

T.C.
FIRAT ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ



FARELER VE İNSANLAR İLE YALNIZ BİR
AVCIDIR YÜREK ADLI ROMANLARDA
ENGELLİLİK VE GROTESK

Hatice DEMİRBAŞ

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

BATI DİLLERİ VE EDEBİYATLARI ANABİLİM

DALI İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Programı

EKİM 2024

T.C.
FIRAT UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

Master's Thesis

**DISABILITY AND GROTESQUE IN *OF MICE AND MEN*
AND *THE HEART IS A A LONELY HUNTER***

Tez Yazarı
Hatice DEMİRBAŞ

Danışman
Doç. Dr. F. Gül KOÇSOY

EKİM 2024
ELAZIĞ

T.C.
FIRAT ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ

BATI DİLLERİ VE EDEBİYATLARI ANA BİLİM DALI

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Başlığı:	<i>Fareler ve İnsanlar</i> ile <i>Yalnız Bir Avcıdır Yürek</i> Adlı Romanlarda Engellilik ve Grotesk
Yazarı:	Hatice DEMİRBAŞ
Tez Öneri	02/06/2022
Tarihi:	
Savunma Tarihi:	14.10.2024

TEZ ONAYI

Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimleri Enstitüsü tez yazım kurallarına göre hazırlanan bu tez aşağıda imzaları bulunan jüri üyeleri tarafından değerlendirilmiş ve akademik dinleyicilere açık yapılan savunma sonucunda **OYBİRLİĞİ/OYÇOKLUĞU** ile kabul edilmiştir.

İmza

Danışman:	Doç. Dr. F. Gül KOÇSOY Fırat Üniversitesi İnsani ve Sosyal Bilimler Fakültesi
------------------	---

Başkan:	Doç. Dr. Işıl ŞAHİN GÜLTER Fırat Üniversitesi İnsani ve Sosyal Bilimler Fakültesi
----------------	---

Üye:	Dr. Öğr.Üyesi Tuba BAYKARA Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi
-------------	---

Üye:	
-------------	--

Üye:	
-------------	--

Bu tez, Enstitü Yönetim Kurulunun 15/10/2024 tarihli toplantısında tescillenmiştir.

Prof. Dr. Ahmet AKSİN
Enstitü Müdürü

BEYAN

Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimleri Enstitüsü tez yazım kurallarına uygun olarak hazırladığım “*FARELER VE İNSANLAR İLE YALNIZ BİR AVCIDIR YÜREK ADLI ROMANLARDA ENGELLİLİK VE GROTESK*” Başlıklı Yüksek Lisans tezi’mın içindeki bütün bilgilerin doğru olduğunu, bilgilerin üretilmesi ve sunulmasında bilimsel etik kurallarına uygun davrandığımı, kullandığım bütün kaynakları atıf yaparak belirttiğimi, maddi ve manevi desteği olan tüm kurum/kuruluş ve kişileri belirttiğimi, burada sunduğum veri ve bilgileri unvan almak amacıyla daha önce hiçbir şekilde kullanmadığımı beyan ederim.

14.10.2024

HATİCE DEMİRBAŞ

PREFACE

This study aims to illustrate disability and grotesque in the novels of John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* (1937) and Carson McCullers' *The Heart Is A Lonely Hunter* (1940). All the data and references that I used in my thesis will try to explain the relationship between disability and grotesque in the novels.

Firstly, I would like to thank my advisor, Assoc.Prof.Dr.F.Gül KOÇSOY for her patience, support and guidance throughout my thesis writing process.

I would like to express my deepest love to my husband, Cengiz Demirbaş who encourages, supports, and motivates me every time of my life.

I also want to thank my father and mother for their support in my life.

HATİCE DEMİRBAŞ
ELAZIĞ 2024

CONTENTS

BEYAN	I
PREFACE	II
CONTENTS	III
ÖZET	IV
ABSTRACT	V
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. DISABILITY AND GROTESQUE	4
2.1. History of Disability	4
2.1.1. Disability Studies	6
2.2. GROTESQUE	9
2.2.1. A Brief History Of Grotesque	9
2.2.2. Southern Gothic Literature and Grotesque	16
3. DISABILITY AND GROTESQUE IN <i>OF MICE AND MEN</i>	22
3.1. John Steinbeck's Life, Works and Literary Career	22
3.2. Disability in <i>Of Mice and Men</i>	24
3.3. Grotesque Elements in <i>Of Mice and Men</i>	31
4. DISABILITY AND GROTESQUE IN <i>THE HEART IS A LONELY HUNTER</i>	37
4.1. Carson McCullers' Life, Works and Literary Career	37
4.2. Disability in <i>The Heart Is A Lonely Hunter</i>	39
4.3. Grotesque in <i>The Heart Is A Lonely Hunter</i>	44
5. CONCLUSION	49
BIBLIOGRAPHY	53
ÖZ GEÇMİŞ	

