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ALIENATION AND GROTESQUE IN FLANNERY O'CONNOR'S *WISE BLOOD* AND OĞUZ ATAY'S *TUTUNAMAYANLAR*

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Abstract

The term, grotesque is a technique that is used to unite oppositions such as comedy and horror, pleasure and repulsion. Originally appearing in Renaissance art, the grotesque was also employed in literature. Thomas Mann claims that "the grotesque is its most genuine style" (1991: 13)[1], because of the sense of loss, alienation and meaninglessness caused by the Great War. Regarding alienation, two protagonists Hazel Motes from Flannery O'Connor's *Wise Blood* and Turgut Özben from Oğuz Atay's *Tutunamayanlar* are significant with their almost insane societal representations. In this paper, two novels from two different countries will be analysed to observe the elements of the grotesque and revealed how the authors applied the elements in their novels to criticise and satirize the social and political corruption in their own countries.

Keywords: *Flannery O'Connor, Wise blood, Oğuz Atay, Tutunamayanlar, Grotesque, Alienation.*

FLANNERY O'CONNOR'UN *WISE BLOOD* VE OĞUZ ATAY'IN *TUTUNAMAYANLAR* ROMANLARINDA YABANCILAŞMA VE GROTESK

Öz

Grotesk terimi, komedi ve korku, zevk ve tiksinti gibi karşıtlıkları içinde barındıran bir tekniktir. Başlangıçta Rönesans sanatında ortaya çıkan grotesk, sonraları edebiyatta da kullanılmıştır. Thomas Mann, Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın yarattığı kayıp, yabancılaşma ve anlamsızlık duygusundan dolayı groteskin "en özgün tarz" olduğunu iddia eder (1991: 13). Yabancılaşma teması açısından Flannery O'Connor'ın *Wise Blood* romanından Hazel Motes ve Oğuz Atay'ın *Tutunamayanlar* romanından Turgut Özben, toplumdaki delirme temsilleriyle dikkat çekmektedir. Bu çalışmada, iki farklı ülkeden iki roman incelenerek eserlerdeki grotesk unsurlar incelenecek ve yazarların kendi ülkelerindeki toplumsal ve siyasi yozlaşmayı eleştirmek ve hicvetmek için romanlarındaki unsurları nasıl uyguladıkları ortaya konulacaktır.

Anahtar kelimeler: *Flannery O'Connor, Wise blood, Oğuz Atay, Tutunamayanlar, Grotesque, Alienation.*

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1 qtd. in Clark. Clark, J.R. (1991). *The Modern Satiric Grotesque and Its Traditions*. UP of Kentucky, Kentucky.

All lost.
All lost in the dust.
Lost in the fall and the crush and the dark.
Now all coming back.

Simon Armitage

Angry son, are you the one
In this world standing alone
These are the hard times, before
The storm, just look around

Radical Noise

Introduction

The origin of the grotesque goes back to the fifteenth century, however, the term appeared in the theoretical writings in the eighteenth century (Makaryk, 1993: 85). Nevertheless, the grotesque images which contain the representations of monsters and primordial gods and goddesses can be seen in the myths of Mediterranean cultures. During the Renaissance, the grotesque came out with some stage performances such as dancing with masks to celebrate festivals. Especially, plays of commedia dell'arte, also known as Italian comedy, with iconic costumes and masks represent the elements of the grotesque. In neoclassical English literature, a similar tendency to represent carnival characters such as clowns, jesters, magicians and fairies continued in popular plays of the period. In the Victorian period, John Ruskin approached the grotesque more theoretically, in this sense, Ruskin became "the first to admit the grotesque into serious aesthetic discourse" (Makaryk, 1993: 87). Ruskin's main idea about the grotesque centres upon the play of the mind with terror, therefore, he divides it into the terrible and the playful. In the modern period, the German thinker, Wolfgang Kayser claimed that the grotesque is a play with the absurd, while Mikhail Bakhtin argues that it carries the carnival attitude that turns all the hierarchies upside down.

