigraph from a probably anonym folk song. “A big piece of fish” reflects man’s most essential need of survival. The line taken keeps the vividness of living in itself. The ambitious line of “a big piece of fish” is followed with a lamenting line. “Yellow water used to flow” means it is not flowing now or not flowing as it did in the past. The sun and “the gold discs” of “our ears” changes to the yellow water image in these lines by keeping their message. The loss of intimacy and innocence is epitomized in the changing nature. The physical change also denotes that change is so radical and drastic that even the possibility of returning to the older life form and style does not exist.

“Not because of the yellow heaven” and “but because yellow was the will of Heaven” combine a scientific reality with an idiosyncratic reception. Dağlarca reconstructs the fact that water takes its color from atmosphere by adding the notion of faith to this fact. He argues in the poem that nature does not evolve and continue by means of certain cause and effect events but it comprises a soul in itself that feels and reacts accordingly. In this respect, “the will of heaven” carries the natural with the supernatural. As Bly does in “Suddenly Turning Away”, Dağlarca emphasizes a unique body with a combination of many different parts and these parts directly affect this unique entity. The color yellow conveys a positivity flourishing like a plant or rising like the sun. Looking back to the bright and pure days of past is embodied with yellow water. It visualizes the natural flow of natural succession;

Yellow water used to flow,

It used to communicate its flowing,
 From ages to exploiters, once for all. Dağlarca 36

The repetition of “yellow water used to flow” as a refrain makes the poem similar to a folk song. Dağlarca’s quoting a line from a Vietnam folk song defines the frame of poem from the respect of tone and form. He underlines with this refrain that the old life style and process of natural existence are on the verge of a total radical replacement. It is notable that yellow water image symbolizes the nature itself in a minimalistic way. The flow of yellow water is the organic existence of human history, thus it shows the relation of man and nature from the beginnings of life. The long history of survival is expressed with “from ages”. The cultural accumulation is only realized by means of the flow of yellow water. When this natural process is hampered by unnatural actions and events, an anomaly in the system breaks out as visualized in Bly’s “Suddenly Turning Away” such as “bullheads bite the snow” and the sinking “half-evolved antennas of the sea snail” (18). As it happens in ‘not-functioning antennas’, nature cannot communicate with the modern man for he has chosen to cut the navel cord that feeds his most instinctive feelings, which makes his situation an inextricable knot.

In poetic tone of Bly and Dağlarca we encounter with an insistence on some favorite or recurrent themes. They rearrange their reappearing subjects even in the most seemingly unrelated poems. It is possible to find a trace calling to mind the recurrent argument in their poems. “Suddenly Turning Away” and “Yellow Water” are two examples clearly denoting such a style. While Dağlarca is trying to find out the place occupied by man in this world and nature, he deliberately chooses “exploiters” to combine his universal message with a historical reality, in this way he stresses on his

ideology and hope. He does not disregard the possibility of nature's healing power even on the ones consciously preferring to be destructive and 'brutal'.

Yellow water used to flow,
Without being seen by Europeans, Americans, and even by God,
It used to write on the yellow Earth, its new lot. Dağlarca 36

"Without being seen" conveys a kind of purity and innocence that have remained intact for ages. Here Dağlarca draws the picture of a serene brook flowing on its own pleasure without being even detected "by God". In this respect the humanity of Asian people is saved by this wilderness. So yellow water image changes into the yellow skin of Asian races by getting a multiple function and meaning when the correlation between man and nature is taken as a basis. Vietnamese folk song at the beginning supports the traditional life of that 'folk'. When "the shadows of not-love come" (18) as stated in "Suddenly Turning Away" by Bly, the old page of the history of an Asian folk is rewritten with not pure yellow water but their own blood. As a result, the communication constructed through ages is cut, so the chant of nature is broken and serenity is lost.

Romantic understanding of nature in 19th century poets such as Wordsworth, John Keats, Coleridge and Shelley can be traced in the poems of Robert Bly and Dağlarca. Romantic poets' opponent voices are intermingled with those of Dağlarca and Bly with slight differences. Bly and Dağlarca's reaction to the misuse of technology, industrial revolution, materialism, loss of intimacy, lack of metaphysical reception, and egocentrism is the essential point that makes their poems closer to the poems of Romantics. What differs from the style and perception of Romantics lies in Bly and Dağlarca's transforming natural images into surrealistic ones, thus creating new meanings from the accustomed artifacts or subjects. Their notion of 'death' is quite

controversial issue in their canons for 'death' fluctuates between two opposite poles. It can be classified into two major meanings as described in Bly's use of 'darkness'. The first meaning is conveyed within the frame of an ordinary reaction; the fear of death and emphasis on its maliciousness. In its negative meaning Robert Bly stresses upon its being a natural process but at the same time he shows the paradox of artificiality even in death. Dağlarca expresses a similar attitude by creating abnormal atmospheres in which unnatural deaths occur. The second reception about the notion of death stays as an evidence for poets' idiosyncratic voices. They regard death as a way of solution to be away from the real threat that is, loss of humanity, which is going to be evaluated in the third section, "Praise of Death" in the second chapter. As Bly and Dağlarca denote in "Looking at New-Fallen Snow from a Train" and "Poverty", they conjoin death with nature and purity. As it can be detected clearly, while combining different elements, they put forth their main purpose and argument. From the title of "Looking at New-Fallen Snow from a Train" Robert Bly defines his role as a narrator and observer. He creates a certain distance between a natural weather event and his position. He describes the emotions aroused from witnessing an unexceptional snow fall. But while he is depicting the natural atmosphere he also conveys the connotative meanings of "new fallen snow". The whiteness of snow emphasizes both death and life together. Whiteness creates an abandoned land on which no one or nothing exists.

Snow has covered the next line of tracks,
 And filled the empty cupboards in the milkweed pods;
 It has stretched out on the branches of weeds,
 And softened the frost-hills, and the barbed-wire rolls
 Left leaning against a fencepost-
 It has drifted onto the windows ledges high in the peaks of
 barns. Bly 45

The lines above call to mind the poetic tone and simple style of *Silence in the Snowy Fields*. But this simplicity is deceptive as Davis puts in his criticism. Robert Bly's keen eye observing focuses on the details and on how snow surrounds everything and covers the ugly sides of the place, probably a farmyard. It beautifies the lines of tracks by making them a part of nature. Snow does not let anything to appear different from others, so it fills the empty cupboards. It creates a dreamy whiteness in which no part of nature or place disrupts the serenity of atmosphere. For that reason it covers the barbed-wire rolls, window ledges and "has softened the frost-hills". In such an atmosphere even the name of death cannot exist.

A man throws back his head, gasps
And dies. His ankles twitch, his hands open and close,
And the fragment of time that he has eaten is exhaled from
his pale mouth to nourish the snow.

A salesman falls, striking his head on the edge of the counter. Bly 45

Although the scene of death contradicts with the pure and intact depiction of snow in the preceding lines, we encounter with a death in fact, two kinds of death in these lines, which is also expressed in "Executive's Death". The difference between the natural death of a regular person and odd death of "salesman" is underlined with 'a soul nourishing the snow' image and caricaturized with 'a salesman killing himself by "striking his head on the edge of the counter"'.

As Dağlarca points out in his "Yellow Water" image, nature renews itself on every occasion. It is a combination of seemingly different powers and man stays as one of the major powers affecting the nature and directly being affected by it. In the lines above Bly describes the moments of a dying man in detail. The instinctive reaction for survival is visualized with his tightening and shrinking body. But then he cannot

withstand the natural process and ‘fragment of time’ which is transformed into another entity without losing its function or quality.

“The fragment of time” image refers to the definite time that man occupies in nature. After completing this process the light has to return to the source to shine more efficiently. In spite of death’s being regarded as the end of life, it signifies that life will continue in a new form. In the cinematographic scene of the man’s mouth’s touching the snow, the close relation between the first man dying and nature is visualized. His death means something and leaves a trace in this life to be followed, thus his death is respectively functional when compared to that of a salesman.

“A salesman falls” brings to mind the title and main argument of Arthur Miller’s *Death of a Salesman*. As he makes his audience and reader to ask what happened and changed after the death of the salesman through his sons at the end of the play, a salesman killing himself accidentally does not affect anything in the natural circulation. So it can be deduced that he paradoxically occupies a place in nature but is excluded from its system. If nature and man are two forces completing each other and the closeness between man and nature is a matter of existence for man, it comes out that he is the one causing anomaly and disrupts the natural flow of “yellow water”. In this respect, while a man “dies”, a salesman “falls”. He cannot even die properly as such an inability or improbability is pointed out with salesman’s boss, the executive in “Executive’s Death” too. Bly categorizes two understandings towards nature by presenting two symbols from daily life. “Looking at New-Fallen Snow from a Train” is a tripartite poem which is very functional in conveying the main argument in the poem. Bly expresses what he felt while watching the new-fallen snow in an impressionistic way. He places the lines depicting the death of a man and salesman between the ones in

which Bly represents the snow itself. In this way he signifies the role of nature on man's life.

Snow has filled out the peaks on the tops of rotted fence posts.
It has walked down to meet the slough water,
And fills all the steps of the ladder leaning against the eaves.
It rests on the doorsills of collapsing children's houses,
And on transformer boxes held from the ground forever in the
center of cornfields. Bly 45

The overwhelming power of snow is kept through these lines. Everywhere low or high is covered with snow. But the slight change in the objects covered by the snow reflects the negative atmosphere. In the opening description of the snow Bly stresses its "softening" power on objects. However it reaches to the upper parts of a fence and then falls to melt in the muddy water in these lines. As the two lines above are taken symbolically, they visualize the death of salesman. When the man who has strong relations with nature dies, he "nourish[es] the snow" (Bly 45). But the situation is different in the case of salesman for his death functions as "the slough water" that will melt and destroy the entity of snow. Again snow's disguising the ugliness around is conveyed through its resting "on the doorsills of collapsing children's houses". Even the hopelessness of a child when losing their toys is compensated with snow. A transformer box stays as a scar between the greenness of a cornfield and is deliberately kept away from the ground in case of its moistening or getting wet. In spite of all the efforts to hinder the wholeness, snow covers the electricity boxes by uniting them to nature's other parts and elements. The skeleton of the poem lies in the scene in which man's "pale mouth to nourish the snow". A similar reaction denoting the intricate relation between man and nature appears as a guard sacrificing himself for the continuation of natural circulation in "Poverty" by Dağlarca. The title has more connotative meanings

in the poetry of Bly; he brings the meaning of life and absence or lack of the objects or subjects around to the same level in such lines as “that we should learn of poverty and rags” (Bly 44). In “Poverty” Dağlarca expresses the survival and signifies Vietnam as its embodiment. The poem is opened with a short epigram or a note defining the atmosphere of the poem as “the thoughts of Nguyen-Bin-Kiyem” (Dağlarca 41). This note shows that the situation conveyed through the poem is not stated on the level of a physical action but “thought” or willingness to sacrifice in case of a danger or threat appearing to destroy nature;

This is a fight from earth to heavens,
Burn me.
Burn me, but
My sheltering forests burn not. Dağlarca 41

The encompassing quality of war is reflected with “from earth to heavens”. The mass destruction aimed in war could only be realized by means of land and aerial weapons. But what attracts attention in these lines is that a man called by the superior powers as ‘primitive’ and ‘ignorant’ has grasped the real meaning of life and nature’s undeniable significance in his existence. As a sage person he knows that “my sheltering forests” mean more than it does for the occupying forces. He repeats “burn me” twice and his speech or “the thoughts of Nguyen-Bin- Kiyem” turns into a lament and moaning. He is ready to relinquish his life energy to nature by considering consciously that his death will “nourish the snow”. At this point his death is not a total absence but it is a subsequence in newer form. Such an understanding can be likened to the praise of death in poets but there is a slight difference for the narrator, Nguyen- Bin- Kiyem has no other option to offer in the deal with the overwhelming powers.

This is a fight, do whatever you want,

Burn my sky.
 Burn my nights, but,
 My well-fed oxen burn not. Dağlarca 41

“This is fight” is reiterated at the beginning of each part. This repetition denotes the efforts of narrator who tries to accept the situation he is in. He rationalizes the deeds he witnessed with the line “do whatever you want”. Dağlarca employs a style in which the first three lines of three parts reverberate each other in form and content. The first part and second part share the same action and subject. “Earth to heavens” in the first part appears in “my sky” and “my nights”. As the quotation shows at the beginning of “Yellow Water” with “a big piece of fish” (Dağlarca 36), the most instinctive need is conveyed by means of “well-fed oxen”. The emphasis on the harsh conditions of living and labor through “well-fed oxen”, leads to an equation which is balanced by two sides of scales. The equation reflects the level of dependence on one another. If the farmer loses his powerful oxen, he will not be able to cultivate his land thus he is going to be subject to hunger and death. Brutality in indirect killing is what Nguyen- Bin- Kiyem could not discern. The only reason he can find is ‘war’ and stresses upon this reality with “this is a fight”;

This is a fight, I know,
 Burn my heart.
 Burn my affections, but,
 My rice fields burn not. Dağlarca 41

In the last part we encounter the exhaustion of the narrator for he wants a kind of spiritual suicide for saving his labor. As stated in the comparative analysis of *The Light around the Body* and *Our Vietnam War*, rice is the essential means for survival as “manna” was to Israelites for a certain time. In some sources mentioned, manna is resembled to snowflakes, like snowflakes it was falling on plants and other objects by

covering them. When rethought within the frame of “pale mouth to nourish the snow” (Bly 45), snow, rice and manna, the vitality of coherence between man and nature comes out. Without a close relation, heart and affections are meaningless and functionless. For that reason Wordsworth preferred to sit on that “old grey stone” instead of reading books dryly in “Expostulation and Reply”. As he underlines in the poem that nature is the essential source of light that is, knowledge. Dağlarca makes the character in “Poverty” question the illogical result that is, if the war is an invention of man, it should be between the members of his own kind and the fire of battle should not include the nature with its components. But it is also significant to note that nature is affected from war because of the inevitable result of the correlation. “Rice fields” and “well-fed oxen” signify both the love of living and a foregone conclusion.