ÖZET

FARELER VE İNSANLAR İLE YALNIZ BİR AVCIDIR ADLI ROMANLARDA ENGELLİLİK VE GROTESK

Hatice DEMİRBAŞ

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

FIRAT ÜNİVERSİTESİ

Sosyal Bilimleri Enstitüsü

BATI DİLLERİ VE EDEBİYATLARI ANA BİLİM DALI

İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Programı

Ekim 2024, Sayfa: V+55

Bu tezin amacı John Steinbeck'in *Fareler ve İnsanlar* (1937) ile Carson McCullers'ün *Yalnız bir Avcıdır Yürek* (1940) adlı romanlarında engellilik ve grotesk kavramlarını incelemektir. Engelliliğin Amerikan edebiyatında 20. yüzyılın ilk yarısında ortaya çıkış şeklini, etkilerini ve sonuçlarını sosyal ve tarihsel olarak göstermeyi de hedeflemektedir. Bu bağlamda, engelli insanlara karşı önyargılı bir bakış açısının var olduğunu ifade etmek önemlidir. Engelli insanlar ayrımcılığa uğramış ve toplum tarafından büyük bir problem olarak kabul edilmişlerdir. 1990 yıllarında ortaya çıkan Engellilik Çalışmaları, engellilere karşı tıbbi model yerine genel bakış açısına odaklanmıştır. Engellilik çalışmalarında Davis, Stiker, Qicke, Titchkosky, Garland-Thomson ve Longmore gibi önemli kuramcılar eleştirel çözümlemeler getirmişler ve Engellilik çalışmalarının alanını geliştirmişlerdir. Böylece, engellik çalışmalarının alanı engelli insanların sosyal ve kültürel durumlarını göstermeye başlamıştır. Önemli kuramcılar görüşlerine bağlı olarak hem *Fareler ve İnsanlar* hem de *Yalnız bir Avcıdır Yürek* adlı romanlarda engellilik çalışmalarının kuramları doğrultusunda inceleme yapmıştır.

Ek olarak, Batı edebiyatında engelli bireylerin fiziksel görünüşleri sıklıkla grotesk olarak kabul edilmektedir. Engelli bireylerin fiziksel özelliklerinin göz önünde bulundurularak grotesk olarak yansıtılması birçok toplum anlayışında karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Grotesk terimi edebi eserlerimizde karşımıza çıkmış ve özellikle Amerikan güney gotik edebiyatının temel özelliklerinden biri olmuştur. Ayrıca, grotesk kavramı edebiyatta ve sanatta tarihsel süreç içerisinde açıklanarak engellilik ile bağlantısı incelenmektedir. Wolfgang Kayser ve Mikhail Bakhtin'in görüşlerine göre, grotesk düşüncesi değiştirilmiş ve estetik bir tür olarak kullanılmaya başlanmıştır. Kayser ve Bakhtin'in katkılarıyla, Modern çağda groteskin amacı cinsiyet, ırk ve engellilik gibi kavramları ortaya koymaktır. Bu amaçla, çalışmamız öncelikle engellilik ve engellilik çalışmaları hakkında genel bilgiler verip engelliğin tarihsel gelişimini de göz önüne alarak grotesk ve engellilik arasındaki ortak noktaları açımlayacaktır. Engellilik ve grotesk kavramları karakterler aracılığıyla yazarlarımızın eserlerinde örneklendirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Engellilik Çalışmaları, grotesk, John Steinbeck, *Fareler ve İnsanlar*, Carson McCullers, *Yalnız Bir Avcıdır Yürek*

ABSTRACT

Disability and Grotesque in *Of Mice and Men* and *The Heart Is A Lonely Hunter*

Hatice DEMİRBAŞ

Master's Thesis

FIRAT UNIVERSITY

Graduate School of Social Sciences

WESTERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

English Language and Literature Program

October 2024, Page: VIII+55

The aim of this thesis is to examine the concepts of disability and grotesque in John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* (1937) and Carson McCullers's *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (1940). This thesis also aims to illustrate the first appearance of disability in American literature and its impacts and consequences socially and historically in the first half of the 20th century. In this case, it is important to express that there has been a biased point of view towards disabled people; disabled people have been discriminated and they are accepted as a major problem by society. Disability Studies which has emerged in the 1990s focuses on a general perspective towards disabled people rather than the medical model. The most important theorists in Disability Studies such as Davis, Stiker, Qicke, Titchkosky, Garland-Thomson, and Longmore have brought critical analyses toward a general perspective. They expanded the scope of Disability Studies. Thus, the scope of Disability studies started to demonstrate the social and cultural conditions of disabled people. Based on the views of some significant theorists, both *Of Mice and Men* and *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* are examined in line with the theories of Disability Studies.

