

Mystical and holistic aspect of the monumental trees, and their importance for ecotourism

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Abstract: Ecotourism is a sort of tourism activities which is realized for different purposes like holistic belief, scientific curiosity, and feeling of respect and appreciation to nature. The monumental trees are invaluable sources for ecotourism purposes with their huge physical dimensions on circumferences, diameters, heights and ages, and the interesting appearances on their trunk occurred in time due to the pathological formations. They also have special places in local history and folklore. Because of the extraordinary longevity when compared to human life in addition to immeasurable inspirations that they create on the poets and artists, the monumental trees also stimulate feeling of love, respect to the nature and the national history on the young generation's mind too. All of these peculiarities carried by the monumental trees make them living cultural heritage of human being in the whole countries all over the world impressing deeply the social, mystical, and cultural lives of the communities all along the human history. The mystical and holistic aspects of the trees having monumental characteristics, and, their importance on ecotourism from the standpoint of holistic belief, scientific excursion, and nature respect are focused in this paper. After clarifying cultural relationships between the monumental trees and the mystical belief of human thought on tree worship, some of the concepts concerning the cult of tree like the Tree of Life, the Tree of Knowledge, and the Tree of Immortality are explained in the context of ecotourism realized for holistic belief. Due to their magnificent trunks and huge branches monumental trees affect in depth the spiritual worlds of people by showing the endless and creative power of god. They are also accepted as the living witness of historical events finished with victory or defeat in the country. Visiting to monumental trees arouse feeling of love, respect to nature and the national history in common mind. There is no doubt that, the tourism activities made in the framework of cultural consideration or scientific aims should also be evaluated in the ecotourism concept too. Turkey is full of many monumental trees which could be classified under different ecotourism actions. Existing samples related to the holistic belief, nature respect, and, scientific excursion will be shown in this paper respectively. Before giving some knowledge about ecotourism potential of Turkey in this course, technical procedures applied in age estimation of monumental trees will also be outlined in short in the paper.

Keywords: Monumental tree, Ecotourism, Cultural tourism, Scientific tourism

1. Introduction

Ecotourism is a form of tourism fulfilled by sensitive and respectful visitors feeling responsible to relatively undisturbed and fragile ecosystems, and, to local culture and belief of the inhabitant people surrounding in order to recognize their culture and to observe marvelous landscape and the wildlife habitats. Visitors are directed towards to the areas pristine and virgin natural environments or interesting unusual geological formations rather than conventional tourism areas like sunny beach and famous historical ruins. It provides interesting experiences and unforgettable memories to visitors and, a good income for the host people as well as being a sustainable finance source for natural environment conservation actions. The monumental trees, old growth forests and, the forest remnants those are isolated by local topographic and climatic conditions current for thousands of years are invaluable sources for ecotourism activities.

The trees having extraordinary physical dimensions in respect to circumferences, diameters, heights and ages or interesting images appearing in time due to the pathological formations on their trunk, and also having a private place in local history and folklore are called as monumental trees if they have a long life enough for being a bridge between the past and future of the people surrounding (Asan, 1987). Although the dominant character seems high or diameter in this definition, ages are the most effective physical diagnosis in that course however. Poplar and willow trees for instance, cannot become monument because of their short longevities. Consequently, abnormal dimensions, fantastic visual effects, and having a sociocultural values in the context of local history, folklore and mystical believes of the people are the privileges of monumental trees (Asan, 1992; 2017/a).

Because of their impressive dimensions and longevity compared to human life in addition to their unique appearances, the trees having monumental character played very important role on development of the spiritual worlds of varying societies living on different geographical regions on the earth (Asan, 1993; 2015). The Tree of Life (The World Tree, The Cosmic Tree or The Sacred Tree in other words), The Tree of Knowledge and, The Tree of Immortality are the most well-known examples for instance in this course (Asan, 2009). Although they appeared under different names in the countries placing in different continents -Yggdrasil in the Northern countries, Bayterek, Bay Kayınk, Tamir Terek or Mönküterek in Central Asia and Siberia (Karakurt, 2011)-, most of them had been imagined as the same form except tree species existing around depending on

the ecological conditions current in the region. Yggdrasil for example; sometimes considered as a yew (*Taxus baccata* L.), sometimes as an ash tree (*Faxinus* spp).