In its simplest form, grotesque means "the rendering of skeletons, demons, witches and ghosts, from ancient times to the present" (Novak, 1979: 50). At the same time, grotesque means the juxtaposition of terrifying and comic, in this sense, the essence of the grotesque is best exemplified as "[t]he skeleton with its combination of deathly terror and horrible grin" (1979: 51). Of course, the apparition of supernatural characters does not necessarily make writing grotesque; the aim is to make the reader ponder the unexpected combination of two different images. So, what is the result? Is it thoroughly comic or sober? Neither is intended in a work of art or both, the target of the grotesque is also to transgress the boundaries, especially, that of the texts written during difficult times. Therefore, the grotesque is interconnected with satire as well.

The twentieth century is one of history's most troublesome and painful periods with a holocaust, two world wars, economic depressions and atomic bombs. Under these circumstances, as might be expected, the authors tended to utilize the elements of satire in their texts and the grotesque to create an alternative reality. Clark claims that "the horrors of the twentieth century have incited satirists to refurbish, to reanimate, older treatments of cannibalism in order to cope with the extravagance of the present scene" (1991: 134). In this century, "the gothic and the grotesque mate and become the dominant imagery of our era" (1991: 18). Thus, the representations of the grotesque can be traced in various literatures all over the world.

Different authors from different countries revolve around various themes according to their social or personal problems, in other words, the responses of the authors change from country to country, society to society and author to author, yet what brings those authors from all over the world is that their use of the grotesque to cope with their present realities. The American writer Flannery O'Connor (1925-1964) witnessed locally the racial issues in the South and universally the Holocaust and the Second World War in her short life. O'Connor's first novel, *Wise Blood* (1952) is the story of Hazel Motes, a veteran of World War II, and his coming back first to Tennessee and then going to Taulkinham. On the other hand, the Turkish writer, Oğuz Atay (1934-1977) observed locally two military coups, economic difficulties and internationally the world war. In his first novel, *Tutunamayanlar* (The Disconnected) (1972), Atay tells the story of Turgut Özben who tries to uncover the mystery of his dead friend Selim Işık's suicide. Both authors employed the elements of the grotesque in their novels with their own

unique techniques, and their common point is the criticism of the problems they face in their short life spans. In this paper, their use of the grotesque will be analysed, and their differences and similarities will be compared.

1.Hero or Antihero?

Modern life has brought misery to most people; the more crowded have become cities, the lonelier has become the modern individual. Among the last technological machines, people are getting more and more separated from each other and communication between people has lost both its meaning and function. The Hungarian thinker, Georg Lukács begins his book *The Theory of The Novel*, "[h]appy are those ages when the starry sky is the map of all possible paths … everything in such ages is new and yet familiar" (1971: 29). In the age of epic, that is, the ancient ages, people were living with pleasure under the starry sky, there is no "interiority," "otherness" and "exterior" for the soul" (1971: 30). However, with the modern life the individual lost happiness through the disappearance of the "totality of life;" therefore, heroes become the "seekers" (1971: 60). Heroes seek unity and happiness, and there is no way out, but an adventure.

Many modernist characters suffer from psychological troubles because of social disorientation. According to Lionel Trilling, the modernist tradition contains the themes of a "sense of loss," "alienation," and "despair" (qtd. in Ellmann and Feidelson, 1965: vi). He argues that "modern literature has elevated individual existence over social man, unconscious feeling over self-conscious perception, passion and will over intellection and systematic morals, dynamic vision over the static image, dense actuality over practical reality" (1965: vi). The major characters of modernist fiction are usually drawn as desperate, isolated and estranged from society. The same theme recurs itself in the many works of the age; James Joyce's Leopold Bloom who wanders about in Dublin in a day, T.S. Eliot's Alfred J. Prufrock who is never able to communicate with women, and Virginia Woolf's Septimus Smith who commits suicide at the end of the novel, are the first names that come to mind.