In “Johnson’s Cabinet Watched by Ants”, Bly exemplifies the “brutality in high places, / of lying reporters” (16). He combines a political image to the natural one. The poet demonstrates an imbalance in the system by reducing the influence of the citizens to a minimum scale. The static nature of the act ‘watching’ and the tiny shape of ant support the minimized force of citizens. The ant image broadens its meaning from being feeble to the symbol of working classes. In most poems Bly does not use numerals to divide the stanzas but in “Johnson’s Cabinet Watched by Ants” he separates the poem into three by denoting them with a number. This use of numbers shows three stages of a process with an argument conveying the aim of Bly. In the first two parts Bly stresses upon the hypocrisy of the administrators and a nightmare in which usual and normal things or people transform into a “cannibal” as Dağlarca defines in “Coasts of Vietnam”. As stated before in almost every poem of *The Light around the Body* we encounter a trace that leads us to Vietnam and its desperate situation. In “Johnson’s

Cabinet” Bly places the elite of society in a forest in which they will transform into monstrous creatures;

1

It is a clearing deep in a forest: overhanging boughs
 Make a low place. Here the citizens we know during the day,
 The ministers, the department heads,
 Appear changed: the stockholders of large steel companies
 In small wooden shoes: here are the generals dressed as gam-
 boling lambs. Bly 5

In these lines Bly depicts many subjects that he will turn to expand the argument to different subjects or reiterate in other poems. “A clearing deep” visualizes a historical fact, the use of defoliants to clear the flourishing plants during Vietnam War. The density of the forest forces these administrators or so called elite people to bend down like monkeys. Their brutality and inhumane behaviors are reflected physically in their poses and simian features. “Overhanging boughs make a low place” for lower deeds such as the burning of rice fields or farmyards. Bly deliberately uses “the citizens” to mock with the understanding of civilization. When these administrators or decision makers are away from the normative pressure of the social rules, they “appear changed” for they let off the inner suppressed feeling of destructiveness. “Ministers” and “department heads” signify two defining power elites that have a huge responsibility in public events. The multiple meaning of ‘minister’ includes the influence of both religion and politics together when the social issues involve. In their poetry Bly and Dağlarca criticize the misuse of the religion for the interests of certain people and emphasize the irrationality of playing with the ordinary people like puppets as a result of developing egocentric wrong policies. When the lines above are read backwards in a deconstructive way “forest” which symbolizes the wildness turns to the parliament or “Johnson’s

Cabinet” both denoting the civilization. So “here the citizens we know during the day” gains a negative meaning. Before the parliament, the administrators lie about the existence of a war in Vietnam, the direct involvement in war, the mass destruction and astronomical expenditures of the war. So forests are not a “sheltering” for the Vietnamese people as expressed in “Poverty” by Dağlarca, but a means of the authority for being irresponsible in their deeds.

“Stockholders of large steel companies” remind us the quotation at the beginning of “Coasts of Vietnam” taken from Johnson as “the needs which will be increased by the war in Vietnam will enrich American economy” (Dağlarca 5). ‘Steel’ and “small wooden shoes” image demonstrate a total opposition in quality and meaning. Steel stays as the symbol of war as Wilfred Owen stresses in “Arms and the Boy” in the lines “Let the boy try along this bayonet-blade/ How cold steel is, and keen with hunger of blood”. In this respect while steel is standing for the technological development, “small wooden shoes” represents its opposite, primitiveness. The possibility of a stockholder’s wearing a shoe that only poor wear creates an irony and by means of irony Bly emphasizes the mask of innocence worn by the capitalist powers before their citizens. It also denotes the efforts of the civilized trying to be like so called primitive people; in other words to be in their shoes is a tactical way of killing them by diverting the attention. Becoming ‘primitive’ in civilized clothes creates a grotesque atmosphere in which surrealistic images flow through. As it happens in the first line, Bly tries to keep us within frame of Vietnam in both forest and in this case wooden shoes, which is a traditional wearing of Asian folks.

“Generals dressed as gamboling lambs” illustrates how these responsible people perform as if they are on stage. The irony created with steel and wooden shoes is

maintained here with generals and lamb. The traditional symbol of innocence, lamb becomes a disguise for generals' bloody decisions. Paradoxical quality of the administrators' behaviors lies in the fluctuation created with 'tonight- tomorrow'. The loveliness of a lamb jumping around denotes the degree of deterioration in situation.

2

Tonight they burn the rice-supplies; tomorrow
 They lecture on Thoreau; tonight they move around the trees,
 Tomorrow they pick twigs from their clothes;
 Tonight they throw the fire-bombs, tomorrow
 They read the Declaration of Independence; tomorrow they are
 in church. Bly 5

The rhythm and style of recurrent grammatical form resemble the lamenting mood of "Poverty" by Dağlarca; its repetition on "this is fight" and "burn me- burn not" demonstrates a dual situation created in "Johnson's Cabinet", in which one power or act denies or refutes the other. "Tonight they burn the rice supplies" exactly meets the last line of "Poverty"; " My rice fields burn not" (Dağlarca 41). The image of lecturing on Thoreau, a transcendental poet and philosopher stays on the same level with burning "rice-supplies". Thoreau who uttered in his essay "Walking";

I wish to speak a word for nature, for absolute Freedom and Wildness, as contrasted with a freedom and Culture merely civil, — to regard man as an inhabitant, or a part and parcel of Nature, rather than a member of society. I wish to make an extreme statement, if so I may make an emphatic one, for there are enough champions of civilization; the minister, and the school-committee, and every one of you will take care of that. <http://thoreau.eserver.org/walking1.html>

In "Walking" Thoreau argues the place of man in nature with an emphasis on nature's defining role in being a real human. Besides his notions regarding the nature

reflect the perception of both Bly and Dağlarca, especially in the parts discussing the ‘civil-wild’ dichotomy, Thoreau creates a similar irony in “ministers-school committee” as it is in “ministers-department heads”. So Bly asks how a person can talk about both Thoreau and burning ‘rice supplies’. The realistic and historical image of Thoreau is competed with a symbolical one. Bly takes us to the center of a forest again with “tonight they move around trees”. He describes an infiltration or operation against the so-called guerilla forces. While “they” are searching for the enemy they do not care about the innocent folk and their “well-fed oxen” or “rice fields” of Dağlarca. So their cleaning “the twigs from their clothes” symbolically shows the efforts of absolving themselves from the inhumane and illegal acts. The kinesthetic image of taking “twigs from their clothes” visualizes how “they” degrade the other side. Although their deeds are not so trivial and simple, they behave as if they are cleaning dust away from their clothes. In the following lines, the situation is more marginalized with ‘throwing the fire-bombs’, probably for the rice supplies, and reading the “Declaration of Independence”. The ones reading such parts as “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness” (www.ushistory.org) from the Declaration, reflect the fragmentized mood they are in. Bly underlines the pathological level of being ‘unnatural’. After killing so many people and their bloody hands taken from a Shakespearean tragedy are still sticking, they go to church for their innocent and benevolent praying. With “dressed as gamboling lambs” Bly caricaturizes the generals as a wolf trying to hunt by wearing a lamb hide.

3

Ants are gathered around an old tree.

In a choir they sing, in harsh and gravelly voices,

Old Etruscan songs on tyranny.
 Toads nearby clap their small hands, and join
 The fiery songs, their five long toes trembling in the soaked
 earth. Bly 5

In the final part of “Johnson’s Cabinet” Bly places “ants” to the other side of scales. This placement separates the poem into two actors; one is a whole body of ministers, department heads, barons and generals, and the other “ants”. He deliberately factionalizes two groups to demonstrate how the perception is different from each other. In this last part Bly achieves a catastrophic atmosphere in which only a saved group of people could keep their individuality. The multiple meanings of natural visual, auditory and kinesthetic images create a last word Bly concludes from the experiences he was witnessing. Political quality of the poem is also conveyed with the surreal acts of ants and toads. Thus Bly combines the natural with abnormal, the traditional with the opponent by means of symbolical quality achieved through the poem.

“Ants gathered around an old tree” keeps us in the frame of “a clearing deep in a forest”. So in this part Bly stresses upon the situation both in his home with “Johnson’s Cabinet” and the ‘unnatural’ deeds in Vietnam. The feeling that made a Vietnamese cry “my rice fields burn not” in Dağlarca’s poem also leads these “ants” to the center of nature, which is symbolized with “an old tree” image. Here Bly relates a kind of ritual for salvaging their life and traditions. Although *The Light around the Body* is not contemporaneously equivalent to a popular Hollywood fantastic science fiction film, *Avatar*, it shares some similarities with the film for both of the works try to develop an opponent and resistant voice against the expansive suppressing forces. In *Avatar*, there is a climactic scene depicting a group of creatures’ attempts to survive by “gather[ing] around an old tree” when a mass destructive offensive is started by the hi-tech army of

US. They perform their traditional ritual and dance by chanting some sacred words. For the film is a fantastic one, they connect their braided hair to the branches of tree. The connection between nature and that so-called primitive group is visualized in this scene.

In a similar way, the first two parts of “Johnson’s Cabinet” draw a fatalistic atmosphere where all the solutions are depleted. The ritual for salvation is expressed with the lines “In a choir they sing, in harsh and gravelling voices / Old Etruscan songs on tyranny” (Bly 5). In these auditory images two traces attract the attention. When the situation in America during war years is taken as a basis, it comes out that “ants” signify the resistance group against the Vietnam War and their “harsh and gravelling voices” turn to the hoarse protests which were deliberately denied by the authority. In this case the old tree resembles the parliament which is surrounded by the protesters and their slogans. The old tree keeps a negative and positive meaning together when regarded with “Thoreau” and “Declaration of Independence” of the second part. Tree image demonstrates how humanistic ideals are corrupted with wrong and inhumane policies.

The image of old tree conveys the mythological background in itself and can be traced to the Garden of Eden, where Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit from the “tree of knowledge”. Ezra Pound expresses in his poem “Tree” a similar understanding with Bly -however he openly states his opposition to Eliot-Pound tradition-. Pound identifies himself with a tree, that is nature, by means of which he finds a kind of enlightenment, “I stood still and was a tree amid the wood, / Knowing the truth of unseen before;” (II-179). Old tree stays as a connection line between the culture and history of a community. It has connotative meanings of an old sage or sapient savior leading people to a safe place. Its roots keeping the soil tightly display its strong relation to nature as a monument or physical representation of natural circulation.

Robert Bly employs Roman Empire and its people as a recurrent image through his poetry to demonstrate the crudeness of imperial powers. Here he enriches this political image with the natural images. Thus Johnson's cabinet is transformed into the senate of Rome, and "ants" into "Etruscans" who were oppressed, tortured and finally assimilated by Roman Empire. Their "songs on tyranny" call to mind the rough voices of Vietnamese who were exhausted by hunger and oppression.

In "Animals in Art: Symbols of Gluttony and Evil", "toads, similar to snakes, are characterized as unclean...they are typically a symbol of death." (<http://arthistory.suite101.com>). In general the reception of 'toad' as a symbol is negative and it represents the lust, gluttony and inferior deeds. When toad image with ant is regarded as the flatterers of cabinet members, the meaning above can be traced as their being the supporters of war. But on the other hand, in the last part of "Johnson's Cabinet", Bly does not use the toad image to illustrate the inferiority of the administrators as he did in the first two parts. Instead he employs the image to create a sensitive dreamy atmosphere. Probably Robert Bly is aware of an old Vietnamese folk tale about toad. Janice M. Del Negro reviews Jeanne M. Lee's book *Toad is the Uncle of Heaven: A Vietnamese Folk Tale* in which Lee retold the Vietnamese folk story. It is possible to find some similarities between this tale and "Johnson's Cabinet" for the frame of the tale is about a disaster, a power or authority and appearance of an opponent to avoid the evil. As Del Negro summarizes in her review in *SLJ School Library Journal*;

Realizing that the drought will soon destroy all life on Earth, Toad journeys to the Emperor of Heaven to ask for rain. On his way, he is joined by bees, Rooster and Tiger. Confronting an unconcerned emperor, Toad finally

makes his request known. . . The Emperor of Heaven remedies Toad “uncle”, a title of great respect and affection in Vietnam. 77

As the tale above suggests the toad image in “Johnson’s Cabinet” can be evaluated as a raining scene while ants are dancing. Three points in the last part lead us to regard toad as a signifier of raining. The first one is based on the mythological tale mentioned above, toad’s relation to raining in Vietnamese folk culture. The second and third points are traced in the last lines. One which signifies a kinesthetic image; “toads nearby clap their small hands can be resembled to the action of raining and ‘rain’ is maintained with auditory impression of falling raindrops. Clapping meets the sound of dripping rain drops on the branches and leaves of the old tree. The third point is tactile and “trembling in the soaked earth” completes the circle.

In the poetry of Bly and Dağlarca it is obvious that two poets’ poetic discourse varies between hope and despair. As “Johnson’s Cabinet” exemplifies, Bly is not in a total hopelessness and he does not want to tie one’s hands by emphasizing a vicious circle. He cleverly tries to balance the effect of rivals. The image of toad supports such an effort. While he is drawing a catastrophic situation in the first two parts, he talks about a ‘colony of the saved’. Toads participating to the elegiac songs of ants demonstrate how nature responds to a right resistance immediately. In “their five long toes trembling” Bly does not idealize the resistance movement in the mood of heroics. He reflects the fear felt during the opposition period. This scene visualizes a hopeful unification of nature with its all ‘natural’ elements. When the ritual of ants- toads and “tomorrow they are in church” are compared, it can be noted that Bly achieves the artificiality with a realistic going to church scene and the real intimacy with a surrealist scene of ants and toads.

The relation between the ants, old tree and toads is conveyed with a quotation from “Forest Zone” by Dağlarca as follows; “Quite Fan-Chuy-Shu, while the jungle is quiet”. The harmony of man with nature is expressed through an auditory quality. In this respect when ants moan and dance against the harshness, toads’ “join[ing] the fiery song” relates the same reaction with the quotation. In *Our Vietnam War*, we come across “Zone” poems. Bilyap, translator of Dağlarca’s poetry collection prefers to translate the Turkish word “kesit” as “zone”. But it is important to mention that the Turkish word’s meaning is more equivalent to the words ‘slice’ as it is in ‘the slice of life’ or ‘Scene’ for Dağlarca stresses upon the experienced facts in “Zone” poems. Here the title translated by Bilyap, “Forest Zone” is going to be used but by underlining the meaning as ‘A Forest Scene’. As it happens in “Johnson’s Cabinet” we are situated in the middle of a forest at the beginning of “Forest Zone”. The opening lines “This is jungle area, / Here, there are large leaves, of large trees, green and large” (Dağlarca 11) immediately call to mind the opening of “Johnson’s Cabinet”; It is a clearing deep in a forest: overhanging boughs / Make a low place” (Bly 5). Although these two openings resemble each other, they do not convey the same meaning. Interestingly what is expressed from the beginning in Dağlarca’s poem comes out at the end of “Johnson’s Cabinet” by Bly. When the two poems are compared according to the logical order of the message and meaning, it can be maintained that one poem is a mirror image of the other from the respect of semantic composition.