Before living together as in the small tribes and clans the primitive men were surviving by hunting the wild animals and, by collecting berries and roots of plants, and, by taking shelter in the hollows of huge trees individually (Fig.1). Since, there was no societal memory while he was living alone primitive man could not aware of the long livings of huge trees at all. The thing that he noticed first after arising common memory was the length of longevity of giant trees seems himself endless. This awareness did stimulate a deep respect together with a little fear and admire to giant trees providing him food and shelter facilities.



Figure 1. The hollows of huge trees had been used as shelter by primitive men

These mystical feelings changed to tree worship in time and, reflected as the first creature alive was a giant tree into genesis myths of the societies living in the north-east and central Asia (Asan, 2016a). Thus, the trees having monumental characteristics were accepted as totem by some primitive tribes in olden ages. Two sort of cult can be considered in this issue; a) direct worshipping to the sacred trees themselves representing gods such as Bayterek mentioned in the Epic of Manas; b) to use trees as a tool to make a contact with god such as Ulu Kaying mentioned in Epic of Er Sogotoh (Asan, 2016a; 2017a). Basic thought of tree worship comes from the spirit of tree belief. According to the researches of Sir J. G. Frazer published in 1890 under the name “The Golden Bough: The Roots of Religion and Folklore”, there was a common belief among the primitive clans concerning the trees existing in sacred groves that, about carrying spirits of dead people. In other words, spirits of dead people were going on their life under the shadow of trees in sacred groves. The spirit of dead people was bothering when the tree was injured (Frazer, 1890).

There are some slight differences however, among the concept of the Tree of Life, the Tree of Knowledge and the Tree of Immortality, although they were described similarly in varying myths and epics. Common specifications in their descriptions given in various references are here; an incredible trunk on a magnificent root system like Yggdrasil expressed in Norse Mythology, very huge spreading leaves and branches covering the whole sky like Sidrat al Muntaha alluded to in hadiths (Oral explanations attributed to Muhammed The Prophet on definite subjects out of Quran) and tafsirs (Oral and written explanations belonging to Islamic authorities in order to clarify the subjects written in Quran) in Islamic Belief, and a long tall establishing a linkage between the sky and underground. It stands on a small hill occupying in a plain as it was told in the Legend of Er Sogotoh (Çoruhlu, 2011), An eagle or god sits at the top, and a dragon lives among the roots of tree (Fig. 2).



Figure 2. Common specification of The Tree of Life in various epics and legends

The term of “Tree of Life” is an olden concept as well as the human history. It is a utopian consideration system created by the ancient societies arisen in different parts of the world because of their mystical faiths. Thus, it is a common motif in the olden religions and mystical beliefs as well as mythology, and philosophy. The term Tree of Life is also used as the synonym for cosmic tree, world tree and sacred tree. Referring to the researches made by Holmberg and Middendorf, Çoruhlu expresses the definition of the Tree of life as following, regarding the legend of White Youth in his study named «Main Branches of the Turkish Mythology» (Çoruhlu, 2011);

« *White Youth wanted to see the place where he was born. He saw a great and magnificent tree on a small hill existing in the middle of a large and smooth plain while he was looking for it. The tree was illuminated by a mystical light coming somewhere. Top of the tree was reaching to the seventh store in the sky where Urun ay Toyon's thorn standing and, its roots were going to deepest places under the ground. Leaves of the tree were talking to inhabitants of sky*».

From the stand point of mystical and religious aspects, The Tree of Knowledge term belongs to a tree only existing in the Garden of Eden having the forbidden fruit on its branch. Since, Adam and Eve noticed difference between good and bad after eating the forbidden fruit, both of them began to gain knowledge to understand the events happening around. Thus, the tree having the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden is being called as The Tree of Knowledge after that, due to causing born of human wisdom and intelligence. The term «Knowledge:Sagacity» is a title given to old person who has broad experience and knowledge concerning the historical, social and cultural life of the societies because of his witnesses on various events during his long living time. Since, the monumental trees become just inside of the whole social events happened around, they are the most important alive witness of local folklore and the history full of with victories and defeats. Consequently, The Tree of Knowledge term can also be adapted to whole monumental trees, except far away from the inhabitant areas, in the context of sociocultural consideration (Asan, 2016b; 2017b).