The protagonist of *Wise Blood*, Hazel Motes like one of the central characters mentioned in the previous paragraph is a war veteran coming back to his hometown in Tennessee. However, finding the town abandoned, Motes decides to go to the fictional town, Taulkinham to escape his past. Denying the heritage of Jesus that he inherited from his preacher grandfather at home, Motes founds his own church, "Church Without Christ" to preach his ideas about religion. "The Bible was the only book" Motes read, and it was one of the only things he got from Eastrod into the army with him, the other one was "a pair of silver-rimmed spectacles that had belonged to his mother" (O'Connor, 2008: 14). As a protagonist, Hazel is not a typical heroic character, instead, he is depicted as a man without social skills. When he was in the army, he got some friends, but "they were not actually friends but he had to live with them" (2008: 14). A man with the glasses of his grandmother is not an ordinary character; O'Connor undermines the traditional hero concept.

Hazel's attempt to refuse to believe in what his grandfather taught to him is a rejection of the control of his grandfather and religion in general. Therefore, he immediately founds his Church Without Christ to forget his past, however, he encounters all the symbols and ideas he has already rejected. Hazel begins to preach on his car on the streets to gather followers, yet the only supporter is a local guitarist, Hoover Shoats who later changes his name to Onnie Jay Holy. The only disciple of the Church Without Christ Holy is a swindler who uses Hazel's church to make money. Violently enraged by Holy's cheating on him, Hazel runs his car over Holy and kills him. At the end of the novel, he blinds himself not to meet his burden again. Blinding his eyes can be considered an instant of insanity, one of the elements of the grotesque. Bernard Mc Elroy asserts an overt relationship between insanity and the grotesque; moreover, a noticeable number of twentieth-century authors created unique first-person narrators who are either insane or possibly insane (1989: 95).

The insanity of Hazel Motes originates from the fact that he becomes paralysed by society. From the beginning of the novel, he is depicted on a train symbolising his spiritual journey in searching for existential and religious meaning. He reaches a new town where he wishes to feel content and find the meaning of life. As the days pass, his torment increases. Finally, he finds himself alienated by society because while trying to change people around him, they begin to change him through the principles he advocates. On the one hand, he cannot influence people to transform them into the group he wishes, on the other hand, he feels like he will drown since he cannot escape from those people.

The theme of insanity can be traced in Atay's *Tutunamayanlar* as well. The protagonist of the novel, Turgut, who is married to Nermin and has two children, is a petty bourgeois, "Turgut Özben: married, and has two children. The father of his children and the husband of his wife. The man of the house. A male bird. In the morning, he flew out of his window and he looked for food for his wife and children all day[1]" (Atay, 2003: 551). One day, he learns that his friend, Selim Işık, whom he met at the university while studying civil engineering, committed suicide. Then, Turgut sets off to figure out why Selim killed himself. Turgut is also drawn as an ordinary man, he does not carry heroic codes, for example, he cannot, "by reading books, stop the greengrocer from cheating" on him, indeed, he cheats him even though he is fully aware he is doing it" (2003: 370). Therefore, Turgut calls himself a so-called Don Quixote. He says, "[y]ou can compare me to Don Quixote who reads knightly novels and thinks himself a knight. However, there is one difference between me and him: I consider myself Don Quixote" (2003: 370). Thus, the image of insanity is reinforced through Turgut's similarity to Don Quixote.

In search of Selim's suicide, Turgut meets with Metin, one of Selim's friends, and they have supper at a restaurant. After dinner at midnight, Turgut takes Metin to a brothel, the Kingdom of Brothels where he acts as if he was the king of this realm. He orders to keep the doors locked so no one is allowed to enter or go out. Turgut rapidly changes his titles, once, he says, "I am Turgut Özben, son of the King of Denmark" A few lines later, he calls himself the Minister of Finance and Metin the Grand Vizier. Through the representation of the king of Denmark, he compares himself to Hamlet who overthinks and cannot act on time. Then, he says, "The world is a brothel; everyone went in and out" (Atay, 2003: 266). Through this reference, Atay refers to Shakespeare's quotation, "All the world's a stage, / And all the men and women merely players; / they all have their exits and their entrances" (Act II, Scene 4). At this point, Atay creates this scene in a play-like atmosphere where the boundaries become opaque. Turgut speaks, "We are all children of this country. We all pay our taxes. We broke down the walls separating people. Together, we serve to establish an understanding that leads us to happy tomorrows. Let's drink!" (Atay, 2003: 268). Once again, Atay emphasizes that all the restrictions are removed in this very place.