In addition, In Western literature, the appearance of physical disability is often accepted as grotesque. The term 'grotesque' appears in our literary works and has become one of the main features of the Southern Gothic. Besides, the concept of 'grotesque' is examined in the historical process both in art and literature. According to Wolfgang Kayser and Mikhail Bakhtin's views, the idea of grotesque has been changed and started to be used as an aesthetic genre. In the modern era, the purpose of the grotesque is to demonstrate modern issues such as gender, race, and disability with the contributions of Kayser and Bakhtin. For this purpose, this thesis gives general information about disability and disability studies by taking into account the historical development of disability and clarifies common grounds between disability and grotesque. The concepts of disability and grotesque are exemplified in the works of John Steinbeck and Carson McCullers through the characters.

Keywords: Disability Studies, grotesque, John Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men*, Carson McCullers, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*

1. INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, Disability and Grotesque in *Of Mice and Men* (1937), which is one of the most famous works written by John Steinbeck, as well as *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (1940) which was written by Carson McCullers are both examined.

For the centuries, Disability has caused many social divisions in the society in many aspects. Many societies believe that if the human body is imperfect or damaged, the souls of disabled people are evil. The society is the dominant factor that shapes people's lifestyles and characters and the society teaches what the normal is. It affects our frame of mind but it is unacceptable. Especially disabled persons are portrayed as monsters and horrible in Western culture. Even in many literary genres people labeled as disabled are often reflected as unhappy, depressed, and sinful. In this sense, using disabled characters provides and draws more attention to the social themes and challenges the belief of what the normal is. In this thesis, the theory of disability will be analyzed in historical dimensions. Before starting to define something, it needs to analyze its nature. The theory of disability is generally combined with the excessive things in earlier times. It has both negative and positive situations in its nature. According to Ruskin, "Physically speaking it mainly involves deformities, physical defects, and distorted ugly appearance. In a mental sense, it mostly entails psychic disorders, nervous breakdowns, insanity, and aggression" (1875: 112). As Ruskin said, deformities are mostly connected with malformations on body in terms of medical model.

In real terms, disability is especially related to the physical and mental impairment of the body. It is accepted as a disadvantage in many sources. Taking this definition into consideration we should think that deformity of body and mind identifies the disability. When we think about the concept of disability, it emphasizes more than we see. The society has always shown us what normal is or what abnormal is. The research has consistently shown that disability in the literature shows the social construction. Disability studies show that social construction can play an important role in identifying disability. In parallel with this point of view, disability can be connected with physically and psychologically distorted characters.

Disability is a key issue in the literature. Most studies in the field of disability have only focused on physical impairment or mental impairment as medical. However, many notable writers such as Steinbeck and McCullers tried to draw attention the disability in their works. Contrary to general belief, they reconstruct the concept of disability. Disability Studies evaluate traditional values, barriers, and limitations.

In the first part of this thesis, Disability and Grotesque will be explained in detail. Disability Studies are divided into two parts; history of disability and disability studies. The term 'Disability' means "an illness, injury, or condition that makes it difficult for someone to do some things that other people do, and that is usually permanent or lasts for a long time" in the Cambridge Dictionary. It is related to the lack of body parts such as physical impairment. In earlier times, people behave disabled persons in many different attitudes. Later, with Disability Studies in the 19th century, the concept of disability illustrated society's barriers. For that reason, this study will touch upon Disability Studies as gender, race, and ethnicity to support the ideas. Thus, our creative writers reflected the social injustices in terms of disability in their works. At the same time, it is important to examine the concept of disability in the works of Steinbeck and McCullers.

In order to evaluate the characters in terms of the grotesque, the history of the grotesque will be explained according to many philosophers and thinker's thoughts and contributions such as Wolfgang Kayser, Mikhail Bakhtin, and John Ruskin. In the beginning, the grotesque is mostly common in the art to reflect human and animal features on the stone and it is improved to illustrate artistic production in medieval times. In the course of time, the extension of the meaning of the grotesque began and started to be used in literature for different and critical purposes. The term 'grotesque' is used to refer to human or animal features that are abnormal, strange, complex, and striking. The nature of the grotesque has both repulsive and laughter in its structure. As the grotesque, The striking nature of the lack of body such as disgust and attraction in the protagonists attracts the reader. Having two contrary feelings in its structure draws the attention of the reader such as grotesque. It is possible to say that people behave a person who is physically or mentally distorted suspensefully. As one part of us prejudices them, the other part of us is curious.