The Tree of Immortality is an abstract concept assumed for some trees believed giving an eternal life to the legendary heroes by means of elixir leaking their trunks and branches. Too many epics and legends produced based on this consideration especially among the olden societies in the northern parts of the Europa, Siberia and the Central Asia. The trees called as Bayterek, Bay Kayınk, Tamir Terek or Mönküterek, and Yggdrasil mentioned in the legends of White Youth, Er Sogotoh, and Manas are very famous examples on The Tree of Immortality. On the other hand, there is still a widespread conventional habit among the people living in the forests of Turkey that is called as “Yalamuk”; peeling the inner barks of pine trees in order to lick the juice of trees due to the belief on the cure of various illnesses especially tuberculous (Asan, 2015).

There is no doubt that, neither The Tree of Life and The Tree of Knowledge, nor The Tree of Immortality could be evaluated directly as an ecotourism motive unless they are transformed into real objects due to their conceptual utopian meanings even though they play very important role on the religious belief system of the local indigenous people. Beside their huge dimensions, to have a folkloric or historical tale, or spacing in a holistic sacred area may be evaluated as a reasonable consideration in order to establish a sound bridge for this transformation. Consequently, the imaginary definitions of the Tree of Life and The Tree of Immortality can be expressed by means of the marvelous appearance and the huge magnitude of monumental trees, and, utopian definitions of The Tree of Knowledge can be concretized with the help of historical or mystical tales attributed to the trees. Having a space in the sacred areas like the tomb where a holy man is buried, or courts of mosques, churches and other kinds of temples are other factors which may be used in this context (Asan, 2016b).

Due to their unique appearance and sociocultural values, the single monumental trees and old growth forest remnants are taken under protection umbrella by legislative arrangements almost all the countries in the world. The giant sequoias in USA, the old cedar stand in Bischer Village in Lebanon, the sacred olive orchard in Gehtsemane around Jerusalem, another olive orchard remnant in Kalkanlı Village in Cyprus, and, the giant baobab trees in Sought Africa are the most well-known

examples in this course. Either their magnificent dimensions or, their historical, folkloric and holistic features create an important ecotourism opportunity to the countries having them.

Turkey is full of many monumental trees and old growth forests and forest remnants which could be evaluated for different ecotourism actions. Some of them will be introduced below regarding their sociocultural aspects. Before giving some knowledge about ecotourism potential of Turkey in this course, technical procedures applied in age estimation of monumental trees will also be outlined in short in the paper.

2. Sociocultural aspects of the monumental trees

Turkey is a rich country with regard to monumental trees. There are many relatively undisturbed and untouched old growth forests and forest remnants on the upper zone of the high mountains far away from human impact suitable for visiting by the people excessively fond of nature in order to respect to natural environment, and, to observe natural process ongoing in the forest ecosystems. Scientific excursions are also organized by scientist to the old growth forests and forest remnants for understanding natural rules and struggles among the fauna and flora present in the system too. There are also many single trees in the inhabitant areas that religious people visit them for the sake of holistic belief or, folkloric behavior in Turkey. Some of the single monumental trees existing in the forests are visited by the people in order to satisfy their curiosities. A few samples are given here in the section following.

2.1. Monumental trees representing holistic belief

Monumental trees having a space in the sacred areas especially standing near a tomb belonging to holy men famous with their religious services or due to their national efforts heroically are visited for the sake of holistic belief. A dead *Cupressus sempervirens* trunk in Koca Mustafa Pasha Mosque (Fig.3a), and *Platanus orientalis* in Eyüpsultan Mosque (Fig.3b) in Istanbul; and an *Olea europaea* in the courts of Sarı Selim Mosque (Fig.3c) in Hatay-Payas can be sampled for the holistic belief.