The theme of Insanity is related to the carnivalesque that Bakhtin discusses in *Rabelais and His World*. Bakhtin writes about three distinctive aspects of the grotesque, exaggeration, hyperbolism and excessiveness (1984: 303). However, all those three aspects point out the excess of depictions of the body, that is, Bakhtin deals with the grotesque in terms of body issues. He also refers to another image which is the "grotesque-utopian banquet" (1984: 337). In such a feast, which carries a highly carnivalesque atmosphere, people come together around "tables with tasty food … spread in the streets" (1984: 337). As is observed in the brothel scene, Turgut creates a carnivalesque setting in the brothel where they all drink, and then he calls himself the prince. For Bakhtin, the second image is the uncrowning of the King, however, here it is vice versa, Turgut, as an ordinary man, becomes the King of the Brothel Kingdom. Thus, turning all the hierarchies upside down, Turgut announces his sovereignty there.

2. Social and Political Corruption

Clark maintains that "[b]oth extremes-society's growing increasingly alien, fatuous, smug, and corrupt, as well as the individual protagonist's being progressively stripped bare of heroic characteristics-are often portrayed together" (1991: 15). Clark's statement approves that O'Connor subverts the hero's reality as seen in an ordinary novel. However, the hero's presence is considerably connected to the landscape of the novel, for the presence of the protagonist is realised in this space. It is the same for Joyce's Bloom; it is almost impossible to think of Bloom outside Dublin or Prufrock outside the "half-deserted streets" of London. Therefore, space proves to be an essential element of the grotesque protagonist.

The failed journey of Hazel and Turgut has a significant relationship with society. Although the two heroes live in thoroughly different cultures, the problems they encounter are similar in essence. In *Wise Blood*'s Taulkinham, fraud controls everyone and everything, for example, Asa Hawks is one of those swindler characters. He is a preacher who claims to be blind, yet he can see everything. As a trickster, he uses his so-called blindness and his daughter to get money from people. Wearing a pair of sunglasses, he looks like a blind man to deceive people. O'Connor writes,

1 Unless otherwise stated, all translations regarding *Tutunamayanlar* used in the text belong to the author.

> Ten years ago at a revival he had intended to blind himself and two hundred people or more were there, waiting for him to do it. He had preached for an hour on the blindness of Paul, working himself up until he saw himself struck blind by a Divine flash of lightning and, with courage enough then, he had thrust his hands into the bucket of wet lime and streaked them down his face; but hadn't been able to let any of it get into his eyes. (O'Connor, 2008: 77)

In the quotation above, O'Connor points out the manner of fraud in people; as a preacher Hawks delivers a speech about blindness, and then he looks as if blinding himself. Then, regarding his blindness, he uses the scars of the lime on his face to collect money from people.

Some critics regard *Wise Blood* as a novel of existential concerns, because "O'Connor is concerned less with the political landscape than with the spiritual" (Rath, 2010: 47). Yet, that does not mean she ignores the political problems of society. Nevertheless, she still deals with political issues, for example, Hazel's relationship with the police is troublesome. While driving on the highway, Hazel figures out a police car following him. The policeman orders him to pull over to the edge of the road. The dialogue between the two reveals the corruption in political life:

> "I wasn't speeding," Haze said,
>
> "No," the patrolman agreed, "you wasn't,"
>
> "I was on the right side of the road."
>
> "Yes, you was, that's right," the cop said.
>
> "What you want with me?"
>
> "I just don't like your face," the patrolman said. Where's your license?"
>
> "I don't like your face either," Haze said, "I don't have a licence." (O'Connor, 2008: 142)

Then, the policeman asks Hazel to drive to the top of the hill and pushes Hazel's car down the hill. The car lands on its top and the cop says, "Them don't have a car, don't need a licence" (O'Connor, 2008: 143). O'Connor explicitly displays the problematic situation of the political authority through a grotesque event. The policeman pulls over a car because of disliking the face of the driver. It is not a feeling of doubt or a threat to the public; the cop's attitude is highly personal towards Hazel, which makes the scene quite grotesque.