The dense forests of Vietnam are visually represented with “large leaves, of large trees”. In the following lines Dağlarca emphasizes the meaning and function of those large leaves or as Bly puts “overhanging boughs”;

The leaves conceal,

They conceal protectingly the nature and those who defend their country,

Dark with the consciousness of existence, huge for being dark.
 You are America, it is obvious that you will pour,
 Your remote control firing bombs, by the thousand,
 thousand and thousand more,
 Till the giant trees burn down to the last. Dağlarca 11

The function of dense forest differs for the Vietnamese people and for the occupying powers. The physical concealing quality of “large leaves” signifies a variant meaning in “Johnson’s Cabinet” and “Forest Zone”. While in the first poem administrators use nature as a means for hiding their brutal acts, nature is an ‘old tree’ Vietnamese find a shelter during heavy bombing. The close relation between the natives of Asian lands and nature is expressed with large leaves. Their using large leaves as an umbrella in case of raining is also kept while bombs are falling; instinctively they take shelter behind the trees and leaves. In this respect Dağlarca creates a hunting scene in which people harbor in darkness to be saved from death. The relation of prey and predator is polar opposite of protecting nature. The function of nature is combined with the resistance of “those who defend their country”. Although the outsiders have to stay in “a clearing” in the middle of forest, the Vietnamese use the wild nature to survive. Such a difference demonstrates the degree of closeness to nature.

As stated several times before, the meaning of “darkness” sways on the high seas of Bly and Dağlarca. In general Dağlarca underlines the negative meaning of darkness but in this poem his voice resembles that of Bly for darkness stays as the color and symbol of the most inner feelings and soul. In this respect the darkness of forest does not denote a despair as it is generally underlined in world literature. It is like a womb of mother in which the baby finds warmth, protection and nourishment. In other words, the nature is perceived as a mother caring for her baby. Dağlarca ontologically

considers the existence of man on the same level with the nature. Darkness inverts its meaning by conveying a light or knowledge for the salvation of man. In her *Modernism, 1910-1945, Image to Apocalypse*, Jane Goldman uses Virginia Woolf's words as an epigraph for the beginning part as follows; "on or about December 1910, human character changed" (33). Woolf's concise evaluation summarizes the change in human understanding and feeling in the twentieth century, which was opened by a world war. The primitive or instinctive darkness felt within the deepest side of man left its place to a 'pseudo-development of enlightenment'. Both Bly and Dağlarca discover the change by experiencing the effects of various wars on people in their works, especially in *The Light around the Body* and *Our Vietnam War*. As "Johnson's Cabinet" and "Forest Zone" demonstrate, when man is away from the nature he tries to destroy the ones close to the warmth of nature. As Bly stresses several times in his essays, *American Poetry Wildness and Domesticity*, it is an effort of denying his own nature and breaking his connection with the history which reminds him of how his "character changed" (Woolf 33). Darkness, in this respect, stays as a golden chance for a returning to the center of nature. But the structural order of "Forest Zone" immediately makes the reader face the crude reality and cruel world. After the line describing the romantic and dreamy darkness, where man encounters his own nature, Dağlarca illustrates only a sample scene of a total annihilation carried out during Vietnam War years. In the lines ". . . it is obvious that you will pour, / Your remote control firing bombs", darkness of forest is crystallized with the strong yellow and white but at the same time artificial colors of a fire bomb. Dağlarca combines the misuse of technology with the existence of nature. As mentioned before, he paradoxically underlines that darkness is the real illumination for the meaning of life. The harshness in "you will pour" is embodied with the repetition of

“thousand” which deliberately signifies a vicious circle and immense hate against “huge for being dark”.

“Forest Zone” can not keep its optimistic description and jolly atmosphere till the end. In this respect, it carries the basic principle of a tragedy, which begins happily and ends with a catastrophe. “Till the giant trees burn down to the last” does not convey the controlled optimism of “Johnson’s Cabinet”. While Bly mentions two power entities thus consciously otherizes two sides to stress upon the “ants”, Dağlarca retells the desperate and tragic situation of “those who defend their county” and the ones burning their bridges which will provide connection line between their inner self and nature. The desperateness in Dağlarca’s poem is maintained through an irony, that is, ants will not find an old tree to bless their souls by singing in ritual around it for all the giant trees or wisdom and commonsense are destroyed.

“Till the giant trees burn down to the last” creates a contrast with the darkness which is “dark with the consciousness of existence”. Dağlarca argues two excluding results in the lines related to darkness. The authentic darkness of forest, that is nature, allows man to integrate into its whole unity. So man loses himself in the darkness and paradoxically finds himself in the place that he has lost his individuality. But the burning “giant trees” and the ashes left hinder such integration because the darkness in this case functions as a messenger of war and a threat for the humane existence.

It is quite clear that “Forest Zone” gains its affectivity from its emphasis on the physical descriptions. It conveys the degree of physical harassment through visual images such as falling fire bombs and burning trees. On the other hand, in “Johnson’s Cabinet” we encounter a combination of physical and psychological harassment with the traces of oppression. This combination is an expected result of the mood and style

Bly keeps through the poem. Its traveling along the lines of realism and surrealism, nature and the supernatural makes such a mixture of feelings possible for the reader.

Dağlarca integrates the images of nature into the political ones as he exemplifies such an attitude in “Forest Zone”. In a similar way, Bly chooses visual images representing nature in order to criticize the wrong social structure and system. He alleges that a misled and deceived society keeps basically a potential threat for its own continuation. Bly maintains through his poems that the capitalized minds stand against integration with nature consciously if they are ranked as administrators or decision makers and unconsciously if they are common people. As stated before Bly seeks for the reasons of Vietnam War in his society. In a corrupted society he concludes that lack of communication with man and nature is one of the essentials in the bloody breakouts.

“The Great Society” demonstrates the efforts of seeking the wrongness not in the so-called primitiveness of Vietnamese people but in the most developed society. Bly broods over conveying the artificiality he stresses in “The Executive’s Death”. What he achieves in “The Great Society” is creating a bundle or cluster of images which are so abstract and open ended that they easily can be applied both to the social situation of US and her government in those years and also the predicament in Vietnam. The surrealistic images lead to the basic argument of the poem. In some lines the discourse changes into an absurdity expanded over the following lines;

Dentists continue to water their lawns even in the rain;
 Hands developed with terrible labor by apes
 Hang from the sleeves of evangelists;
 There are murdered kings in the light-bulbs outside movie theaters;

The coffins of the poor are hibernating in the piles of new tires. Bly 17

Bly opens the poem with a quite radical tone. He tries to embrace all elements of society by contrasting them in the background of nature. The images created set the mood of the poem both realistic and surrealistic. It is possible to find some traces from other poems such as “The Executive’s Death”, “Come with Me” and “A Dream of Suffocation”. The image of dentists watering the grass without caring the rain reflects the psychology of the executive when he assumes that “they are lost in a snow storm” (Bly 3) although they had a plane crash in “The Executive’s Death”. The new tire image forms a contrast with “those removed Chevrolet wheels” (Bly 13) in “Come with Me” but the effect of these new and old tires is the same, both emphasize the exhaustion, loneliness and unrecoverable situation. “Old warships drowning in the raindrop” (Bly 8) in “A Dream of Suffocation” conveys the similar kind of miniaturized lines in which apes “hang from the sleeves of Evangelists” and “murdered kings in the light-bulbs” in “The Great Society”. As the examples above denote, Bly does not confine himself into definite patterns. He employs similar images in his poems if he deduces that it will be suitable for the whole effect of the poem without worrying about repetition. In this way, he makes his argument clearer and more influential.

“Dentists continue to water their lawns even in the rain” crystallizes the absurd situation an elite class is in. Bly maintains that “dentists” or the representations of an economic power are so away from the nature, intimacy and real life that they can not even discern the ridiculousness of their act. They only implement what is expected from them without considering whether it is necessary or not in that case. From the respect of functionality their deed is useless. Bly visualizes a picture in which a robotic or statue like man keep watering the grass while it is raining. In fact, Bly demonstrates the degree of corruption in society with the image of meaninglessness.

In “Great Society” an abstract frame is formed to be filled later on according to the reception of the reader. In this respect, when industrial revolution and expansive policies are taken as a basis, “hands developed with terrible labor by apes / Hang from the sleeves of evangelists” (Bly 17) lead us to a historical fact, the beginnings of America and colonialism. The issue of labor and nature are also related subjects evaluated in “The Great Society”. The ape image calls to mind “Hairy Ape” by Eugene O’Neill for he describes a laborer’s, Yank’s efforts to have a ‘place’ in the society that he disdains in the first parts. His being named as “ape” by other people, especially by the higher class both shows his physical appearance for he has “hands developed with terrible labor” while working in the stokehold and his being positioned as inferior in the social rank. These two lines also refer to the slave trade and serfdom in the first centuries during the establishment of US government. Apes hanging from the sleeves of missionaries deliberately denote the influence of religion in enslavement as Bly criticizes through *The Light around the Body*. The systematic religion which has already been corrupted by the individual interests and materialism taking place the ‘primitive’ one increases the distance between man and nature and transforms the man who is close to nature into a creature clinging not to the branches of nature but to “sleeves of evangelists”. What Bly criticizes is not the evangelists but the evangelists who try to enslave other people in order to use their labor by means of religion. For that reason he places them as “the citizens we know during the day” (5) in “Johnson’s Cabinet”. The surrealistic lines using apes and evangelists as subjects distort the perception of physical size and thus caricaturizes the situation. Although the apes representing the labor class are more powerful physically they are weak before a political entity dominating over the workers. This kind of distortion is kept in the following lines for “there are murdered

kings in the light-bulbs outside movie theaters” (Bly 17). This line follows “the sleeves of evangelists” with a semi colon so this line is an explanation or the extension of the explanation made in the preceding line. The situation of the oppressed and the oppressing one creates a similar complexity to tragedies in which heroes are killed or the most unfortunate events occur. The essential aim is to reach to the catharsis or the purification of soul by means of witnessing the pain and sorrow. But what is significant in this line lies in “outside movie theaters”. In other words what is experienced by workers or the oppressed in general is not a fictitious production but the real life. So tragedy pops up not in cinema but on the streets. In the first part of “The Great Society” the use of semi colon combines the part logically and creates a cause and effect relation. The last line of the part again stresses upon the death, “The coffins of the poor are hibernating in the piles of new tires”. “The poor” have already been otherized and what waits them in the future is only death.

The janitor sits troubled by the boiler,
 And the hotel keeper shuffles the cards of insanity.
 The president dreams of invading Cuba.
 Bushes are growing over the outdoor grills,
 Vines over the yachts and leather seats. (Bly 17)

In the second part Bly draws the picture of a catastrophic atmosphere in which all the classes feel the same hopelessness and melancholy. The alienation to the nature reflects itself in the exhaustion of working. It is emphasized in these lines that no one can realize his own duty. The degree of exhaustion is visualized with images from nature again. Nature replaces and thus reappears in an insistent attitude in the unexpected places. The surrounding bushes and vines can also represent the embracing

quality of nature. But nature in this case mostly demonstrates the loneliness and desolation.

The city broods over ash cans and darkening mortar.
 On the far shore, at Coney Island, dark children
 Play on the chilling beach: a sprig of black seaweed,
 Shells, a skyful of birds,
 While the mayor sits with his head in his hands. Bly 17

The soul of the place is consumed and lost in the city center because it is encaged between “the ash cans”, that is, garbage cans and “darkening mortar”. As Bly achieves in “Listening to President Kennedy”, he maintains darkness as a means or symbol for the death in these lines too. But here two different and excluding moods are offered. Although till the line “on the far shore” a pessimistic atmosphere is kept, we encounter with the rays of sun penetrating through the clouds. “Darkening mortar” is replaced with dark children playing on the shore cheerfully. The distance emphasized makes a return to nature where such details of liveliness as “a sprig of black seaweed” and “skyful of birds”. From the respect of kinesthetic images, the clear cut distinction between two moods expressed in the third part of “The Great Society” attracts attention. While “the city”, New York City is pondering over the vicious situation which is visualized with ‘garbage cans’ and “mayor sits with his head in his hands” (Bly 17), a static atmosphere is maintained through a suicidal heaviness. On contrary, “at Coney Island” dark children image denotes the willingness and freedom of soul which is supported with “skyful of birds”. Bly combines two meanings of darkness in the third part. He gives the traces of hope with darkness but at the same time ends with a hopeless administrator who sits as though he puts his thinking cap on.

In “The Great Society” Bly employs a discourse resembling the tone of “Forest Zone”. Dağlarca’s “You are America, it is obvious that you will pour” line is embodied in a various way by Bly. Both poets demonstrate and criticize the pseudo-development and how it alienates man from his own life by means of creating a contrast with nature. The two poems express a similar struggle or lack of this struggle for a ‘real’ life through different images. The changing meaning of darkness is also kept through the end of the poems. The closing lines emphasize upon the same despair; “Dağlarca’s “Till the giant trees burn down to the last” is completed with “While the mayor sits with his head in his hands” since such a situation is the messenger of being buried in the wreckage.