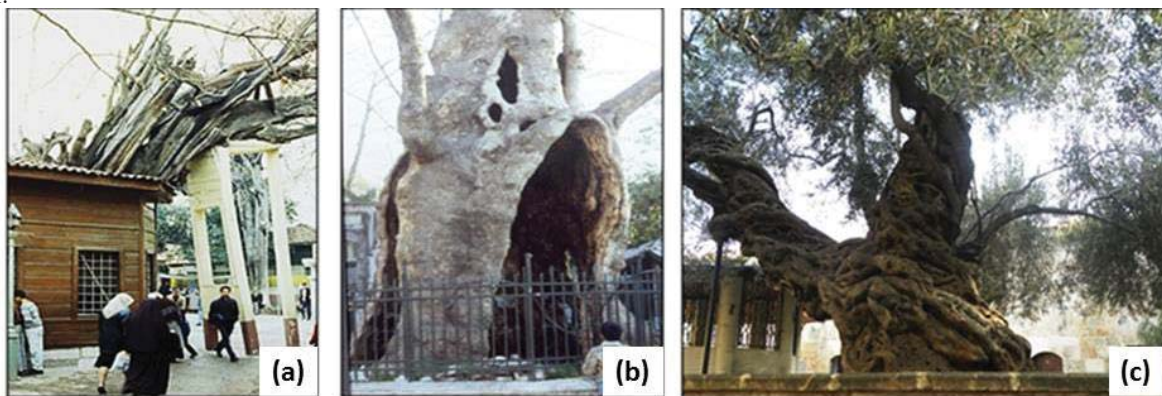


Figure 3. a) *Cupressus sempervirens* trunk , b) *Platanus orientalis*, c) an *Olea europaea*

2.2. Monumental trees having historical value

The monumental trees those are having a private place in local history and folklore are called as sagacious trees if they have a long life enough for being a witness to the social events happened around, and for being a bridge between the past and future of people living in the area. Since, plane trees (*Platanus* spp.) were accepted as the symbol of state by the Ottoman sultans, there are many olden plane trees today gained monumental character in the cities of Bursa, Edirne and Istanbul. Three of them are shown in the figure 4.

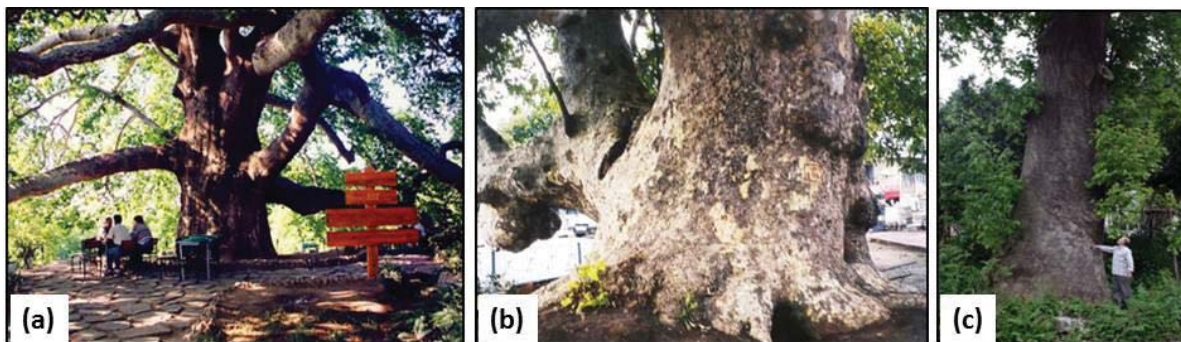


Figure 4. a) The Plane of Inkaya in Bursa, b) The Plane of Çakılı around of Edirne, c; The Plane of Tokatköy Beykoz, Istanbul.

2.3. Monumental trees having folkloric value

Folkloric values of the monumental trees originate from the tales which are told on a monumental tree concerning moral and ethical principles current in authentic customs among people. These tales sometimes may be involved in holistic beliefs, sometimes relevant to common sociocultural subjects too. Three of them are shown in the figure 5.