Moreover, the grotesque which is one of the most important features of Southern Gothic literature is mostly used in characters and settings. The representations of the characters and setting are generally grotesque in Southern Gothic. Correlatively, this thesis will give information about Southern Gothic literature which is a sub-genre of Gothic writing. In American Literature, Southern Gothic has a significant place to express humankind's tragic past in the South. From the beginning to the day that we live, social and historical events take place in every part of our lives. It is known that The South experienced a tragic and devastating Civil War causing depression, economic decline, and deaths of more than thousands. In this spirit, it is also important to say that The Great Depression, World War I, and other events influenced many remarkable writers. The Southern Gothic became a more famous genre among writers and it depicted the cultural climate of the American South. The Southern Gothic is a literary style that deals with social issues. Most of the social issues such as racism, slavery, violence, and social conflicts are demonstrated in Southern Gothic writing. Especially, William Faulkner, Carson McCullers, Flannery O'Connor, Truman Capote, and Tennessee Williams are the most notable writers of the twentieth century in Southern Gothic writing. These remarkable writers tried to demonstrate social construction and conflicts by using physically and psychologically distorted characters. Physical grotesques and abnormalities symbolize society's moral sentiment. It was broken down. In addition, As a Southern Gothic writer, Carson McCullers reflected characteristics of this genre in her works.

In the second chapter of this thesis, John Steinbeck lives, works, and literary careers and his perfect novella *Of Mice and Men* (1937) will be examined. These authors are the most remarkable writers to enlighten this study. Both Steinbeck and McCullers are the most significant writers in the American literature. To learn the themes, techniques, and languages used in the works is more precious to us. In this sense, as an important writer in American literature, John Steinbeck often dealt with social injustice, poverty, prejudice, racism, and modernization. The symbol of disability is reflected in the grotesque characters so it is possible to see the power of the disabled characters in his works. John Steinbeck reconstructs the concept of disability by combining realistic, naturalistic, and modernist conditions of the period. *Of Mice and Men* (1937), which is written by Steinbeck deals with this problematic sense. It is known that if you have any kind of disability you are different and not normal. In American Society, disability is demonstrated as horror and shunned as well as characters' estrangement so Steinbeck's character selection is significant in terms of disability. As a romantic, modernist, and realistic writer, he focused on the characters searching and questioning the meaning of life.

In the last part of this thesis, Carson McCullers' works, literary career and his novel *The Heart Is A Lonely Hunter* (1940) will be analyzed in terms of disability and grotesque. Carson McCullers who is the most significant writer of Southern Gothic fiction dealt with the concept of disability and brought a new fresh point of view to the disability. Her fictional characters are generally grotesque and distorted. As well as McCullers' famous stories, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (1940) demonstrates the concept of disability with its theme and grotesque characters. In this creative writing, McCullers chooses a deaf protagonist to examine and combine human relationships in a small town. McCullers employs disabled characters like Singer. She demonstrates the portrayal of traditional Southern Gothic literature by using grotesque characters. In a broader term, the grotesque which is used by Carson McCullers is the blending of opposites feelings simultaneously. Although there are many different characters used in their fiction, there is the same goal for the readers because these notable writers try to illustrate society's corruption reject their established norms, and reconstruct the concept of disability in their novels. In addition, disability is a main concern in McCullers' themes. Carson McCullers, as a late modernist, tried to give a deep message both socially and historically and she refused established prejudices. According to McCullers, everyone should behave normally and privately to the disabled people labeled as others.

Both John Steinbeck and Carson McCullers focus on the concept of disability and use grotesque characters and settings. It is known that there are established assumptions about disability. It is seen that these notable writers discuss and emphasize the same thing. This research aims to define common grounds and differences among the two novels in terms of disability and grotesque. In this process, history of disability and disability studies will contribute to this thesis. In post-modern literature, the physical appearance of disabled people is accepted as grotesque. Based on previous studies about disability, disability is mainly associated with the grotesque not only physically but also behaviorally and intellectually. In this sense, disability has been a major problem in the societies. Little is known about disability and is not clear what factors affect this concept and how is reflected in fiction.

To sum up, being a disabled person has been a significant issue for ages. Thanks to some significant writers and philosophers, disabled people's positions in many different societies are assessed in the literature. Disability studies and the history of disability will be a light for us. In this thesis, the fundamental principles of the manifesto of the Union of Physically Impaired Against Segregation will be a guide for understanding disability studies. The meaning and field of the Disability is extended with the contribution of the principles of Disability Studies. Disability studies put forward that the term 'disability is discrimination' so this study will touch on the difference between disability and impairment. Despite the impairment is mostly used as a medical term, disability is linked to social barriers so the concept of disability is not only related to the body but also to the social environment. In this spirit, the term 'disability and disability studies' will be analyzed through the nature of characters as physical, behavioral, and intellectual.