In one of the efforts for avoiding the wreckage, “Dragged On” by Dağlarca intentionally creates a death and torture scene to attract attention to the man’s suffering in the hands of his own kind. As exemplified in the previous poems, Bly and Dağlarca do not tolerate the violence and inhumane behavior that make people suffer. As it happens in most poems two poets employ animal images to visualize the pain in war. In this case too Dağlarca uses “an iron dog” for a tank. In some poems as “Dragged On” Dağlarca unites the effects of dehumanization, politics and nature. Because he questions and could not find any logical reason for such violent and bloody deeds as expressed in “Dragged On”, Dağlarca includes all factors into one whole image of “tank”. In this poem death is given as an unnatural result for there is no reason for its existence except decreasing the merit of man and meanwhile its non-existence is expressed through lines such as “beyond death”. Bly begins his poem with an epigraph denoting the romantic death of a Vietnamese. It is idealized for the death related in the following lines cannot match with the epigraph. “Your corpse is marching Fam-Van-Ki / Looming up to skies”

(Dağlarca 14) also reflects that man reaches to the source of light for his shadow appears longer. This emotional epigraph is followed with a definitely rhetoric question;

U.S. Army-12 B X 84

You are a tank but going where?

Behind you tied with thick ropes, is dragged on,

A Vietnamese, his face after blood, empty. Dağlarca 14

“U.S. Army-12 B X 84” is a refrain reiterated in the beginning of each part. Dağlarca criticizes the war crimes during the Vietnam War, but the scene described carries both realistic and symbolic qualities together. Even today it is possible to come across a man dragged behind a tank on TV. Encountering a scene even in the Twenty first century reflects another reality and brings to mind a question like “Do bullets develop because civilization develops” as Dağlarca asks in another poem, “Electric Zone”. Dağlarca creates a giant like image who enters the forest or the town for food and captures a man whom he will crush between his jaws. In these powerful lines the displacement is also emphasized; how far a tank dragging a Vietnamese can go or what is the aim in such an act. “His face after blood, empty” explains the reason. What Dağlarca stresses upon is not merely physical loss of the facial shape, but the emptiness left for a person close to nature. His bond is broken off from the natural cycle especially by an artificial power. He loses the meaning of life and what is left behind is a huge chaos. Everything is crystallized into a dream when that man is refrained from unification with nature as the second part puts it; “Behind you is dragged on, / Asia’s flower, a hand and foot beyond death, fancy” (Dağlarca 14).

U.S. Army- 12 B X 84

You are an iron dog,

But not a Vietnamese who’s dragged on,

Your humanity, in your mouth carrion. Dağlarca 14

Dağlarca and Bly regard the issue of fighting and war not in national limitations. On contrary they evaluate war as an epidemic threatening all mankind, especially the ones causing it. In this respect, Dağlarca's title *Our Vietnam War* as stated in the first part of the chapter and Bly's argument that is, war firstly damages the souls at home lead to the same understanding. The above lines again visualize all embracing attitude of Dağlarca from the respect of humanity. "Iron dog" image signifies an anomaly and robotic quality by emphasizing the apocalyptic end that is, man is preparing his own destruction day by day.

In "At a March against the Vietnam War" Bly retells a similar opposition by means of paradox. In other words he asks the question "You are a tank going but where?" (Dağlarca 14) which opens "Dragged On". "At a March" conveys two lines of time together. It integrates two experiences one of which denotes the reaction "against the Vietnam War" and the other reflects the degree of suffering subjected to during war years. Bly begins his poem with a note showing the time of their demonstration. The note of "Washington, November 27, 1965" also gives the impression of an event appearing on newspapers. As Dennis M. Simon states there is a "domestic opposition" to Vietnam War and from different poles; "Another source of early criticism against the war took the form of "teach-ins" on college campuses. The first occurred at the University of Michigan in March of 1965. The practice spread to campuses throughout the nation (<http://faculty.smu.edu/dsimon/Change-Viet2.html>). It is obvious that Bly has participated such demonstrations and activities and there has given very encouraging speeches about the meaninglessness of war by reading excerpts from his poems. In "At a March" he firstly positions the reader to the center of demonstration where ambitious and young voices are crying against the foreign policies of the government. The date

1965 also refers to the most destructive months of the war and U.S. government's inclusion to it. The historical fact given above by Simon appears in this case in "Maryland";

Newspapers rise high in the air over Maryland

We walk about, bundled in coats

and sweaters in the late November sun Bly 34

"Newspaper" image immediately leads to the role of media during Vietnam War years. Its manipulating effect and bafflingly causing the realities hidden from the ordinary people to reveal the hypocrisy of the administrators or politicians are visualized in the beginning line. This line demonstrates both the action of an angry folk originated especially on campuses calling the government to account for Vietnam War and the quick reaching of scandalous breaking news to home by means of media. The atmosphere changes into a melancholic one with "November sun". The weather conveys the desperate situation of the protesters. The last line can also be read as an admittance of the realities. Although some conscientious people react against an unfair war, they function as November sun, they appear as the sun appears but can not overwhelm the coldness of coming winter. In other words, they have sensed that they cannot change the policies of the government for a long time. "Bundled in coats" signifies not a shivering but a trembling. Natural image supports their psychological mood since the existence of fear is not overlooked in the first part and the fluctuating emotions are given through visual and kinesthetic images.

"Looking down, I see feet moving / calmly, gaily, / almost as if separated from their bodies" (Bly 34) brings to mind "the sheriff who takes off his legs and nails them to a tree" (31) in another poem, "War and Silence". The paradox of feelings is expressed with a distance between a part of body and the left. While the feet walk

“calmly” and “gaily” for the individual implements a humanistic reaction against the campaign of oppression both at home and on the land of Vietnam, the other parts of body especially the mind is occupied with the heaviness of a kind of guilty conscience. The fragmentized helpless soul is conveyed in depiction of a walking during the demonstration.

But there is something moving in the dark somewhere
 Just beyond
 The edge of our eyes: a boat
 Covered with machine guns
 Moving along under the trees Bly 34

The ambience radically changes in the lines above and we are taken from “Maryland”, the home to the dense and wild forests of Vietnam and to a military operation scene. Here Bly creates a prey and predator relation. “Calmly, gaily” thus a serene atmosphere leaves its place for prospective noise of artillery. “Something moving in the dark somewhere” visualizes a predator sneaking through the river like an alligator. In this line the darkness of “Forest Zone” interestingly makes a hindering possible not only for “those who defend their country” (Dağlarca 11) but also the oppressors. The perception of distance loses its conventional meaning thanks to a surrealistic style in “Just beyond / the edge of our eyes”. Bly perceives the evilness of the deeds of U.S. soldiers there. As he maintains through *The Light around the Body*, he emphasizes with “the edge of our eyes” that war does not affect only the place it breaks out but it also redefines the meaning of freedom and happiness at home. Boat which signifies the embodiment of death with its well-equipped war machines calls to mind a mythological figure, Kharon once more since in a similar way to his carrying the dead to Hades, here boat appears as a menace for the existence of man and natural

continuation. Its “moving along under the trees” underlines the anomalous situation by pointing out the contrast between the wood and metal. In an atmosphere where the liveliness is dominant, boat’s metallic coldness supports the contrast and the feeling of being under threat. Darkness of “in the dark somewhere” conveys a traditional and superstitious fear which has lasted through ages as that forest monsters will come out of the darkness of the cursed wood. ‘Forest monster’ can be found even in Bible as Louis Matthews Sweet states ‘Night Monster (Lilith)’ was translated as ‘forest demon’ among other creatures such as ‘wild dog’ and ‘raven’ which convey the same meaning of eating decayed corpses with “You are an iron dog” (Dağlarca 14) in “Dragged On” (see <http://www.internationalstandardbible.com>). The negative meaning of darkness is kept through the following lines;

It is black,
 The hand reaches out
 And cannot touch it-
 It is that darkness among the pine boughs
 That the Puritans brushed
 As they went out to kill turkeys Bly 34

While boat’s concreteness is stressed in the previous part, it is positioned to an unreachable place with “the hand reaches out / and cannot touch it”. Here abstract quality transforms the appearance of boat into the evil sustained by means of weapons. Bly states that boat cannot not exist by itself if the notion of danger and destruction does not exist. But this “black” is so intrigue and integrated into the soul of man that destroying it means a kind of self destruction. In these lines the evil nature of mankind is conveyed through a kind of confession and admission of the underlying reality. As Nathaniel Hawthorn does Bly faces his own national history and tries to find the real reasons covered by the mythical ones. While Bly is describing the quality of darkness,

he deliberately leads us to a ‘Thanksgiving’ celebration scene. In this respect, “November 27, 1965”, the date given at the beginning of the poem does not only denote the protests around the White House or Lyndon Johnson’s speech on the intention of increasing the number of American troops in Vietnam but also refers to the week of thanksgiving. Here Bly traces a bloody history with surrealistic images. He retells the epic of a nation which set humanistic ideals during its establishment but could not sustain them. In “It is darkness among pine boughs / That the Puritans brushed” the trace left by the ancestors is emphasized. In other words the evil finds its way through the indications trailing the history. When rethought within the frame of a boat with heavy weapons on it, the puritan image supports the emphasis of suppression. For Bly this image also summarizes the ironic fate and appearance of American nation. Since the Puritans ran away from England by reason of their being subjected to a social, political and religious oppression and found a shelter on the new found land, it can be deduced that they sympathized the sorrows of the natives whose land was occupied by the forerunners and for they experienced what assimilation was like, they would stand against destruction of native tradition and culture. This logical expectation/reaction is refuted by the deeds of Puritans in history. In this respect “as they went out to kill turkeys” gains a symbolical meaning for it implies the killing of natives as if they are turkeys. Bly undermines the innocent meaning of ‘Thanksgiving’ with this line on account of its being a celebration not only for the completion of a flourishing first year on the new land but also rejoicings over the whole clearance of the native presence.

At the edge of the jungle clearing

It explodes

On the ground Bly 35

In “At a March” a process with various connotations is described. The infiltration of boat through the river ends with the lines above. The lines’ emotional intensity reminds that of Japanese ‘haikus’ for similarly the concentration of the idea is given in a three lined limited space in the above lines. Here “the edge of our eyes” transforms into “the edge of jungle clearing” where “ministers, department heads, stockholders of large steel companies and generals” demonstrated in “Johnson’s Cabinet” are probably waiting for boat’s arrival. “It explodes / On the ground” visualizes a disembarkation, the cruelty and instantaneousness of which are conveyed by means of the style it is landed. Boat’s entity on the ground forms a great threat for the nature in general and the forest in particular. Its explosion shows what will happen to the resistant Vietnamese.

Bly alters his attention from a genuine battle field scene to a kind of generalization on war. His efforts to discern the underlying cause for the notion of war appear in the last lines. Bly maintains that mankind consciously and willingly makes war not by reason of the external events behind the feeling of combating, but it is a manifestation of the inner undeniable desire of devastating the other. In the last lines this desire of destroying the other side is combined with the meaning of darkness;

We long to abase ourselves
 We have carried around this cup of darkness
 We long to pour it over our heads
 We make war
 Like a man anointing himself Bly 35

“At a March against the Vietnam War” suggests that the war cannot exist unless man wishes it. For it is not a natural result following cause and effect relation but an anomaly in the system. With “we long to abase” Bly underlines the paradoxical reality

of degrading humaneness with a longing to reject the nature and mood of improvement from the respect of emotions. The repetition of 'we' in every line of the last part demonstrates both the effort of facing the reality and the emphasis on the inferior instinctual feeling. "We have carried" denotes the historical process of war through the ages and long lasting spirit which we cannot do without "this cup of darkness" in history as if we are blessed by it. So "Like a man anointing himself" places the notion of war to a religious level. The biblical meaning of "anointing" is related to religious ceremony, especially the anointing of Jesus and the kings. In both cases what is signified with this ceremony is to bless and celebrate the existence of a new and radical change. Similarly Bly creates an interesting relation between the reasons of war and the problem of existence. He retells the fallacy of existence by means of a vicious struggle and annihilation policy.

The issue of struggle and making war sustained in the main argument of "At a March" is maintained through an animal image presented in "Hippopotamus Zone" by Dağlarca. Hippopotamus image can be compared to the boat with heavy weapons on it in "At a March". It is also the connotative opposite of the boat described in Bly's poem for while one's existence is only causing destruction, the other stands as a cure for this spreading disease of war. Such a belief in nature is openly given in the beginning with an epigraph; "There is something greater than night and day: Nature" (Dağlarca 26). Besides the healing power of nature is visualized with a hippo image, the hope for the future is also conveyed through the optimistic epigraph above for it means that after good and bad days only nature will exist and survive. In this poem the nature reminds the features of heavenly creatures and gods and hippo becomes an anointed Jesus for

ending the conflicts on earth. In a similar way to the style of “At a March”, “Hippopotamus Zone” is constituted of three processes and one result in couplet form.

What’s that, a hippopotamus has come on land,
With what the skies put on as light, it has adorned itself. Dağlarca 26

“What’s that” is repeated at the beginning of every couplet for expressing both the surprise of an expected or long waited remedy becomes real and thus hopefulness and confidence in nature. Hippo’s landing is the exact opposite of the boat which “explodes / On the ground” (Bly 35). While one arms itself with most developed weapons which create a kind of artificial light after “Only the stuttering rifles’ rapid rattle” of “Anthem for Doomed Youth”, the other ornaments itself with the basic elements of nature. With his keen eye Dağlarca achieves to describe the scene of a hippopotamus’ hauling its shining body onto the land. In other words the drops of water on the grayish skin of the hippo are resembled to the stars and their light on the sky.

What’s that, the hippopotamus has puffed out its cheeks, round
It has spouted out the sea, where the sea watches jungles. Dağlarca 26

Like an extinguisher it puts out the fires of jungle or maybe “at the edge of the jungle clearing” (Bly 35) caused by the ‘explosion’. The lines above demonstrate the renewing nature of the circulation. Dağlarca emphasizes the endlessness of nature’s resources symbolically by creating an animal image extinguishing the fire. If we reevaluate this image as a signifier of nature, besides ‘boat image’ in “At a March” by Bly, ‘tank image’ in ‘Dragged On’ by Dağlarca also stands as the opposite of hippo image. The basic difference between these images is closely connected with the struggle of survival. While one side is fighting for the continuation of natural chain, the other side tries to break that chain and thus unconsciously unchains the monsters such as ‘tank’ and ‘boat’. The negative meaning of hippopotamus with its aggressiveness and

wildness cannot be found in the poem. But in old Egyptian mythology the hippopotamuses of Nile were regarded as the symbol of fertility and protectiveness. Dağlarca's image resembles the second meaning for hippo by reason of its saving other beings in nature.

What's that, a hippopotamus stands on the soil; huge quadruped,
Where humanity flows, not caused by nature but because of blood.