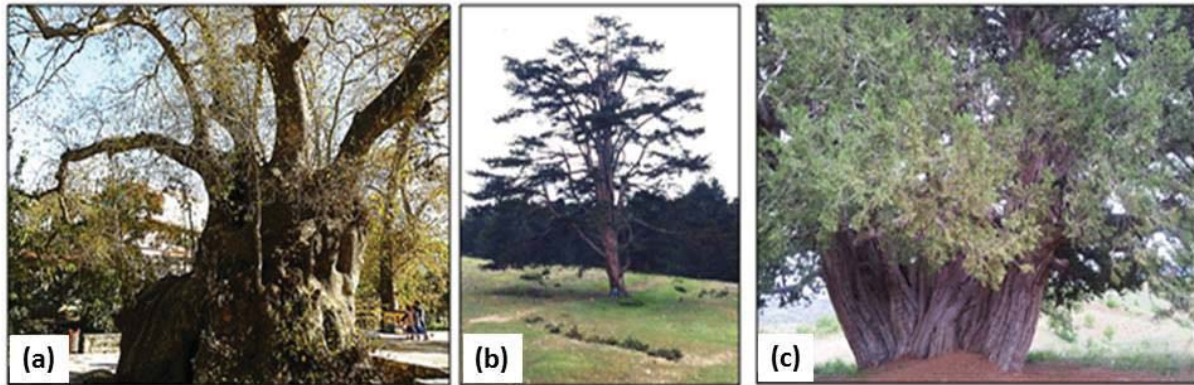


Figure 5. a) The Plane of Moses in Hatay-Samandağ, b) The Pine of Uşaklı around of Abant Güvemköy, and, c) The Ağıldır in Taşkent-Konya.

2.4. Old growth forests and forest remnants in Turkey

Some of the monumental old growth forests that can be seen at different parts of the country, and the number monumental trees measured in these forest remnants are compiled in Table 1.

Table 1: Old growth forests and average physical measurements observed

Name of Forest	Province/Town	Tree Species	Nr. of measured Trees	Average DBH (m)	Average height (m)	Estimated Age / in the year of
Ambardağ	Giresun/Bulancak	<i>Fagus orientalis</i>	7	1,63	43,0	310 / 1987
Kemaliye	Trabzon/Akçaabat	<i>Fagus orientalis</i>	18	0,87	44,0	350 / 1997
Örümcek	Gümüşhane/Torul	<i>Picea orientalis</i>	16	1,65	52,2	700 / 1997
Kürtün	Gümüşhane/Torul	<i>Picea orientalis</i>	5	1,41	47,4	300 / 1987
Kartalçölü	Denizli / Eskere	<i>Pinus nigra</i>	11	1,40	18,0	600 / 1986
İncirköy	Muğla / Fethiye	<i>Pinus brutia</i>	6	1,10	39,5	260 / 1987
Tezli	Muğla / Fethiye	<i>Cedrus libani</i>	6	1,62	30,4	440 / 1984
Bölükkatran	Antalya / Elmalı	<i>Cedrus libani</i>	10	1,69	23,7	740 / 1984
Dibekçukuru	Antalya/Kumluca	<i>Cedrus libani</i>	15	1,51	24,1	1220/1984
Güzelsu	Antalya / Akseki	<i>Cedrus libani</i>	7	1,72	24,6	1180/1984

Forest remnants are a sort of forest area covered by the natural tree species those are seen seldom around normally. These forests are patch wooded lands staying far away and in isolated form from their main spreading areas. *Pinus nigra* stands in the Kastro bay around of Kırklareli-Vize, *Pinus silvestris* stands in Yozgat, *Pinus pinea* stands around of Artvin, *Cedrus libani* stands in Çatalan –Erbaa, *Quercus vulcanica* stands in Isparta-Eğidir, and *Phoenix theophrasti* in Datca peninsula are the most well-known forest remnants in Turkey.

3. Age estimation methods useable on monumental trees

According to definition given at the beginning of introduction section, age is the most important component in determining monumental characteristic of the trees for assuming them monument. Age is not only as a physical component, but also a diagnostically stipulation to gain monumental peculiarity for a tree. Common meaning of tree age is a time interval passed between the years of first annual ring appears after germinating the seed, and the year of growth finish. The tree is alive during this period. Tree species having some kinds of etheric oils and resinous tissues stay standing a long time after dead nevertheless. Age prediction gets importance in this case. Thus, correct age estimation of the monumental trees is most important work to do while in data collecting studies. Technical procedures in age estimation of the monumental trees can be classified as below;

1. Annual rings counting directly on increment cores taking out from the sample trees.
2. Proportionating of average annual ring width obtained from the sample trees onto diameter without bark measured at breast height
3. Benefitting from relationship between the age and diameter at breast height measured on sample trees.