2. DISABILITY AND GROTESQUE

2.1. History of Disability

As the name suggests this section introduces the history of disability. Disability is a significant key part of our lives that might happen to everyone every time. The term 'Disability' means in the Oxford Dictionary a physical or mental condition that makes it difficult for somebody to do some things that most other people can do. In other words; The term disability is defined as a disadvantage especially a physical and mental impairment in general meaning. In other words, physical appearance is an especially determinant factor in defining the conception of normal. Taking this definition into consideration, if you have any kind of impairment, especially physical impairment, you are disabled and disadvantaged in society but we should not forget that an accident or an illness can make us a disabled person anytime in this long life. From the past to the present, these definitions restrict our lives and demonstrate what is normal or abnormal. Interestingly, considering these descriptions what comes to your mind? In this spirit, we have to identify the question in our minds: Who qualifies as disabled? Society is, of course, shaping our perceptions towards disabled persons.

In what follows, In Stiker's *History of Disability* (1999) he explains the meaning of disability in more ways than one:

From ancient Greece to the Renaissance, a fundamental feature common to all these different cultures was the question of the meaning of disability. Schematically, in Greece, birth deformity was a curse or even malefice and individuals were excluded or left to die by exposure to the elements; in Hebrew culture, certain expressions of disability were treated as an impurity, but the poor had to be approached with compassion. The New Testament shows Jesus detaching infirmity from sin and placing himself closer to disabled hordes banished from temples and cities; this alternative intimacy of relations happened because the existence of disability proclaimed the Kingdom of God. At the end of the Byzantine Empire, we see a man like Zotikos found one of the first leper colonies. As for the Middle Ages there was a great deal of harshness for those termed "crippled," as they were assigned the role of revealing a world beyond socially sanctioned appearances (the buffoon), or of the cripple without resources, constituted as a figure of Christ. The suffering and stigma associated with disability was to be alleviated while also serving as an opportunity to make the individual/organization granting charity into a vehicle of their own salvation. All of these social adjustments of "acceptance" occur without integrating disabled populations in the modern sense of the term (1999: 9).

Based on Stiker's explanations it is possible to say that the different societies' points of view towards disabled persons emerged in different ways. These descriptions show us the social, political, and cultural expectations of the society at that time. Thus, Society has been divided into disabled and non-disabled for many years because disability is accepted as a great sin or burden in its history. About disability history, John Quicke also mentions:

there are, latent to the dominant culture, ideas about handicap and disability from an earlier period which still have considerable force. An example is the notion, which runs through the history of Western civilization and is legitimated by various religious teachings, that disability indicates possession by the devil or by an evil force, or is the outcome of evil doing (1985: 3).

It can be inferred that Disability is associated with the devil or demonic things in many societies. In many cultures, disabled persons are seen as deviant because they are different than the normal conditions of society. They consider them as different, deviant, other, and abnormal.

As Koçsoy said in her article “In the early history of the United States, a baby born disabled was often left to die, for example. When evil is made visible, it is easier to understand it, and attributing the cause of disabilities to evil can be seen as justifiable” (2021: 1056). Generally, people believe that disabled persons are the reflection of evil in the world. In the beginning medieval culture believed that abnormalities and deviants come from God. The perceptions of monstrosity shape the characteristics of disability. Especially the impairment from birth represents the deformed, unclear soul and burden among the predominant society. Stiker states:

Since that which God possesses must be, by definition, without blemish, disabilities made literal the evidence of the inherent imperfection of the human condition. Within the formulation, disabilities resulted in social ostracization and in a tradition of representation that deploys disability as the master metaphor of humanity's essential corruption since the Fall (2019: 21).

It can be said that Stiker is right about human corruption because disability can not be connected with God, it can be only a result of human corruption. For this reason, Disabilities are representatives of their cultural and traditional views. God itself is perfect so disabled persons symbolize the corruption of humanity. In this respect, these societies have identified the disabled as monsters. The term ‘monster’ is beyond nature and its structure is a complicated and terrifying phenomenon. The perception of monstrosity shapes the characteristics of disability. In other words, they qualified or identified with the monsters' scary features. Therefore; we can also add monstrosity perception with Stiker's words “the notion of monster is necessarily related to that of disability” (2019: 72). It is essential to express that these patriarchal societies treat disabled people as monsters.