Edwards and Graulund assert that "the extreme, the decadent, the excessive and the bizarre are the 'real' of the text" (2013: 8). Atay represents the civil servants as the bizarre characters in the backdrop of *Tutunamayanlar* by creating a Kafkaesque setting to satirize the state bureaucracy. Turgut parodies how issues cannot be resolved in the state bureaucracy and how people visit rooms and civil servants for only one signature of a manager. According to Turgut, one follows the ten commandments while wandering in the dark passages of the government office. The first one is "You shall not lay your hand on any piece of paper" and the others are that "you will not speak early, you will not put forward any thoughts, you will not seem to know anything, you will not be dressed strangely, you will not be able to put your hands on the table, you will pile on the agony, you will smile, you will wait, provided that you do not cause them to dismiss you.. and you will never despair" (Atay, 2003: 292). Atay regards the civil servants as the smallest representatives of state authority, thus they are represented as scary figures that people fear, which is blended with dark humour. Turgut argues that "a sullen face is necessary for the protection of state authority. Hobnobbing weakens this authority, endangers the higher interests of the state" (Atay, 2003: 302).

In *Tutunamayanlar*, "Şarkılar" (Songs) and "Açıklamalar" (Analysis) parts are the most humorous parts of the novel. In those parts, Atay overtly criticizes the traditions and institutions of the country such as politics, politicians, national education system, religion and some Turkish reforms to reveal how Turkish intellectuals suffer from institutions and traditional practices. According to some scholars, "Şarkılar" and "Açıklamalar" parts are blended with the elements of the grotesque in some sense (Apaydın, 2007: 53). However, it is hard to find elements of horror but distaste and disgust in these parts. In the first part, Selim's birth and his childhood are narrated in traditional Turkish poetic form. In the second part, Selim goes to the school where he cannot find

any happiness. Selim says that he did not like school at first, because his teacher was not like his mother (Atay, 2003: 120).

3. Setting and Atmosphere

The connection between space organization and characterization also fortifies the grotesque atmosphere of the novel. Gaston Bachelard in *The Poetics of Space* as "our first universe, a real cosmos" (1994: 4). House contains various events in daily life ranging from happiness to sadness, from love to anger, and desire to disgust. For Bachelard, there are "'walls' of impalpable shadows, comfort itself with the illusion of protection- or, just the contrary, tremble behind thick walls, mistrust the staunchest ramparts" (1994: 5). The modern hero belongs to the latter: he/she sets out by abandoning the house which consists of thick walls constricting both mental and physical freedom. Handan İnci Elçi, in her book *Roman ve Mekan* (The Novel and Space), examines selected Turkish novels written between Tanzimat and the Modern Era from the aspect of how the house is depicted regarding the characters in the texts. According to Elçi, the chief characters of Modernist novels are either "homeless" or in a perpetual conflict with the house (2003: 226).

Depicted as a grotesque outcast, Hazel acts like an alienated individual who is neglected by society. His exceptional condition is reasonably related to the grotesque feature of the setting of the novel. O'Connor deliberately establishes a grotesque setting to reinforce the alienation of the protagonist. Motes' mental problem is highly connected with his homeless and shelterless condition. The novel begins with highlighting Motes' uneasiness on the train: "Hazel Motes sat at a forward angle on the green plush train seat, looking one minute at the window as if he might want to jump out of it" (O'Connor, 2008: 3). Besides, "[h]is suit was a glaring blue and the price tag was still stapled on the sleeve of it" (2008: 3). Despite sitting on a luxurious seat and wearing a costly suit, Motes does not feel comfortable and suffers mentally.