4. Using a suitable multiplying coefficient (Age converting factor) and the diameter at breast height measured on sample trees directly.
5. Finding out a correlation between the age of monumental trees and the establishment date of historical buildings or archaeological remnants.
6. Radiocarbon (^{14}C) Method.

Using possibilities and restrictions of each method is outlined below.

3.1. Annual rings counting method

This method is based on to count annual rings on the increment cores taken out from the trees. This is very simple and a distinct procedure for age prediction. Conditions required for this method are listed below:

- Annual rings could be seen directly and definitely,
- Annual rings belonging to the first and last years must be present on the increment core as it can be seen in Fig.6,
- No extra or lost annual rings should be exist on the increment core
- No hollow or rotten parts in the trunk of tree



Figure 6. Conditions required for ring counting method

3.2. Proportional approach

This method is used in case of decay or hollow existence in the trunk. Due to lost large number of rings in the stem, it is impossible to find out real age of tree by using ring counting on the whole increment core (Fig.7).

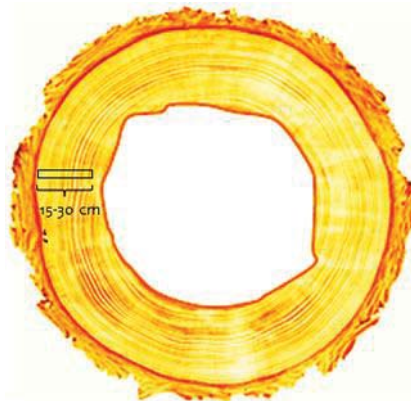


Figure 7. Age prediction on the hollow trees

Thus, partial ring counting approach is realized on increment cores with 15-30 cm length taken from the sound parts of stem. Number of annual rings is counted, the length of core is measured, and radius without bark is determined. The ratio between radius and increment core length is calculated by dividing radius to increment core length. Age estimation procedure is completed by multiplying this ratio with the number of annual rings counted on increment core. This procedure must be repeated two times at least on the same tree in order to obtain a reliable result.

3.3. Age and diameter relationship method

As a general rule in the nature, the larger the diameter the longer the life of the trees. This statistical rule is expressed with the relationship established between the age and diameter and, implemented with the equations calculated by using age and diameter measurements collected from the sample trees. Such an equation and its correlation coefficient obtained by Köse and Güler (2015) are given below:

$$T_{\text{years}} = 0,3808 * D_{\text{wbk}} + 6,5517 \quad R^2 = 0,9987$$

Where T: age in year, D: diameter without bark in mm

Data belongs to 50 olive trees were used in the research. Only dbh outside bark and, two sided bark thickness measurements are necessary for using this equation (Köse and Güler, 2015). Although this equation is found out for olive tree, it can be used for other slow growing tree species too like *Fagus*, *Quercus* and *Carpinus* spp. among broad leaves, and for *Cupressus*, *Taxus* and *Cedrus* among coniferous in the case of rough age estimation however. But, it should not be used in age estimation of fast growing tree species at all.

3.4. Estimation with age conversion factor

Age and diameter relationship can also be established with more simple way instead of special equation for each one of the tree species. Two groups' common coefficients belonging to slow growing and fast growing tree species respectively ignoring species of the trees may be produced by using the data set derived from age/diameter ratio calculations.

A study related to age conversion factor was completed by Asan (2016). 44 sample trees totally (17 samples among fast growing, 27 samples among slow growing groups) were used during in construction of conversion factor equations. Results of the study are presented as graphically in Fig. 14, and as numerical within 50 cm diameter intervals in Table 2.