In this case, the importance of interpretations of disability history can enable us to reach the knowledge of historical and cultural points of view as political and social. Throughout history, there has been a dominant patriarchal perception of disabled people. In Titchkosky's words, “Disability is still viewed as an unexpected, undesired, asocial, apolitical, bodily condition” (2000: 213). Disabled people are often seen as a problem by the physical and social environment they live in. Most importantly, judgments about the normal or abnormal body emerge in disabled persons' alienation and isolation. In light of this information, the social, political, and spiritual approaches to disabled people still influence their lives. Thus, In this frame, it is obvious that disabled people have been oppressed and isolated for years and are seen as stigmatized. Disabled people seen as stigmatized are always outside of society because they are not connected with the sense of being normal. The sick or impaired body restricts disabled people's lives and society itself from these restrictions. The history of disability is formed of what is normal or what is abnormal by society throughout history.

For centuries disabled people have been discriminated from the society in many ways. They are marginalized and called also dangerous. On the other hand, the history of disability starts to change step by step after the post-war. Every person who has physical deformities and deficiencies can find a place in society like others who lost their arms, legs, and other organs of the body in the war. As it is known, in earlier times there was no place in the society for disabled persons, they

called them others and they never located disabled people any part of a real society. But now something starts to change over time.

2.1.1. Disability Studies

Disability Studies largely emerged out of disability civil rights movements in the late 1990s. It is known that disabled persons have marginalized and oppressed minority groups for years. Most of the scholars focused on the field of medical disability, especially physically sick or impaired body, from the new model of disability studies. Likewise, the social approaches toward disabled people are observed in the most significant works of Stiker, Qicke, Davis, and Titchkosky. Throughout history, disabled people have been isolated, alienated, and marginalized and society called them others because of their physical handicaps. The society is divided into disabled and non-disabled. Historically, the sick or impaired body is associated with monsters and is separated from society. Thus, we see the beginning of the restrictions and limitations between society and disabled people. The general perspective against disabled persons is always eccentric and demonstrates the condition of disabled persons who are faced with established assumptions toward themselves. In the last twentieth century, the scope of disability studies has been improved. In addition, related to the advancements in this field Altschuler and Christobal state:

The passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990 accompanied a new wave of disability studies scholarship led in large part by literary scholars, as field founders and leaders including Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, Catherine Kudlick, Paul Longmore, David Mitchell, Sharon Snyder, Lennard Davis, Tom Shakespeare, and Tobin Siebers demonstrated the ongoing importance of disability to critical analysis in the humanities (2017: 3).

Most of these significant theorists who made contributions to the field of disability studies helped the progress. It is important to emphasize that disability studies work on discrimination toward disabled people. And also it is essential to assess disability studies as socio-historical concepts. Even though there are two models of disability; medical model and rehabilitation, they are different from each other. While the medical model is interested in disease, rehabilitation is mostly interested in observation and remediation. By contrast with the medical model, disability studies reconstruct the construction of disability. Many activists of disability studies in the twentieth century tried to demonstrate the difference between impairment and disability. As the term impairment is interested in the loss of body parts or organs, the term disability is mostly related to the social environment. In connection with this explanation, Davis asserts the discrimination with the following lines:

“An impairment involves a loss or diminution of sight, hearing, mobility, mental ability, and so on. But an impairment only becomes a disability when the ambient society creates environments with barriers-affective, sensory, cognitive, or architectural” (1999: 506-507). It is clear that disability is not only related to the impairment of the body but also it is domination of society. Society constituted obstacles and barriers for disabled persons so disability studies study on social conditions of disabled persons. In other words, the scope of disability shows the social, cultural, and political conditions of disabled persons in society. It might attempt to say the scope of disability has expanded beyond the impairment. In another study by Taylor, Shoults, and Walker, Disability Studies is defined as:

Disability Studies refers generally to the examination of disability as a social, cultural, and political phenomenon. In contrast to clinical, medical, or therapeutic perspectives on disability, Disability Studies focuses on how disability is defined and represented in society. From this perspective, disability is not a characteristic that exists in the person so defined, but a construct that finds its meaning in social and cultural context (2003: 1).

In parallel with other theorists, they expanded the definition of disability. It is constructed with the social norms contrast to the medical model. From a historical perspective, most of the scholars argue the conception of normality. Many significant theorists reconstruct the disability concept in ancient Greece, in the English Renaissance and Enlightenment, in the nineteenth century Europe and America. The new works on disability studies start to redefine and revise it historically. The previous assumptions on disability are revised by the influence of Feminist, Marxist, and post-modern criticism. Over the years the meaning of disability and impairment as social and cultural have expanded and evolved with the environmental change, technological developments, and increase in population. A "cripple" on a public thoroughfare might have been seen as a divinely punished sinner in the 1830s, a potential rehabilitant in the 1950s, a political activist in the 1990s, and, in any era, a mendicant (Longmore-Goldberg, 2000: 892). The general meaning of the term disability is different from the disability studies. Correspondingly, "The disability rights activists in North America and Europe began to oppose considerations that placed the body at the centre of explanation" (Reddy, 2011: 291). These volunteer activists interrogate the sense of body that takes precedence over the sense of self. While society ignores disabled persons' identities, disability rights activists try to demonstrate their identities beyond the body.