When Motes arrives at Eastrod, he observes that his house is "as dark as night", and there is nothing but "the skeleton of a house" (O'Connor, 2008: 16). He enters the house where "nothing left … but the chifforobe" (2008: 16). Because of the presence of chifforobe, his mother may "rest easier in her grave," (2008: 24) because she used to have a great attachment to the furniture. Then, Motes remembers his mother's funeral, and how the coffin was closed on her face. A direct connection can be founded between the image of the skeleton house and that of the coffin in the sense that both of them are closed spaces and make people depressed and gloomy. Therefore, he says "I'm sick … I can't be closed up in this thing. Get me out!" (2008: 17). After all, it is not the picture of the house Motes desired; therefore, he cannot stand being there.

Regarding the function of the setting, every author creates his/her unique reality through writing on paper. In terms of the relationship between the setting and the grotesque O'Connor states that "anything that comes out of the South is going to be called grotesque by the Northern reader, unless it is grotesque, in which case it is going to be called realistic" (1970: 40). According to O'Connor, any piece of art written in Southern fiction is labelled as the grotesque by the Northern readers because they are not accustomed to that tradition. Therefore, geography turns out to be destiny for the Southern writer. And for the Northern reader, it is not from their everyday life. She goes on, "[i]n these grotesque works, we find that the writer has made alive some experience which we are not accustomed to observing every day, or which the ordinary man may never experience in his ordinary life" (1970: 40). The grotesque writer chooses unusual characters for the hero/ine of the novel to surprise the reader. The role of the bizarre hero is highly associated with the setting of the novel since the hero is depicted in a very special landscape.

Living in the Southern part of the USA, Motes represents all the eccentric personal traits; he seems to be an insane person which leads him to kill a person. After his army service, Hazel buys a secondhand car mostly "a house for [him]," because he does not have "any place to be" (O'Connor, 2008: 49), but one night he kills Solace Layfield, the so-called prophet of his Church without Christ with the car. While on his way back to the city, he is pulled over by the police. It is revealed that he does not have a driving license, and his car is rolled from the top of a hill and smashed. The police offer him to give a lift to where he is going, but rejecting their help, he says "No" meaning he hasn't planned to go anywhere (2008: 143-4). It is not unexpected that he does not know where to go, because his mind is perplexed. Therefore, O'Connor does not present a place of sanctuary for Hazel to find shelter for he is outcast and almost insane.

When the relationship between the space and the mental state of the modern individual is concerned, it is not surprising that *Tutunamayanlar* begins in Turgut's place, "It all started in the second half of the twentieth century, one night at Turgut's place" (Atay, 2003: 25). Atay portrays Turgut as very restless and uneasy at the beginning of the novel, and he writes, "he was overwhelmed by the inexpressible boredom of his anger at the objects around him. Maybe Selim might have described that this life as a salon-salle-a-manger in the front, two bedrooms at the back, the kitchen-stack room-bathroom on the right of the corridor, his wife and children sleeping inside, the petty-bourgeois blessings he enjoyed in proportion to his money had made him unable to breathe" (2003: 26). Turgut is alienated to his presence in his own place, in the petit bourgeois class, in society, and even in the universe. Despite having a good life, with his wife and children, Turgut is not content with his condition.

In "The Grotesque in Southern Fiction," O'Connor again quotes Thomas Mann, "the grotesque is the true anti-bourgeois style" (1970: 44). For example, Franz Kafka's most famous protagonist Gregor Samsa who is the bourgeois office servant transforms into an enormous insect. Similarly, Turgut is portrayed as a character against middle-class values, which can be observed even in their place. The physical characteristic of a petit bourgeoisie house is depicted as containing a "living room," "two bedrooms," and a "bathroom." In addition to the organization of the space, the structure of objects in the house constitutes confinement for the characters as well, which contributes to the theme of restlessness. Turgut has a library full of hundreds of books that have been bought to imitate Selim, many books are not read yet; and there are several paintings on the walls hung by Nermin, his wife (Atay, 2003: 26). At this point, the vanity of the petit bourgeoisie lifestyle is underlined with the books and paintings functioning as a means of decoration in the house. Besides, "[t]he situation was not promising: the carpet on the floor did not match with the furniture at all" (2003: 27). Turgut's alienation is highlighted through various objects in the house such as the carpet, books, and paintings which are incongruous with each other like Turgut in the society.