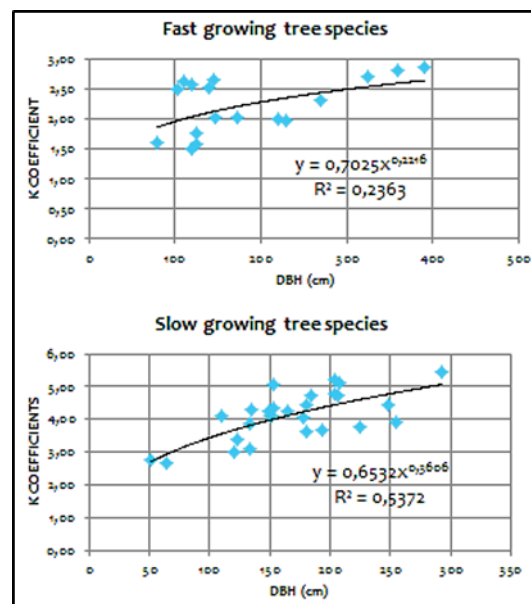


Figure 8. Changing of K coefficient factors with regard to diameter at breast height

Table 2. Conversion factors useable for age prediction with the help of DBH

DBH (cm)	Conversion factors		Ages (Years)	
	Fast growing's*	Slow growing's**	Fast growing's	Slow growing's
100	1,95	3,44	195	344
150	2,13	3,98	320	597
200	2,27	4,41	4,54	882
250	2,30	4,78	575	1195
300	2,49	5,11	747	1533
350	2,57	5,40	900	1890
400	2,65	5,66	1060	2264

- Fast growing tree species: *Fraxinus*, *Castanea*, *P.brutia*, *P.Pinea*, *Abies equitrojani*, and *Platanus* spp
- Slow growing tree species: *Cedrus*, *Picea*, *Juniperus*, *Cupressus*, *Abies*, *Quercus*, *Fagus* and *Taxus* spp

3.5. Comparison method

As a conventional behavior coming from history, a single or a group of tree is planted by the architects and engineers around of public buildings like palaces, churches, synagogues and mosques when their construction were finished. Since the buildings and the trees are at the same age approximately, establishment date of historical buildings can be used for age estimation of the monumental trees adjacent in this case. This approach was approved while in age prediction of some monumental trees in Istanbul province.

3.5. Radiocarbon method (^{14}C dating)

3.5.1. Basic explanations of Radiocarbon (^{14}C) dating

Age estimation by means of radiocarbon method is an instrument for age determination of an object containing organic material which ones have been part of a living organism. The method is based on the comparison of two carbon isotopes having 12 atomic molar mass (^{12}C), and having 14 atomic molar mass (^{14}C), and, instability of the ^{14}C isotopes due to radioactive decay appearing in time. Isotopes are the atoms of same element having the same number of protons and electrons insides, but they have different number of neutrons in the nucleus of atom that is changing the atomic masses (Meriç, 2015).

^{14}C isotope is produced by the cosmic rays in the upper atmosphere. Nitrogen atoms are converted into radioactive ^{14}C isotopes at the end of these cosmic actions. Since, all of the radioactive elements are unstable ^{14}C isotopes begin to loose mass in time and back to nitrogen again. ^{12}C and ^{14}C isotopes turned to $^{12}\text{CO}_2$ and $^{14}\text{CO}_2$ after oxidation in atmosphere and they are absorbed by the plants while in photosynthesis and, then they are passed to animals and human bodies through the food chain. Therefore, all of the living organism have the same amount of $^{12}\text{CO}_2$ and $^{14}\text{CO}_2$ as in the atmosphere and, there is a same constant ratio (^{14}C compared to ^{12}C) among them unless living organism die. Since, regeneration of $^{14}\text{CO}_2$ goes on continuously in the atmosphere, the stability of $^{14}\text{C} / ^{12}\text{C}$ is assumed constant in this method. Replacement of ^{14}C stop when living organism die, and amount of ^{14}C begins decay. Half amount of ^{14}C isotopes in the dead organism decay in 5730 years. This radioactive decay can be used as a “clock” due to its unaffected physical and chemical conditions appearing in atmosphere.