Taking these expressions into consideration, most scholars who study disability studies attempt to create a new socio-political model of disability. The manifesto of the Union of Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS), titled Fundamental Principles of Disability (1976), asserts that disability is the manifestation of social discrimination against the impaired. The Union maintains that it is a society that disables physically impaired people, and disability as a social construct is something external and imposed on the impaired, leading to the isolation and exclusion of the impaired from full participation in society (Reddy, 2011: 291-292). This reinterpretation of the term 'disability' notably indicates that disability is a social construct. There are barriers and discrimination toward disabled persons. Thus, Disability studies work on social dominance over disabled persons in every part of life. For Long, Disabled persons are repressed and an oppressed minority group within the society. When we compare the repression of disabled persons with the other discriminating features in society based on race, gender, and class, it is a demonstration of double disadvantages. As it is known that both negroid persons and women are separated from society so if you are both a black impaired person or an impaired woman, you are already marginated from society because of the social barriers.

In order to make clear semantically, Reddy also makes a distinction between impairment and disability: "First, impairment and disability are two distinct constructs; impairment is individual, private, and a personal tragedy, while disability is structural, social, and externally imposed. Second, disability as a social creation distinguished disability from individual deficit" (2011: 292). It is seen that disability is the barriers and rules imposed by society on disabled persons for centuries so disability studies defend the differences between disabled and non-disabled persons. On the other hand; it is possible to express that Disability Studies focus on race and ethnicity based

on historical process. A lot of people suffered from the torture, lynching, and discrimination of society because of their skin color or their race. Therefore, gender problems also can be examined in the views of feminism. It is known that being a woman is a main problem for ages.

As it is known, the definition of feminism is described as “the belief and aim that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men; the struggle to achieve this aim” (Oxford University, 2024). This movement supports women's positions in our daily lives. In patriarchal societies, women had no rights as equal to men and they were isolated from society. There were basic assumptions and rules for women. In the context of this discussion, Disability Studies focused on the conditions of women who have physical or mental impairment in Western cultures. At this point, “Feminist disability studies defines disability as a vector of socially constructed identity and a form of embodiment that interacts with both the material and the social environments” (Garland-Thomson, 2005: 1559). Thus, Feminist disability studies claim that it is not only related to the lack of body but also disability is about the perception of societies which behave them as a burden or sin in social relations. According to Garland-Thomson:

Feminist disability studies reimagine disability. Feminism challenges the belief that femaleness is a natural form of physical and mental deficiency or constitutional unruliness. Feminist disability studies similarly questions our assumptions that disability is a flaw, lack, or excess. To do so, it defines disability broadly from a social rather than a medical perspective (2005: 1557).

Based on Garland-Thomson's critical analysis of disability studies on feminism, she provides us with a new way of critical thinking in terms of gender. If you are a disabled person, you are already alienated from society but being a woman is thought of as a disability all by itself. In addition to them, If you are a woman who has a physical impairment, oppression, and exclusion are inevitable by society. The gender 'woman' became a significant issue in terms of Disability Studies. Similarly, In a related article titled “Toward a Feminist Theory of Disability”, Wendell (1989) expresses the perspective and perception about women to make it more understandable:

Disabled women struggle with both the oppression of being women in male-dominated societies and the oppression of being disabled in societies dominated by the able-bodied. They are bringing the knowledge and concerns of women with disabilities into feminism and feminist perspectives into the disability rights movement (1989: 105).

By the views of Wendell, it can be concluded that disability studies focus on the women's rights. In 1988, Michelle Fine and Adrienne Ash's *Women and Disabilities* provided a great contribution to literature. Because they explained the relationship in terms of gender and disability. To understand Disability Studies, this work is precious in its history. Consequently, It is an indispensable fact that disability has boundaries with gender, race, and ethnicity so disabled women are isolated and oppressed because of social constructions.