The above lines draw a Blakean picture in which mystic but at the same time catastrophic scenes are depicted by means of a heaven turned upside down into hell. The couplet visualizes a bloody battle field. The unnaturalness of war is stressed again with "not caused by nature but because of blood". A cinematographic quality is felt in "Hippopotamus Zone". When hippo lands, it is shocked by what it has seen. Here "humanity flows" in so strange and wild way that Vietnam changes into a place that "Where Even Tigers Halt and Stare", another poem's title by Dağlarca. The action of flowing can be read with two meaning levels. On one hand "humanity flows" denotes the physical disappearance and a total loss of the feelings belonging to mankind, on the other hand it signifies the increasing number of occupation forces on the land of Vietnam. The last couplet of the poem openly criticizes the capitalist expansion by combining it to nature with fire image; "What's that, a thousand hippopotamus are extinguishing, / What one American set aflame, on Vietnam plain" (Dağlarca 26). The holocaust including and threatening every living being is underlined with the imbalance in the number of doers. The long lasting effects of war on both nature and man are expressed with 'setting aflame- extinguishing' contrast.

In *The Light around the Body* and *Our Vietnam War*, Bly and Dağlarca do not only reflect their opposition to the notion of war in a rough way but they combine the negative effects with original and sometimes subjective images. In these impressionistic

images they articulate their inner feelings and at the same time the outer events. Nature stands as an immense area of meaning for the two poets. For that reason they integrate the nature as subject into other closely related arguments or subject matters. In some poems Bly and Dağlarca write in the sensitiveness of an impressionist or romantic. On the other hand they achieve to surprise the readers with new attempts and experiments throughout their poetry careers. Although the above mentioned poetry collections are the representatives of anti-war poetry, it is possible to find new methods for opposition such as criticizing the inaccurate and defective one with a dialectic style that is to say, by means of the presentation of the opposite and true one. Nature functions as the epitome of the humanness and love of living (*joie de vivre*) in most poems and it also provides an atmosphere for the natural flow of the feelings.

“Melancholia” by Bly is the voice of an exhausted individual harassed by the evil deeds of normal system. As the title suggests the subject of the poem is subjected to mixed feelings. The mood appearing in the poem is desperate and without joy. The feeling of being in the limbo is also a dominant voice through the poem. The style of poem reminds that of “Johnson’s Cabinet” for in both numbers are used before the parts. In this quadripartite poem too Bly employs numbers for denoting a time bound process. “Melancholia” is a highly symbolical poem in which the basic feelings and fate of man are conveyed through color images. The journey of man can be read as a real physical travelling around the country side or as the symbolic representation of temporal experiences. When the poem is evaluated within the frame of war, a similar argument at the last couplet of “Hippopotamus Zone” by Dağlarca comes out.

1

A light seem suddenly in the snow, snow
Coming from all sides, like flakes

Of sleep and myself
 On the road to the dark barn,
 Half way there a black dog near me. Bly 41

The first line of “Melancholia” creates a dreamy atmosphere which can be seen in other poems such as “Smothered by the World”, “A Dream of Suffocation”, “Suddenly Turning Away” and “A Home in Dark Grass”. But in almost every poem by Bly such an atmosphere is formed by means of surrealistic images. The lines above tells the impressions of a man going to his “dark barn” while it is snowing. On the physical level the poem supports the above mentioned dreamy atmosphere with its depiction of “snow coming from all sides” and its resemblance to “sleep”. “A light suddenly seem” can be the headlights of a car going by the road or the lantern of a farmer. But on this level poem does not mean other than a depiction. However, when poem is reevaluated as a symbolic entity, new arguments and meanings can be found. In this respect the images are multifunctional in conveying a pastoral scene and a philosophical sensibility for understanding the mechanism of life.

In a Frostian manner, the enlightening power of nature is expressed with both the first line of the poem and the ‘light-dark’ contrast in the first part. The style of enlightenment is momentary, it flashes and then disappears but the effect continues to exist. In this part the narrator begins to free himself from the physicality and gives the impression of that he will face the real realities by turning to his inner self. “On the road to the dark barn” denotes his inner side as a destination and unlike “iron dog” in “Dragged On” by Dağlarca “black dog” stands for the most intimate feelings and soul. In other words if “iron dog” is antagonist and anti-hero, “black dog” represents the protagonist and hero.

Light on the wooden rail.
 Someone I knew and loved.
 As we hear the dates of his marriage
 And the years he moved,
 A wreath of dark fir and shiny laurel
 Slips off the coffin. Bly 41

As stated before Bly presents instant memories and experiences in the narrator's life. Although the scene depicted in this part is rather melancholic, it reflects the short temporal existence of man. In this respect, "light on the wooden rail" signifies the life span of the individual. What overwhelms in the first lines is the strong feeling of loss. Death denoted with "dark fir" and "shiny laurel" follows one of the best memories in one's life. A short scene from real life is demonstrated by means of two turning points ending in the church. In this organic poem Bly connects the second part to the third one by emphasizing on death and church. An individual experience appears as a par for the course for the fate of man. It is interesting that Bly employs noun clauses and phrases rather than sentence structure in most lines in the first and second parts. For the character is listening his own senses and memories he expresses what he felt at that moment in structures. The narrator begins with an individual voice in the first part and this voice gradually turns to a collective voice. The second part is related to narrator's friend, his marriage and death it functions as a transition area for the third part. Such a style as commencing individually and then immediate turn to the collective exactly reflects the understanding of Bly and Dağlarca.

3

A cathedral: I see
 Starving men, weakened, leaning
 On their knees. But the bells ring anyway,
 Sending out over the planted fields

A vegetation, sound waves with long leaves. Bly 41

In “cathedral” scene the traditional reception of praying there is reconstructed with “starving men” since their “leaning on their knees” is not by reason of praying but of weakness caused by starvation. “But the bells ring anyway” represents both an indifference and paradoxically hopefulness. In this line bell image is multifunctional for it means more than just one suggestion; “but” and “anyway” makes the sentence both affirmative and negative, although there are suffering men who cannot even move because of hunger, the ceremonies go on. Such indifference calls to mind the first line of “Anthem for Doomed Youth”, “What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?” Similarly the meaninglessness of the ceremonies after brutal death of soldiers is emphasized. When ringing bells are regarded as the sounds and auditory images of a better future and hope or sharing the sufferings together in the consciousness of a responsibility, the meaning of bell can be traced even to 1624 when John Donne wrote *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, especially in “XVI Meditation” and “XVII Meditation”, Donne explains a similar meaning of bell as follows; “Here the *Bells* can scarce solemnise the funerall of any person, but that I knew him, or knew that he was my *Neighbour*: we dwelt in houses neere to one another before, but now hee is gone into that house, into which I must follow him” (Donne(a) 438). In tone and sense, second part of “Melancholia” stresses upon the same kind of loss and reality. In “XVII Meditation” Donne mentions the duties of church and “her” role during the funeral of some one. Donne states a whole unity in which death loses its traditional meaning for it turns into a means for entering a better world as “when one man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better language; and every chapter must be so translated” (Donne(b) 574). Among other things he puts forth that sickness and war are

two agents for such a “better” translation. When we combine the above mentioned words of Donne with the fourth chapter of *The Light around the Body*, which is named as “Praise of Grief” and the quotation from Jacob Boehme ending with “and now death has us” at the beginning of this chapter, the first poem’s, “Melancholia’s” argument is clarified and its gloomy atmosphere becomes more obvious. “Sound waves with long leaves” signifies the audible effect of the bell on nature. On the other hand symbolic quality of “Melancholia” leads us to rethink the meaning of the third part within the frame of Vietnam War. “Starving men, weakened, leaning” exactly describes the situation of war stricken Vietnamese people. The food shortage during the war years and some historical facts as ‘accidental’ destruction of rice fields made the conditions more drastic for these people. The passive structure of “weakened” plays the key role in the assessment of scene created with a group of people behaving as if waiting for the death. This passive quality provides the existence of a suppressing power over “starving men”. So Donne’s “better world” does not work here for war cannot promise them a better life, the notion of death is not so affirmative as in the “Meditations” of Donne and some poems such as “The Fire of Despair has been Our Saviour” by Bly and “Here, Shining” by Dağlarca.

4

There is a wound on the trunk,
 Where the branch was torn off.
 A wind comes out of it,
 Rising, swelling,
 Swirling over everything alive. Bly 42

The last part of “Melancholia” is comprised of a cluster of images such as “wound on the trunk, “branch” and “wind” related to nature. The lines above can be read from two different perspectives, in which one denotes an individual action and

other the collective one. When combined with tolling bells, the lines symbolically describe the leaving soul of man. As it can be also seen in “Ode to the West Wind” by Shelley, wind has been connected with soul and spiritual subjects. It is possible to compare soul’s leaving from the body to a wind coming out of the broken branch of a trunk. But on a larger scale, the fourth part creates an epidemic atmosphere of war. From the psychoanalytic studies it is known that man suppresses some emotions and actions to which the society either forbids or does not accept. But according to Freudian classification the suppressed actions can find an acceptable and suitable outlet for passing from the sub/un conscious to conscious. In this respect “a wound on the trunk” changes into the war in the world and the suppressed feeling of destroying the other comes out of this outlet that is, “wound”. The fastness of war’s spreading after its outbreak is visualized with a surrounding wind image. Like a Hades image envious of “everything alive” war spreads and threatens the living creatures including man on earth.

In “Melancholia” Bly achieves to create an atmosphere which is capable of carrying the idiosyncratic and the collective together. The last part presents the general argument of the poem by means of visual, tactile as seen in “a wind swirling over” and thus kinesthetic images. The poem does not end in the way it begins. From this aspect a tragic quality is already created and narrator’s efforts to meet his inner self turn into a kind of confession in which no way seems possible to relieve him of the guilt. Bly and Dağlarca express their opposition to the inhumane actions, injustice and war even in the poems seemingly naturalistic and bringing to mind the style of 19th century Romantics. They use the surface meanings of the poems as covers for the underlying meanings to reach a multiple meaning structure. As Dağlarca exemplifies in “The Reality of Sick

People” they collage the real events and experiences to the fictitious subjects and atmospheres. In this respect Dağlarca’s note, “These words are taken from an American Doctor, David Kinzie, who worked in a hospital for six months” (23) at the end of “The Reality of Sick People” does not only reflect the source of the poem but also expresses a humane reaction to the wrongness disregarded by the majority for people. This poem tells the tragic story of “starving men, weakened” (Bly 14) with a similar perspective. At the beginning of the poem Dağlarca positions the nature and man’s place into the center with the following epigraph;

Mountains are its branches,
Plains are its leaves,
The earth is tree,
Our heart is its flowers. Dağlarca 22

The romantic mood of nature cannot be kept in the following lines of “The Reality of Sick People”. Dağlarca visualizes essential place of man in nature or earth with a tree image. The metaphors above signify the unity of the parts of a living body. Here Dağlarca attracts attention to the beautifying role of man on earth. With branch, leaves and flowers the interdependence between man and nature is stressed. But the lines above are just an idealization of the realities; its dreamy atmosphere leaves its place to a displacement in which parts cannot function properly for the mechanism has been broken consciously by man. These lines can also be read as the opposite of the third and fourth parts of “Melancholia” by Bly. Although the images are similar to each other such as leaves or branches, they convey a totally different meaning. While the above lines are emphasizing on the wholeness, “Melancholia” tells the desperateness of the fragmented entity. In other words, in one poem branches are completing the body as it is expected, in the other one “the branch was torn off” (Bly 42). The tree image

signifying the unity of earth is toppled down by “a wound on the trunk”, and after its collapse it is left to rot away.

All of them have tuberculosis,
 From deficient nutrition, tuberculosis, all of them.
 They come, the blood has taken their shoulders,
 I don't know where, my body aches then. Dağlarca 22

The opening lines completely neutralize the happy and hopeful mood of the epigraph and take us from a refreshing picture to a gloomy hospital scene. The first two lines are repeated as refrain through the tripartite poem. The humane reaction of an American doctor is reproduced in Dağlarca's world and this recreation comes out as a representation of both physical suffering and the heaviness of social burden. In this respect Bly's feeling the sorrows of “starving men” stands on the same level with what Dağlarca repeats in an angry and melancholic tone. The influence of external forces in “weakened” in “Melancholia” is conveyed through “tuberculosis”, which is known as the illness of the poor in Dickensian ambiances. The recurrent “tuberculosis” image changes into a blood sucking vampire or monster with the line “the blood has taken their shoulders”. Dağlarca maintains the degree of exploiting in tuberculosis image. The disease also signifies the desperate situation of “all of them” who have to endure the starvation and physical oppression. “I don't know where, my body aches then” articulates the responsibility felt by the conscious people. In this line it is also possible to find a reason about the selection of *Our Vietnam War* as title; since Dağlarca asks himself such a questioning idea as the above line, he chooses “our” for some one else's war. “My body aches then” shows a kind of emotional identification with the oppressed.

All of them have tuberculosis,
 From deficient nutrition, tuberculosis, all of them.
 They come to their fatherland as Juliet,

They are a Romeo suffering yet. Dağlarca 23

Dağlarca employs an analogy by resembling the love of nation and homeland to that of the well known story of Romeo and Juliet. Dağlarca states that these people die for their country, freedom and the ideals they believe, which is similar to the death of the two lovers for each other. What is emphasized in the analogy is the decisiveness against the difficulties and the existence of an unrecoverable conflict. The lines also demonstrate how previous happy days of living together and without war are replaced by a persistent suffering.

All of them have tuberculosis,
 From deficient nutrition, tuberculosis, all of them.
 But they come to their fatherland quite alive vigorous,
 My earth long wounds ache then.