Thus, there are three variables that are needed for age estimation of a dead organism; 1) the percentage of ^{14}C isotope compare to ^{12}C in the dead organism, 2) the half-life of the sample which is accepted as a constant figure 5730 years, and 3) the ratio of decay; in other words, in portion of $^{14}\text{C} / ^{12}\text{C}$ in the atmosphere as a constant figure -0,693. Following equation is used in the ^{14}C dating:

$$t = [\ln(^{14}\text{C} / ^{12}\text{C}) / (-0,693)] * t_{1/2}$$

Where $t_{1/2}$ is the half-life of the ^{14}C isotope (5730 years), t is the age of the dead organism (or the date of death), -0,693 is rate of natural decay, and $\ln()$ is the natural logarithm. For example, if the proportional value of $^{14}\text{C} / ^{12}\text{C}$ is found as 35% in a dead organism, the age of fossil will be $t = [\ln(0,35) / (-0,693)] * 5730 = 8680$ years old.

3.5.2. Use of ^{14}C dating for age determination of the monumental trees.

As it can be understood easily, ^{14}C dating method is a suitable instrument for age estimations of the dead organism rather than living ones. Since, the inner parts of huge trees, except a few cm under the bark are consisting of dead tissues almost; this method can also be used for age estimation of the monumental trees too when it is possible taking out suitable sample parts from inside of the trees. Annual rings those are closed to centrum of stem are the oldest and dead rings of trees. Thus, sample parts required for age estimation should be taken out from the places adjacent to centrum if there is no hollow inside the stem. In case of hollow existing samples should be taken out nearby hollow (Fig 15), and, an age belonging to a sound tree standing around and having diameter as well as hollow width should be added onto the estimated age of monumental trees determined by ^{14}C dating method.

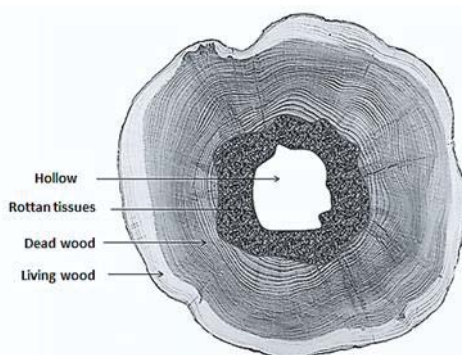


Figure 9. Place of sample necessary for age determination by using ^{14}C dating method in the hollow trees

4. Ecotourism potential of the monumental trees and forest remnants in turkey

As it is outlined under the headline 2, Turkey is a rich country from the sand point of monumental trees, old growth forests and the forest remnants suitable for ecotourism actions. There are also huge amount of single monumental trees around of inhabitant areas beside them too. Some of the individual trees such as . The Plane of Inkaya in Bursa (Fig. 6), The Plane of Moses in Hatay-Samandağ (Fig. 9), *Cupressus sempervirens* in Koca Mustafa Pasha Mosque (Fig.3), and The plane of Eyüpsultan (Fig.3) in Istanbul have thousand by thousand visitors each year however, but there are still a big potential out of the cities for ecotourism activities. Old growth forests in Muğla-Fethiye, Giresun-Bulancak and, Denizli-Eskere, and, the forest remnants especially Çatalan-Erbaa and Kırklareli-Vize are invaluable ecotourism sources waiting for valuation.

5. Conclusions and proposals

The trees having monumental characteristics are accepted as reverential motives by various societies for development of their religions and holly beliefs throughout history. Due to the sacred meanings attributed themselves, huge trees especially in the olden groves played the most important spiritual and religious role in that course. And besides, with their excellent habitus and extraordinary longevities, monumental trees arose feeling of appreciation of human that see themselves. In addition to immeasurable inspirations that, they create on the poets, and other artists they stimulate love, and respect to the nature and national history on the young generation's mind.

The mystical and holistic aspects of the trees having monumental properties, and, their importance on ecotourism from the standpoint of holistic belief, scientific excursion, and nature respect were focused in this paper. Relationships between the monumental trees and the mystical belief of human thought are explained in the context of ecotourism actions realized for holistic belief.

Making a visit to one of the old growth forest full of monumental trees or to a forest remnant staying there for thousands of year without change arouse feeling of respect to nature in common mind. All of these feelings appearing in human thought create self-satisfaction for escaping from the stresses caused by daily problems consequently. Thus, to create awareness on the monumental trees and forests for ecotourism should be accepted an inevitable job for the foresters to fulfill for either spiritual or physical health of human.

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