Fritz Pappenheim underlines the relationship between spiritual existence and the significance of home. According to him, "the individual, who until then had considered himself integrated into a universal order embracing his physical and spiritual existence, found himself uprooted and banished … Now he was driven to build himself a new home" (1968: 37-8). Feeling him/herself isolated in society, the individual has to find a new home to save him/herself. Pappenheim relates the importance of space which functions as a shelter for the individual, for example, Motes cannot find a new place to save himself. Feeling uprooted, Moses is driven to his death gradually, but for Turgut, a new home means the road he will take.

The relation between the depiction of the characters and the space is underlined through Turgut's feelings. Turgut is portrayed as "breathless" because of the habits of petit-bourgeoisie, but he is not aware of his anxiety: "… why does his mind hang on to them? Simple: so there's something not working. Yes, but where is the thing that doesn't work? Is it in the object? Otherwise.... Turgut could not think yet; just a restlessness" (Atay, 2003: 44). Because of the estrangement to his present condition, he is not content with his wife and children or with the objects. Throughout the novel, it will be slowly revealed that Turgut's uneasiness does not originate from the house, the objects or his family, but from himself, and he is going to be aware of his situation through the investigation of Selim's death.

The modern individual suffers from isolation from the masses as well. At the beginning of the novel, Turgut's restlessness, which is not recognized yet, is underlined through the relationship with his wife, the objects in the house, and the city as well: "As Turgut looked at the rear facades of the apartments, he wondered why the buildings had two separate facades; why, like covering the backs of back-to-wall sofas, 'modern' apartments were as meaningless as a barefaced person and why they were always yellow-washed." (Atay, 2003: 43). The "meaningless" buildings are not different from the people living in them: not only the meaningless people but also the houses have turned their back on him.

In spite of sharing a life, Turgut and Nermin do not have well-established communication. Turgut leads his life as if it was imposed upon him, and he desperately obeys the rules of the petit bourgeoisie: "The Sunday ritual of the petty-bourgeois is basically divided into three parts, my son Selim: 'Sunday Newspaper' … 'Big Breakfast' and 'Who Should We Go to Afternoon' trouble. This class act is carried out with great care every Sunday. If you are bored as it is today, you take a look at the supplement and pass it to your wife: 'You solve the crossword, my

dear,' you say with great renunciation" (Atay, 2003: 85). It seems that the life dominates Turgut, and he is getting drowned in the deep waves of life.

Throughout the novel, Turgut gets together with Selim's other friends, such as Süleyman Kargı, Metin, Selim's mother, and Esat. With the events unfolding, Turgut deeply recognizes Selim and the causes of his death. Indeed, he is gradually becoming Selim, or is he already? In the end, he discovers that Turgut is one of the "tutunamayan." In the fourth part of the novel, Turgut comes back to his house which is still boring and constricting: "Can a person think in such an order? I mean big and beautiful things. First, the furniture gets in the way, then the conditions: the heater, the maid, the nursery. If I had a flat to think about. A small apartment with nothing to interfere with thinking." (Atay, 2003: 557). The structure of the space - the objects, the furniture, everyday habits and people - contributes to Turgut's despair retaining him from thinking about the state he is in. At the end of the novel, Turgut leaves home in the morning. He sets out with his car to the country for "a place where private cars don't pamper" (2003: 570). It is the very place he will not feel the power of the petit bourgeoisie on his shoulders so that he can handle the mental distress and free himself.