In “The Reality of Sick People” Dağlarca applies a style which underlines poem’s argument by repeating itself in the lines and slight differences in structure. In this way poem forms an organic unity in itself. For instance, after the repetitive lines Dağlarca questions “I don’t know where my body aches then” at the end of the first part and we find the answer in the last line of the poem. “My earth long wounds” conveys the similar meaning with “a wound on the trunk” (Bly 42) in “Melancholia”. ‘Wound’ makes the body weak and powerless against the threats. So wound represents war fragmentizing the natural unity and pricks of conscience and in both images the destructive nature of war is maintained with an emphasis on suffering of a conscious individual who has to witness “the reality of sick people”, either a doctor or poet. Bly and Dağlarca are two poets who cannot turn their back on the universal problems. But in some poems such as “Looking at Some Flowers” by Bly and “Stars Zone” by Dağlarca we can feel their efforts to get out of a gloomy atmosphere by means of nature

and the depiction of its beauties. Although even in such kind of poems their opponent voices can be traced, they find an escape from the realities and present a harmonical and dreamy nature with its healing energy for “earth long wounds” (Dağlarca 23). In this respect “Looking at Some Flowers” exemplifies the above mentioned rejuvenation and stands as a glimmering flower in the midst of bloody battle field in *The Light around the Body*. As the poem itself puts it, Bly takes the light surrounding ‘the body’ and grants it to “the petals”, which is the real source anyway;

Light is around the petals, and behind them:
 Some petals are living on the other side of the light.
 Like sunlight drifting onto the carpet
 Where the casket stands, not knowing which world it is in.
 And fuzzy leaves, hair growing from some animal
 Buried in the green trenches of the plant.
 Or the ground this house is on,
 Only free of the sea for five or six thousand years. Bly 50

“Looking at Some Flowers” reminds the tone of poems in Bly’s preceding collection *Silence in the Snowy Fields*. As William Davis states, his first book of poems are seemingly simple but in fact they carry deeper meanings than the apparent one and he maintains that in spite of Bly’s accomplishing to surprise his reader with a thoroughly different subject matter in *The Light around the Body*, the differences with the previous collection are superficial. The above poem can be the most conspicuous example of Davis’ argument. The place of nature in the life of modern man, who tries to discover and understand his inner world in *Silence*, is conveyed through a similar tone in this poem. The poem’s depiction of a world in which death cannot find a place for itself brings to mind the epigraph at the beginning of “The Reality of Sick People”. Bly describes the reception of flowers in garden. The dominant color of the scene, a

combination of white and yellow creates vigor which makes the poet forget the ugliness of the daily life and world. While he is focusing on the flowers and the light reflected on them, he emphasizes the harmony and organic structure in nature. The first three lines relates the impressionistic description of nature but “Where the casket stands, not knowing which world it is in” immediately changes the atmosphere since Bly demonstrates a separate reception from the whole picture with this line. In other words, the romantic description leaves its place to a bitter but at the same time covert criticism on materialistic society for a short time and then Bly turns to his detailed drawing of nature again.

“Where the casket stands, not knowing which world it is in” carries two arguments which can be evaluated differently according to the meaning of ‘casket’. When ‘casket’ is taken as jewelry box, it creates an irony because of the preceding depictions supporting the spiritual quality of the poem. In the personification of casket, its unnaturalness is emphasized and in that world of nature it is useless and has no place. Thus Bly slightly touches the chord of misplacement and does not complete his argument. If the word means ‘coffin’, the notion of uselessness does not change for in a structure which always renews itself the power of death also loses its meaning. After this line Bly increases his focus on the insects which “buried themselves in the green trenches of the plant”. The example of interdependence is conveyed through flowers and insects. Besides harmony, the feeling of satisfaction is also expressed with visual-kinesthetic image of an insect with pollens stuck to its “hair”. It is also possible to find out a slight implication to the soldiers and war with “green trenches”. But it stops there and seems only as a trace of subconscious. In the last two lines another example to the unity of nature is presented, a ground “Only free of the sea for five or six thousand

years” mocks with the influence of time. “And behind them” that is “the petals” is combined to the house from where the poet observes the natural continuation by completing the circle at the end. In a similar way the light image appears in “Stars Zone” by Dağlarca as a representation of liveliness and source of life. Dağlarca equates the life of man with the shining of stars. In such an equation, the interdependence mentioned in Bly’s poem is underlined with more emphasis on the “Earth is tree, / Our Heart is its flowers” (Dağlarca 22). The epigraph opening “Stars Zone” stresses a naïve and basic instinct in a starving society “from a Vietnam folksong: ‘A pot full of rice’” (Dağlarca 19). In the poem Dağlarca creates a dreamy atmosphere in which every star on sky is a reflection of the individuals’ imagination on earth;

The stars are like our eternity,
They are far and they don’t die,
They die warmly when we die. Dağlarca 19

The stars are identified with the fate of man for their life span depends on that of man. The above lines describe a natural death which is regarded only as a part of natural circulation. It is known that stars are burning gases which produce their own light and energy. But their existence is also limited and after they ‘die’, they do not shine any more. Star can refer to the fate of man too. For through the history they have been used as guide and messengers of the future. “They die warmly when we die” signifies the scene of a dying down star and a man who has just died since both of them keep their warmth for a certain time.

The stars are like our darkness,
They are far, they vanish for us,
They exist when we love. Dağlarca 19

In tripartite “Stars Zone”, Dağlarca resembles the stars to a basic feature of man in each part. While making such a comparison he employs a recurrent structure at the beginning of the parts with a difference in the signifier. As stated before “darkness” is repeated as soul in this poem too. The above lines liken the stars to the soul and humane feelings of man. In “They exist when we love” stars’ appearance and disappearance according to the existence of light are equated to the vigor and fire of emotions in the deeper side.

The stars are like our rice,
They are far, they don’t satiate,
They satiate like death, when we starve. Dağlarca 19

As Bly achieves in “Looking at Some Flowers”, Dağlarca conveys his criticism on war and lack of intimacy through an implication line. The poor conditions of the Vietnamese war-stricken farmers appear as a trace in “the stars are like our rice”. In these lines ‘star’ image signifies exhaustion and the lack of life energy. Stars change into unreachable ideals which cannot satisfy their hunger or sufferings. When “we” demand more than they are offering to us, they cannot help or “they satiate like death”, which means destroying the effect rather than the reason that is still keeping the capacity of creating the same or similar results. Even in a poem that seems to be unrelated to war in particular Dağlarca expresses his sensitivity towards the sorrows of a certain group by changing the meaning of star image in each part. In the creation of star-man comparison it can be suggested that while Bly regards nature in “Looking at some Flowers” above mankind, Dağlarca places man to the heart/hearth of nature, which gains its meaning only by including man. The two poets stress upon the indifference between light and dark dichotomy although one’s existence cannot occur within the presence of the other. On the other hand the fact that one’s existence is vitally

dependent upon the absence of the other makes them inseparable parts of a unity for both of them complete each other in the natural system. The best typical example demonstrating a combination of light and dark can be found in Dağlarca's "Before Bombs Touch Dark Breasts". This poem illustrates both the above mentioned white and black comparison and Dağlarca's integrity in what he believes even in the poems which has no a direct relation to the argument and style of the other poems about war.

The poem situates a kind of romanticism in the quotation at the beginning "from a Vietnam folksong "I hope love will never forget me" (18). When this quotation is reevaluated within the frame of title, it comes out that it is the last wish and words of person who is about to die or to be more precise, to be killed by heavy bombardment. But as Bly does Dağlarca does not sustain an argument that can be associated with the other anti-war poems. The first two lines of the tripartite poem are repeated with a change in the last lines of triplets as follows; "People could make, however, / And could kiss each other" (Dağlarca 18). These lines recurrent through the poems insistently underline the emotional side of man, a reality that has been forgotten or suppressed consciously so long, in other words the lines offer a way out for the conflicts and remedy for the wounds of war. To support this understanding against the conflicts Dağlarca employs the elements of nature such as flowers, branches and tigers to express that it is also possible to live together with a difference in ideology, race or language. With combination of the colors, the last lines of the triplets stress upon the tragic fate of man who cannot restrain himself from choosing fight as solution. "As the purple herb and rosy herb get together" at the end of first part, "As the red branch and green branch get together" and "As the black tiger and white tiger get together" (Dağlarca 18) in the second and last parts questions the singularity of human species among other species, it

is not the reason and cognitive capabilities but a never-ending desire of a self/destruction. In this respect, light shining on a flower and stars in the sky stand as the sources of understanding the darkness concealed inside the man waiting for a discovery.

In conclusion, 'Nature' presented in *The Light around the Body* and *Our Vietnam War* is an integrated part of the poems, even in the ones stressing upon the harshest political connotations and references. In other words, 'nature' as an element for the reconstruction of the works cannot be limited to certain poems or images. Through the poetry collections it turns out to be a kind of leitmotif recurrent in almost every poem or the influence of nature is felt with quite powerful images representing its eternal quality.

2. 3. Praise of Death in *The Light around the Body and Our Vietnam War*

Bly and Dağlarca create images denoting the bloody battle field scenes and demonstrating their backstage effects on the ordinary and innocent people during Vietnam War years. But the two poets also achieve to unbind themselves from the contextual and temporal limitations by referring to the universality of human emotions. In some poems as it is going to be evaluated in this section of chapter two, Bly and Dağlarca identify themselves with the desperateness of the oppressed by war. “Praise of Death” in their poems refers to several multifunctional meanings. Accordingly in the glorified representation of death as a notion and action it is possible to find slight or great variations among the meanings.

‘Death’ as a celebration mainly sublimating the urge to die in the poems, bears both negative and positive meanings in itself. To illustrate, some lines stress upon the beauty in anguish calling to mind a kind of masochism and they also visualize a tragedy for the experiences are so catastrophic that the only way to forget and evade them is death. Affirmatively it reminds the phoenix image in mythology. The only way to correct a wrong system is to demolish it totally and to reestablish another one. As the phoenix image signifies, death stands as burning oneself to come out of the ashes in a renewed form. Dağlarca’s “Here are those who Burnt Themselves for Their Country” is a typical example of the deconstruction-reconstruction relation. In this respect death reflects hope, opposite to its traditional meaning, that is despair. In the poems in this section it can be suggested that two poets combine both meanings mentioned above by adding the notion of sacrifice to them.

Spiritual connotation of death and harassment of this world are main topics in poems. As Davis puts it finding a new life in death reflects a Kierkegaardian thought

especially in his *The Sickness upon Death* (1849). In this work Kierkegaard, Danish philosopher and theologian mentions the real Christianity by criticizing the systematized one by Danish National Church. He reevaluates the story of Lazarus, who was a dead resurrected by Jesus as a miracle. Kierkegaard categorizes death as physical and spiritual death and maintains that the physical death is only a reformation, but spiritual death is a real threat for individual's existence. Moreover, Kierkegaard regards death as sacrifice for someone else's love. When the notion of praise in death is considered within the frame of a Kierkegaardian understanding, Dağlarca and Bly's arguments become clearer. Bly's "After the Industrial Revolution, All Things Happen at Once" describes a similar situation with mechanized and materialized man. It is better to begin this section with two typical examples to clarify the argument of 'praise of death' made by Dağlarca and Bly. "A Home in Dark Grass" conveys the celebration in death through a surrealistic atmosphere;

In the deep fall, the body awakes,
 And we find lions on the seashore-
 Nothing to fear.
 The wind rises, water is born,
 Spreading white tomb-clothes on a rocky shore,
 Drawing us up
 From the bed of land. Bly 44

The personal pronoun "we" in the poem denotes not a certain group, it gains a representative and abstract quality calling to mind the representations of God in religious books. "We" also carries the meaning of individuality since it changes into a voice for the whole. The poem's opening line "in the deep fall" reflects a mythological and traditional placement of death. Again we encounter a different version of Hades in this line for Hades is situated as the inferior, in the depths of the earth and Olympus

Gods stay in the unreachable high mountain. Man's dying is perceived as being degraded. The action of fall brings to mind the myth of Adam and Eve who were transformed from eternity into mortality with human-specific sufferings. In almost all religious or out of religion descriptions and literally death is regarded as a sea voyage from earth to some where or nowhere, destinations vary according to belief and ideology. What expects the individual there creates both a mystery and pressure on mankind, which causes a kind of fear from death among other subjective factors such as leaving the beloved, family, friends or earthly possessions and joys. With "the body awakes" Bly continues to his religious description by reason of that death is conceived as an awakening from a long sleep. This scene depicts a resurrection scene which is unsettled with the appearance of "lions on the seashore". In order to refute a reception about lions as the punishers, Bly immediately utters "Nothing to fear". He does not want to spoil the positive image of death described. This line also expresses the psychological mood of the dead person, who is afraid of the welcoming lions, in mood; worry is replaced with a kind of serenity and relief.

In the first part of "A Home in Dark Grass" an after death scene is related with an emphasis on the change and new life form. "The wind rises, the water is born" underline the creation of everything at the beginning. In this respect the earth lost is turned into another earth regained and amid such changes man is reborn with a purgatory power of wind and water. Because on one hand, the following line "spreading white tomb-clothes on a rocky shore" visually depicts the waves, their white foams and splashes broken by the rocks on the border of sea, on the other hand it implies both a baptism scene and the purification from the older life form and whatever reminds it or belongs to it. The torn and scattered image of "white tomb-clothes" reflects the total

disappearance of the ceremonies and traditions of the older life. The lines above also signify the image of a shipwreck and castaway. The use of maritime images such as wind, water and rocky shore brings to mind a dreamy scene in which the boat of Kharon, who is the carrier of the dead to Hades, has been capsized and shattered on the rocks. But the last two lines demonstrate the beginning of sea voyage in an enthusiastic way since elements of nature, wind and water “drawing us up / From the bed of land”.

We didn't come to remain whole.
 We came to lose our leaves like the trees,
 The trees that are broken
 And start again, drawing up from the great roots;
 Like mad poets captured by the Moors,
 Men who live out
 A second life. Bly 44

The second part stands as a manifesto for the praise of death. The phoenix image is repeated through different images. “We didn't come to remain whole” reflects the willingness for being fragmentized and thus being separated from the unity. These lines apparently convey an opposition to the natural wholeness, but in fact they also maintain the idea of chain and circulation stated in the second section of the third chapter. The image of losing leaves like trees denotes a physical reformation in the chain. The image keeps the action of death because a man dying falls to the lap of earth as a leaf falling from tree. Death identified with autumn leaf leaves the door of hope and existence open by reason of “start again, drawing up from the great roots”. The trees rotting away also support the scene of physical death. The image of fallen tree paradoxically gives the impression of a new sprig out of the more powerful roots. Thus the images from nature are combined with the positive image of death and death in this respect changes into an existence problem.