We find Turgut in the plains of Anatolia with Olric, his imaginary friend. Staying at a hotel for a long time, Turgut spends his days talking to Olric and thinking about his life. After a while, he withdraws all his money from the bank; leaving his car on a street, he gets on a train. After arriving at the station, Turgut gets off the train and takes a walk there to refresh himself, and then he and Olric get lost behind the train. His troubled feelings are intensified through the organization of the space in the novel. As a modernist protagonist Turgut is not at ease with himself, his family and his house, which draws him from his house to the journey to discover his own self, (özben) and becomes Turgut Özben.

Turgut Özben's search for self-consciousness is similar to Motes' search. On the one hand, the problem of the intellectual in society dominates Turgut's journey. Besides, several issues are underlined throughout Turgut's odyssey such as the conflict with religion, with the state and its institutions, and the clash between the culture of East and West. The main problem lies in the fact that he is not content with life; therefore, his unrest is embodied in the organization of space. For example, to investigate Selim's death, he has to stay away from his wife and children, which is the beginning of his awakening. Besides, the design of the objects in the house also arouses tension in Turgut. Alienated to his family and society, but above all, to himself, Turgut as a modernist character does nothing but escapes from his reality.

On the other hand, Hazel Motes experiences similar troubles with Turgut. For example, Motes' quest centres upon the transcendental issue stemming mainly from religion, which makes him initially a lonely character in society. At the same time, Motes criticizes religion, capitalism, capitalist religion and institutions of state which are the basic causes of unhealthy communication in society. Motes already begins his journey without shelter, in other words, his story begins after leaving his house and his town. While Turgut discovers his self-consciousness, already equipped with the knowledge Motes experiences the quest, but finally, he cannot endure his reality and passes away.

4. Conclusion

O'Connor's *Wise Blood* and Atay's *Tutunamayanlar* were analysed to figure out the elements of the grotesque from three different angles. Firstly, after the analysis of the heroes of the two novels, it can be said that both heroes are alienated from their societies, therefore they cannot breathe figuratively. O'Connor draws Motes as an untraditional hero without the essential social skills while Atay depicts Turgut as a man who is looking for his own self in the petit-bourgeoise life. Motes is represented as an insane man making people afraid of him and Turgut also behaves like a madman, for example, he announces himself as the prince of the brothel. In terms of social relationships, both protagonists can be considered outcasts on their own terms. Secondly, both authors criticise the social and political corruption in their societies. O'Connor displays the social degeneration in the fictitious city of Taulkinham, for example, the so-called blind preacher represents an image of the grotesque by embodying the terrible and playful at the same time. Atay concentrates on social and political corruption as well, for instance, in the state office scene by means of the bizarre civil servants Atay reveals the Kafkaesque bureaucracy in a grotesque event, which is terrible and funny. Lastly, both novels include various representations of places that embody the elements of the grotesque. As a southern writer, O'Connor handles the elements of

the grotesque naturally, a man without a home and family Motes is portrayed in the southern region to show the true anti-bourgeois style. Similarly, depicted in the 70s, Turgut detests the bourgeois life in Turkey.

To sum up, although O'Connor and Atay lived in different countries, both authors employ the elements of the grotesque in their novels to criticise the corruption in their societies. Moreover, they focused on the bourgeois lifestyle in their own cultures by benefitting from the elements of satire. However, their techniques and concerns sometimes vary; for the protagonists, O'Connor's Motes is more brutal and violent than Atay's Turgut. O'Connor is more concerned with the social problems of her time while Atay criticises both the social and political troubles of his period. At the end of both novels, protagonists are found to be homeless, however, Turgut used to have a proper bourgeois life within an apartment, but Motes does not have a house even at the beginning of the novel. Furthermore, Motes begins his journey on a train, in which we have left Turgut and Olric. The reader does not know much about what happened in Motes' life before the train like Turgut's life after the train. In *Tutunamayanlar*, the last time we see Turgut is when they are on a train. Thus, it can be concluded that although the two authors lived in different countries, they were concerned with similar problems. To cope with those issues, they employed the elements of the grotesque in their novels making them both distant relatives and close comrades.

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