“Like mad poets captured by the Moors” gains an explanatory purpose with the use of simile and semi colon precedent to the line. However, the simile itself does not clarify the argument put forth in the previous lines; it suggests another evaluation related to the frame of opposition against “to remain whole”. “Mad poets” can be evaluated in some certain meaning structures. Because the comparison is ambiguous, the signified explains the meaning of signifier. Poets’ being mad makes them different from the rest of the society, so their voice sounds more disturbing to the authority that wishes and supports the monophony. When we regard “mad poets” as variation from the normal system which is represented by “the Moors”, it comes out that death is considered as an outlet from whatever called as regular and cliché. “Men who live out / A second life” maintains the notion of rebirth in death and it is regarded as a chance for the grasp of real knowledge.

That we should learn of poverty and rags,
 That we should taste the weed of Dillinger,
 And swim in the sea,
 Not always walking on the dry land,
 And, dancing, find in the trees a saviour,
 A home in dark grass,
 And nourishment in death. Bly 44

In the last part, Bly combines the realities or acknowledged experiences about death with a suggestion for keeping the spiritual life of individual from monotony. In the first two lines, use of “should learn” and “should taste” grammatically support the above mentioned idea. These lines also demonstrate that Bly puts aside the idealization of death as a positive experience and describes the physical change caused by death. The rotting body and poignancy of death are signified by means of “poverty and rags” and “the weed of Dillinger”. But in the following lines, Bly converges the bodily

reformation into the praise and necessity of death; “and swim in the sea / not always walking on dry land” conveys the general classification of death with sea and life with land. While one is describing the eternity unbound by place or time, the other makes emphasis on the finitude. “Walking on dry land” is another representation of monotonous life and unchangeability. On the other hand plunging into sea is to accept the wavy or still nature of it. In this respect the basic difference between sea and land or death and life is expressed through kinesthetic images which support the idea of forcing limits. “And, dancing, find in the trees a saviour” places the argument into the frame of a religious and ceremonial perspective. This line typically summarizes the nature and death relation of Bly. The tree-saviour image apparent also in the last part of “Johnson’s Cabinet” carries out a similar purpose in “A Home in Dark Grass” too. The poet/narrator obviously identifies his inner self with the immortality of nature. He discovers a place to relieve in the end through the thickness of forest. The title “a home in dark grass” announces and alleges that especially the ones feeling as being displaced besides the others who have become a wheel in the normal mechanism of life in this world will find a “nourishment in death”. “Nourishment in death” is one of the basic topics maintained through the poems connected with death by Bly and Dağlarca. It is regarded as a way and opportunity for grasping the hidden realities of life. In other words Bly’s description of death with the verb “nourish” refutes and surpasses its traditional reception, death loses its meaning of taking the life out of the body but nurtures a newly born body with a kind of compassion. “A home in dark grass” creates a mother or womb image in which the child finds the protection and warmth. In “Personifications of Death”, as Maare E. Tamm puts it “In the ancient world, life and death were perceived as two forces of the Great Mother, the oneness of everything. Life

was associated with the Good Mother, and death with the Evil Mother. According to the psychologist Erich Neumann, death is the hungry earth, devouring its own children.” Moreover traces of this evil appearance are also found in the personification of death or in the words of Tamm “death as a skeleton or a reaper has continued into the twenty-first century” (<http://www.encyclopedia.com>). Bly deliberately changes the roles of Good and evil mothers and thus converts the grim reaper image into a wise old man who keeps the secrets and knowledge for the goodness of humanity. Unlike the idea of Neumann who describes death as a monster mother eating the flesh of her own children (with an obvious reference to the ceremony of burial), Bly describes death as a shelter in “A Home in Dark Grass”.

It seems that the mood of “A Home in Dark Grass” carries some traces of suicidal idealization but in fact Bly evaluates the notion of death as a symbolical representation for reminding the momentary nature of the sorrows in this world. Bly creates a defense mechanism which brings to mind the medieval philosophy about the transience in a world shocked by daily scandals of war crimes breaking out in Vietnam. Thus the praise of death changes into a voice of exhaustion and the efforts of balancing the psychological tension. When the death present in the poem is reevaluated from the point of the protesting voices against Vietnam War, it comes out that in spite of the physical description of death, poet obviously takes the burden of “mad poets captured by the Moors” and paradoxically kindles the fire of hope in the darkness of despair and exhaustion.

Dağlarca’s poems praising the existence of death sound a general argument besides the atmosphere of Vietnam in particular. In this respect it can suggest that when the moral issues and abstract notions involve Bly and Dağlarca share a similar attitude

about creating a more far-reaching structure and sense. The poems describing the issue of death in Vietnam War can easily be read as the voices of any situation related to or defined by death. But in Dağlarca the effort of describing death within the frame of Vietnam is predominant since he always reminds the special situation after the generalization. The title of “Here, To Shine Suddenly” and the epigraph following it exemplifies the above mentioned relation. While the title is making room for a wider connotative ground, the epigraph “from a Vietnam proverb, the people’s morals depends on the morals of the leader of their state” places the argument into the sphere of a more political perception. It should be noted that in many poems such as “Three Presidents”, “The Current Administration”, Asian Peace Offers Rejected without Publication” by Bly and “Dark Blood Message”, “Phosphorus Bomb”, “Whom they called Brigands” by Dağlarca, in one way or another convey their main argument through a similar message that above epigraph expresses. “Here, To Shine Suddenly” is written in couplet form and interchanging structure. The poem combines the role of being conscious into the praise of death so in this style death’s positive image is related in the foreground and at the same time we hear a protesting voice arguing the issue of exhaustion and the feeling of touching the bottom within the context of Vietnam War. The quality of manifesto is also perceptible with the heroic mood and rhetoric questions in some lines with an obvious celebration of death;

To burn consciously is the opposite of death.

One suddenly shakes up reality by getting burned.

To burn consciously, the domination of flaming light,

In a pair of scales, for the nights of society. Dağlarca 33

Dağlarca takes the action of burning as a basis for expressing his argument about that there are types of death and these types make a difference in the generally accepted

meaning of death. In both Bly and Dağlarca the kinesthetic and visual image of 'burning' signifies a tragedy which is caused consciously by the authority or the oppressor and resulted in the greater physical pain and grief. Their stressing on the burnt rice fields does not only denote how the innocent civilians in Vietnam were affected from heavy bombardments through losing their bread or bread and butter work, but also underlines that burning the food sources means burning the folk since they cannot survive without the existence of rice. Although the basic predicament of a war situation is kept in "Here, To Shine Suddenly", the act of burning calls to mind the slight suicidal implication of "A Home in Darkness". It is interesting to state that the darkness in Bly's poem suggests the same idea with the burning in "Here, To Shine Suddenly". For in spite of their being opposites, black and white, they reach to the same point of light that is knowledge of the real life and self. With "To burn consciously is the opposite of death" Dağlarca sharply draws the lines of his argument in an assertive way. Similar to "find[ing] in the trees a saviour" (Bly 44) who will enlighten the one searching for it, the negative meaning of death connected with darkness and ignorance is turned upside down with the adverb "consciously".

"One suddenly shakes up reality by getting burned" creates a kind of saviour or sage image who sparkles the knowledge to the dying person. "Getting burned" describes the vigor and sincerity for the sake of ideals that make the sacrifice for the better futures as an inevitable fate. When the scene of someone who dies by being burnt is kept in mind with the disinformation policy of the American governments during Vietnam War period, this burning of an innocent person destroys the pink world and lies about the non-existence of any attack against the civilians in Vietnam and as the line suggests "by getting burned" the victim disillusiones the masses, thus replaces the real facts with the

produced “reality”. The first couplet presents the main argument of the poem and in the following couplets we encounter either a diversifying image originated from the precedent one or an exemplifying statement for the previous couplet. In this respect the second line explains to what degree to “shake up reality” is possible.

“To burn consciously, the domination of flaming light” obviously signifies the light image as a firebrand illuminating the darkness. Dağlarca places darkness and light into “a pair of scales” and the side keeping the light inside overweighs the other side. Symbolically “the nights of society” refers to the occupation years in Vietnam. The poet believes that the solution will be found within the boundaries of the oppressed country. In the couplets above Dağlarca creates a contrast by means of employing the traditional meaning of light as enlightenment and darkness as evil and ignorance.

Isn't to burn consciously, to exchange our earthly weight,
With our heavenly breath?

To burn consciously, is a counter living,
Against the darkness of wretches, who sooner or later

will wake with our light. Dağlarca 33

The last two couplets remind the assertive tone of “we did not come to remain whole / we came to lose our leaves like trees” (Bly 44) in “A Home in Dark Grass”. The meaning of death loses its threatening attitude towards ending the life since its existence does not disrupt the circulation of life in the above lines. Moreover it is regarded as a positive means for freeing oneself from “earthly weight” with the eternal “heavenly breath”. In the rhetorical question of the third couplet it is possible to find some traces of Sufism or mysticism which is defined as “the belief that direct knowledge of God, spiritual truth, or ultimate reality can be attained through subjective experience (as intuition or insight)” in Merriam-Webster Dictionary. Dağlarca’s emphasis on the

adverb “consciously” clearly demonstrates an idiosyncrasy through which the subjectivity and “ultimate reality” are realized.

The works of Bly and Dağlarca have shown that these two poets closely concern themselves in oriental mysticism to express the hidden spiritual side of individual. In this respect the action of burning also can be evaluated as a maturation stage through sorrows and difficulties. “A pair of scales” image denoting the changing of darkness into the light in the precedent couplet is also kept in the “exchange” of the physical world with the metaphysical one. Similar to the attitude of Bly, Dağlarca puts an emphasis on the transience of the physical world with the rhetorical question. In the last couplet, death is equated with a “counter-living against the darkness of wretches”. Suicidal implication reappears in this line by means of a degradation and rejection of a world shared with the ‘unconscious’ men like the self deluding executives who try to regain their “earthly weight” in Bly’s “The Executive’s Death”, in which a different representation of death is conveyed through a dying company manager. “Darkness of wretches” is an attempt of finding the responsible for the problems and controversies subjected to. What Dağlarca underlines here is a clear segregation between two excluding groups and attitudes. The burning one symbolically defies to the violence of “wretches, who sooner or later will wake up with our light”. Dağlarca concludes in an idealistic and hopeful way that the oppressing ones will eventually stop tyrannizing their own kind since they have been enlightened and reintroduced to the humane feeling and morals. In this respect, when burning is rethought with the title of Bly’s poetry collection, *The Light around the Body* gains a meaning of hopefulness originating from the inner side of man who has illuminated his soul by leading others to a luminous path

as a result. Similar to “find in the trees a saviour” (Bly 44), death changes into a key that opens the treasury of knowledge in “Here, To Shine Suddenly”.

The praise of death in the poems of Bly and Dağlarca is not only originated from the hopefulness expected and expressed in the end but also the two poets conclude that being in grief or despair can also lead to a kind of renovation in feeling by observing the situation of the contemporary life with fights, tyranny and crimes against humanity. The experience of touching the bottom and the reception of no more room to go down creates a confidence in despair. It is obvious that Bly continues to create a different version of phoenix image through his death praising poems. One of the typical examples, “The Fire of Despair has been Our Saviour” is a self-explanatory title for clarifying the argument of Bly in the poem. The poem is presented in the gloomy atmosphere of autumn. Bly always keeps a discourse centered in the Vietnam War even in the seemingly unrelated poems as stated before. The emphasis of autumn and that autumn’s peculiarity lead us to the beginning of war in November 1, 1955 in the tripartite poem. Bly stresses upon that the world will not be the same after this time;

Today, autumn.
 Heaven’s roots are still.
 O Holy trees, rejoicing ruin of leaves,
 How easily we see spring coming in your black branches!
 Not like the Middle Ages! Then iron ringing iron
 At dusk, chill wringing,
 The grass, clatter of saddles,
 The long flight on borrowed stone
 Into the still air sobered by the hidden joys of crows. Bly 48

The tree and falling leaves image in “A Home in Dark Grass” is sustained in the above lines too. Bly draws the picture of autumn with a combination of melancholy and

happiness. "O Holy trees, rejoicing ruin of leaves" stands as a paraphrase of the title. The action of rotting away in "ruin of leaves" is maintained with the coming of spring as expressed in "How easily we see spring coming in your black branches!" In this respect death functions as a means for transforming lifelessness into life. With "Not like the Middle ages" Bly creates an irony that will be kept in the second part too. The grammatical structure of "not like" does not only put forth a reverse example for the joyful spring upcoming but also expresses the tragic situation of that nothing has changed through ages, and waiting for a spring in "your black branches" turns into an unreachable dream. The following lines after the exclamation of "Middle Ages" can be read as the depiction of a battle field scene in which the clashing sounds of iron and saddles are described in a "chilling" atmosphere. The last two lines are ambiguous in expressing a warrior dying or running away. Or the lines can be analyzed as a representation of the beginning of a hectic life in the early morning. The serenity of atmosphere is disturbed by the caws of crows and crowds of people. But what is important here is the image of a road which became useless because of the stones plucked out of it. Historically in Middle Ages the existence of an appropriate road to make the transport easy cannot be detected, whenever it rained the roads were turning into the ponds of mud but especially in England there were stone roads remaining from the time of Roman Empire. But "the paved roads were full of pot holes where peasants had "borrowed" a stone from the road to patch up their homes. The potholes and mud restricted travel to walking, horses, and light two-wheeled carts" (angelfire.com). "The long flight" also denotes a death scene where the soul of man tries to run away from the "earthly weights" as quickly as possible and in this respect the "borrowed stone" turns into a coffin rest or sarcophagus.

Or the Ice Age!
 Another child dead,
 Turning bone stacks for bones, sleeves of snow blowing,
 Down from above, no tracks in the snow, in agony
 Man cried out-like the mad hog, pierced, again,
 Again, by teeth-spears, who
 Grew his horny scales
 From sheer despair-instants
 Finally leading out of the snowbound valley! Bly 48

In the second part of “The Fire of Despair” places the argument in the center of Ice Age, besides Bly puts forth another example for the celebration of death and hopelessness, he creates an irony by underlining a relation between the technological age and the Ice Age. “Not like” Ice Age suggests that the contemporary situation is even worse than Middle Ages or Ice Age. When the argument is thought within the context of Vietnam, it comes out that this part is a mirror reflection of the violence during the war time and also a bitter criticism of the society in general. “Another child dead” does not only denote the death of a child who cannot survive in the harsh weather conditions of an primitive age but also shows that the tragedy of man is originated from his conscious efforts to change his heaven into hell and destroy the better future. In the line above Bly attracts attention to the rate and continuity of child murder victims with “another”. “Turning bone stacks for bones, sleeves of snow blowing” we feel the dominance of death on the grounds that any trace of hope and liveliness has been hidden under the snow. The violent and wild atmosphere in heaps of bone reflects the barbaric quality of war in a modern age. The “bone stacks” also call to mind another poem of Bly, “Counting Small-Boned Bodies”, which describes the utmost levels of dehumanization. Road metaphor is kept in the second part by creating a powerful fear

felt by the man who loses it; “no tracks in the snow, in agony / Man cried out-like the mad hog”. The depiction of death changes in “The Fire of Despair”, the praising attitude gradually leaves its place to a painful self-confrontation with the feeling of loss. The simile “like a mad hog” visualize man’s psychology, he behaves in the same way as an animal which feels itself entrapped and cannot escape from the enclosure. When the first five lines are given in an order to express the cause and effect relation, it is possible to arrange a logical connection between them as follows; ‘Ice Age→ Dead child→ Snow blowing→ No tracks in the snow→ Man cried out’. Physical representation of tracks covered by snow signifies a loneliness and estrangement from the self with the dislocation strongly felt by man. Accordingly the image of “mad hog” supports the situation of helplessness and denotes the degree of man’s appalled mood. In the following lines the negative quality of death is conveyed through the depiction of a hunting scene of large pig bringing to mind the ones on the cave walls drawn by the primitive Ice Age people. The suffering of a man who lost his path is resembled to the physical suffering of a hunted animal by means of vivid visual and kinesthetic images. In this respect the “pierced” boar reflects the fragmentized soul of man. Repetition of “again” two times emphasizes the temporal permanentness of the agony; the violence is visualized with teeth-spears again. On the other hand “horny scales” image in “who / Grew his horny scales / From sheer despair” constitutes the backbone of “The Fire of Despair”. Horny scale is a kind of protective piece on the skin of reptiles such as crocodiles or snakes and visualizes that man has developed a kind of defense mechanism by subjecting to the sorrows. So the lines beginning with horny scales denote the change in mood too. In other words despair causes a hope or happiness in which man finds out a way to grasp the life. “Finally leading out of the snowbound

valley!” gives the impression of an outlet or trace discovered to “to lead out of” the restricted time and space. Lastly “horny scales” image redirects the shield like quality against the emotions into Paul Maclean’s “Three Brains Theory”. In *American Poetry Wildness and Domesticity*, Robert Bly reevaluates this American neuroscientist’s theory in an essay entitled as “Poetry and the Three Brains”. Bly begins his argument with a summary of MacLeans’s classification of brain into three kinds which are named as reptile, mammal and new brains. He maintains that there is a kind of rivalry between these brains (56) about using “the executive power” (53) and the canalization of energy is also possible from one brain to another, interchanging according to the intenseness of the particular situation confronted by the individual. As man’s fear in “The Fire of Despair” exemplifies “the presence of fear produces a higher energy input to the reptile brain” (Bly 53). Interestingly Bly evaluates the energy transfer into the reptile brain as an effect of the fear felt violently in “this century” and in this way explains why so big amounts are spared for military expenditures. In the essay about three brains theory Bly does not refrain from criticizing the situation of U. S. government which is leading to a found a fear empire within the frame of MacLean’s theory as follows; “the United States, given the amount of fear it generates everyday in its own citizens as well as in the citizens of other nations, is a vast machine for throwing people into the reptile brain” (Bly 56). This kind of argument can be easily exemplified with most poems in *The Light around the Body*.

Reptile brain is the basic, the oldest and most primitive kind of the three brains. Its reactions remind those of animals in a dangerous situation. As Bly states, “The reptile brain thinks constantly of survival, of food and of security” (58). Man’s behaving like “mad hog” in “The Fire of Despair” demonstrates that his conflict is reconciled

with a transfer of the energy into the reptile brain. His fears about security and survival are also conveyed through the image of traces disappearing because of snow. White color image does not express innocence or a kind of hopefulness as it reflects in most poems by Bly. Here whiteness and snow represent the coldness of death. The dull quality of the atmosphere supports the negative image created by means of snow. Snow stands as a threatening power against the liveliness of man which causes a strong conflict in man and his reptile brain takes all power from other brains, so he comes over the difficulty by “leading out of the snowbound valley” (Bly 48) and thus both solves the conflict in himself and paradoxically reaches to hope by using the powerful feeling of “despair”. “Another child dead → no tracks in the snow → man cried” can be reassessed within the frame of a humanitarian perspective and according to the diagram drawn above to demonstrate the cause and effect in the second part, thus the disruption of a natural chain is resulted in the loss of humanity. Bly implies that the regular system of developing comes to an end by means of a child dead. He expresses a similar attitude with an emphasis on ‘trace’, ‘road’, ‘snow’ in another poem, “Hatred of Men with Black Hair” as follows; “Underneath all the cement of the Pentagon / There is a drop of Indian blood preserved in snow: / Preserved from a trail of blood that once led away / From the stockade, over the snow, the trail now lost” (Bly 36). As it happened in any war in history, woman and child death was considerable during Vietnam War too. In this respect with the loss of a straight path image meant to be followed through, Bly stresses upon the disillusionment of the ideals founding a country. The second part forms a general basis for both the issue argued and the idiosyncratic reception of the events by the poet during “this autumn” through a combination of multifaceted images.

In other words the frame created from a historical aspect turns to an explanation of the current situation and mood of poet in the last part;

This autumn, I
 Cannot find the road
 That way: the things that we must grasp,
 The signs, are gone, hidden by spring and fall, leaving
 A still sky here, a dusk there, Bly 49

Bly and Dağlarca's praise of death comprises two basic attitudes, in one of which death is celebrated because it is idealized as a new beginning and a better chance of life, in the other its coming is welcomed for the experiences in this world are so unendurable that it stays as a unique solution. "Fire of Despair" suggests another understanding with some traces from both basic attitudes. In this poem death appears as an expected result of the present situation. In the last part Bly describes a world without any idea, belief or morals belonging to the past that is, a blank new fate that will be filled with hopelessness and suffering which is waiting for the whole failure of all emotions related to human being. The poet mentions that he cannot search for the right destination as the man does in the second part. Especially in the second and last parts we encounter the image of a hostile nature which seems to behave as if it has already decided on which side it should take. In this respect another face of Great Mother is given with a modification, with the traces "hidden by spring and fall" both good and evil powers of her serve to the desperate fate of man. Man's efforts to "grasp" life are in vain for there is no way out and all elements presented in the above lines demonstrate the colorlessness without even making a "sign" possible. In this case what is left behind is death which is represented with dry leaf of corn in the last part. This image denotes

both the exhaustion of the individual who feels himself “like the mad hog” which cornered by the hunters and the negative thus traditional meaning of death;

A dry cornleaf in a field; where has the road gone? All
Trace lost, like a ship sinking,
Where what is left and what goes down both bring despair.
Not finding the road, we are slowly pulled down. Bly 49

The above lines maintain the symbolical meaning of ‘shipwreck’ image with a totally different attitude from “Spreading white tomb-stones on a rocky shore / Drawing us up / From the bed of the land” (Bly 44) in “A Home in Dark Grass”. In “A Home” a destructed ship is regarded as a part of the willingness for unifying with death. The positive representation of it overrides the negative traditional meaning and death is received as an indispensable part of a circulation. On the other hand in “The Fire of Despair” turns out to be an inevitable result of the hopelessness emphasized through “dry cornleaf” and “a ship sinking”. A capsized ship reflects the mood of poet too since he describes a vortex of emotions in which a complete chaos is overwhelming by means of “Where what is left and what goes down both bring despair”; At this stage we cannot feel even a trace of hope saved from the wreckage. “Where has the road gone?” questions the fate he has to endure and reflects poet’s helplessness. To sum up, representation of death is conveyed with the influence of an eagerness to live, despite that death is not idealized as it is done in “A Home in Dark Grass” and its evilness is outstanding more in “The Fire of Despair”, Bly keeps his phoenix image through an emphasis on the whole destruction and disappearance of the familiar “road”. In similar way Dağlarca continues to express his reception about death by employing both fire related and nature images in “Here, Shining”. The epigraph opening the poem stresses upon the eternity of nature against the death once more in the dialogue as follows, “Tik

(honorable) Tri Kuang will you tell me whose steps gets faster? / The Earth's, the heaven's" (Dağlarca 40). Anyway in "The Fire of Despair" Bly relates the story of man's finding no peace on earth or heaven caused by a distance from the virtues belonging to human being. "Here, Shining" gives the impression of having a successive structure of "Here, To Shine Suddenly". Even from the title's grammatical structure it is possible to mention a cause-effect relation. The first poem's desire which is denoted with "to shine suddenly" is realized with "shining". Although they share a common imagery, the second one underlines a more idiosyncratic voice originated from the sufferings experienced or witnessed;

Isn't living the same as burning,
 Even in most primitive life there is burning,
 Even in grass.
 Isn't burning little faster way of living. Dağlarca 40

The opening lines of "Here, Shining" places the argument of death into a historical background as Bly does with "Middle Ages" and "Ice Age" in "The Fire of Despair". The first and last lines are reiterated in each stanza of this three-partite poem. The fire "even in grass" describes the deed of burning with a reference to the war in Vietnam. The image of grass burning calls to mind "A home in dark grass, / And nourishment in death" (Bly 44). Accordingly grass that is, nature or inner self of man in the above lines are combined with the grass burning. In both situation death functions as the responsible for peace which is shining under the heaviness of despair. The phoenix image is also kept by Dağlarca; the inevitable fate of man is given by means of the equation between burning and living and "most primitive life". Regarding burning or death in this case as "little faster way of living", means that death is the better life form without temporal or spatial boundaries. As stated before the first and last lines are kept

in the second part which expands the power of death to other elements of nature as “in water and insects alike. / It’s clear in the talking of silence” (Bly 40). The radical change in everything like a transformation such as “the talking of silence” reminds the last lines of the last poem in *The Light around the Body* with a apocalyptic tone, “That shall the talkative be silent, / And the dumb shall speak” (Bly 62). The third part continues to exemplify “Isn’t living the same as burning” with assertive lines, “Within us the song of rays thousand years / Against the night, against the darkness” (Dağlarca 40). To conclude, “Here, Shining” conveys the two attitudes mentioned before in a concise way within a mood swaying between them. The poem reflects the existence of death as a substitute for the willingness of life. As Bly’s poems demonstrate, “Here, Shining” too, grasps the powerful energy of despair to recreate the hope lost for a long time through bloody political deeds or interests and dehumanizing policies.

CONCLUSION

Robert Bly and Fazıl Hüsni Dağlarca are two poets criticizing the inhumanity of man towards his own kind by means of various images employed in the selected poems. The poems sway between the borders of hopelessness and hope, thus stimulate reader to rethink about his world. The poets do not only demonstrate the problem but also suggest the ways of solution. Through vivid images the reader is defamiliarized with the martial expressions and multifunctional quality of meaning is maintained.

The comparative analysis of *The Light around the Body* and *Our Vietnam War* has shown that these two works share many similarities from the respect of subject matter and style. The study which confines itself to the evaluation of nature, death and color imagery in the selected poems from both Bly and Dağlarca assesses the importance of titles by emphasizing their crucial role in conveyance of arguments put forth in the poems. In this respect, the epigraphs and titles function as a background for the further representation of violence created with battle field atmospheres. It is also considerable that the meticulous choice of words in the titles of poems contributes to reread the poems according to different receptions invoked by the symbolical complexity of the poems.

The nature and color imagery are evaluated with the most typical examples selected from the poetry collections, *The Light around the Body* and *Our Vietnam War*. It is known that both Dağlarca and Bly build up their poetry universes around similar subject matters recreated with a different successive poem. For this reason some poems in the collections stand as another version of the previous poem relating the same subject matter or completing part of the precedent one. The organic unity achieved within the poems is also obvious in the classification and placement of the poems

according to the arguments which cannot be excluded from each other. The nature- man relation appears in various forms with slight difference in meaning and function. The same attitude is discernable in the use of colors, especially in the dichotomy of black and white. By means of colors the poets create powerful scenes and images. Colors are always integrated into the nature, thus visualize its influence on man. The animal images convey the different moods of man struggling for life. In other words animals represent the psychology of man producing wrong policies to colonize the ones whom he regards as inferior and primitive or symbolically relates the story of man running away from the world of executives like hares escaping from a forest on fire. In the poems nature plays the key role animals function as symbols in which Bly and Dağlarca maintain their political stance.

The praise of death in the selected poems changes the atmosphere created within the context of nature into a breaking point in which the poets present their obvious opposition not only to the Vietnam War but to the imperial tendencies foreshadowing the brutal outbreak. The selected poems about death have demonstrated that Bly and Dağlarca articulate the dilemma of the life and death. The use of color black for both the soul and death exemplifies the complex situation expressed by the poets. The praise of death stands as the most possible way of a new beginning, which brings to mind phoenix image. But it also signifies a relaxation from the 'earthly' sorrows and experiences. In the poems about death the poets make a metaphysical emphasis on the effects of war with a wider perspective covering not only the war-stricken people but the ones at home watching those 'counting' scenes.

Since in the poetry of Bly and Dağlarca each subject matter carries some traces from the others, they openly criticize the wrong policies conducted by the decision

makers in the center of the most naturalistic setting. The “Light around the Body” is reproduced with a desire of conveying the humanity in Dağlarca’s “Of Universe”, as a lantern to lead the mankind towards what he has either forgotten or neglected;

Give a light to the soul
From eternal times
To the white palms of dark children
Give your warmth. Trans. Meriçelli 8

“Of Universe” denotes that Bly and Dağlarca maintain their opposition with integrity through their poetry careers. When the issue of individuality involves, their voice does not reflect the echo of a heated political period, but a universal care. They apocalyptically suggest the possibility of a day in which this system will be turned upside down “When the Dumb Speak”. In other words they never lose their hope and belief in man despite of temporary moods of despair.

In conclusion, the comparative study of Bly and Dağlarca’s poems about Vietnam War has shown that besides describing the destructive experiences of a certain historical war, the poets regard the war issue as an existential problem of man. They retell the struggle between the oppressed and oppressor through both nature and death.

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