Certainly, Disability studies has a large field in its context so it is possible to reconnect disability studies with race and ethnicity. Disability studies present us with the interrelationship between race, ethnicity, and disability. In different cultures of many societies, we see the discrimination of people who belong to different races and minorities. The term 'other' is improved by society and they are classified according to their gender, race, and ethnicity. Especially the color of people is a determinant factor in living equally. Black people and other minorities are

discriminated against and are convicted to the lower class. Ben-Moche and Magana analyze the study of disability in terms of race and ethnicity :

For many people of color or those who have no access to quality medical care, not being diagnosed is due less to viewing disability as a source of pride or as a fluid state and more to disparities. We see these disparities in service provision and access to doctors and medical services (such as therapy, medication, early detection, and so on) because of inequalities based on class, color, language, and geographical barriers (2014: 106).

In other words; It can be understood that based on their social discrimination the possibility of losing ability or being disabled is more above. People with disabilities are faced with several kinds of inequality. To determine the significance of Disability boundaries, much of activists shaped disability as disability discrimination. Frederick and Shifrer claim that: “The disability is like race analogy became the dominant narrative through which activists and critical scholars understood disability inequality and made claims to civil rights” (2019: 203).

It is obvious that discrimination on race and ethnicity is seen in many attitudes of society aspects of Disability Studies. Historically, the oppression of women, migrants, African Americans, and the people in lower classes are faced with the constructions and barriers in their cultures of society. Concerning this discrimination, Disability Studies demonstrate there is a strong relationship between gender, race, and ethnicity. Likewise, Disability studies give a strong voice for disabled persons. Both race and ethnicity have supported its assumptions based on Disability Studies.

2.2. GROTESQUE

2.2.1. A Brief History Of Grotesque

As a literary term, Grotesque is defined in A Dictionary Of Literary and Thematic Terms: grotesque refers to a work in which abnormal or macabre characters or incidents are presented in a mix of comedy and pathos or horror. The incompatibility of this mix creates in the reader the kind of conflicted response that one makes to a "sick joke": on the one hand, funny; on the other, nauseating or horrifying (Quinn, 2006: 187). According to the history of the grotesque, grotesque has not simply described a type that reflects the characteristics of a particular epoch. In a broad sense, the grotesque is defined as “characterized by distortion or unnatural combinations, fantastically extravagant” (Campbell, 1906: 6). The standards of living, historical events, cultural conflicts, and the physical and psychological oppression of our world have shaped the concept of the grotesque.

To understand the term 'grotesque', it is important to know its long history. The term 'grotesque' derives from grotto, meaning caves. However in literature, the grotesque is an artistic style that combines human features. It offers the presentation of primitive stone productions and paintings. Mostly, the grotesque arouses disgust and astonishment in the reader (Mikics, 2007: 138-139). The animal and human descriptions are portrayed as grotesque in caves. Since ancient times, the meaning of grotesque has been changed semantically both in art and literature. The grotesque refers to the contrast adjectives at the same time such as beautiful and ugly. In other words, the striking nature of the grotesque arouses contradictory feelings in the reader or viewer. Throughout its history, the grotesque has been used to express decorative things. Its long history dates back to

the late fifteenth century. Firstly, the grotesque appeared in Rome and then in the works of Raphael and Pinturicchio who are Italian painters. The first reflections of grotesque in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are on artistic production. Especially during the Renaissance the term 'grotesque' is reflected in the paintings as colors, shapes, and drawings. The enlargement of the grotesque in the sixteenth century increased and the grotesque has expanded to the other genres as well as painting. Therefore; the mask is another artistic feature in grotesque in the sixteenth century. The mask transforms the idea of distortion. The inspiration for the mask signifies the horror parts of both animal and human bodies.

On the other hand; the term grotesque also started to be used in European countries and began to be reflected in their art and literature. The grotesque is mostly used in art as an artistic term both in England and Germany. The German thinkers Justus Möser, Karl Flögel, and Heinrich Schneegans "defended the existence of the comic grotesque, which they saw as the result of a natural inclination inherent in man from time immemorial; yet they all looked upon the grotesque primarily as a grossly exaggerated and absurd form of art" (Haar, 1983: 3).

It was at the end of the term that the concept of the grotesque began to be associated with experimental practices and monstrous figures. Wolfgang Kayser (1906: 60) explains the first definition of grotesque in German language: "the monstrous fusion of human and nonhuman elements as the most typical feature of the grotesque style" (Kayser, 1963: 24). In other words, while grotesque is considered as fantasy, imagination, and unusual images, its meaning begins to transform differently as monstrous.

In the same way, Montaigne calls "grotesque and monstrous bodies, pieced together of the most diverse members, without distinct form, in which order and proportion are left to chance" (Kayser, 1963: 24). Montaigne's use of the grotesque concept facilitates its transition from the field of art to the literature. Montaigne's essays are one of the first uses of the grotesque in literature.

In addition to Montaigne's contribution to the grotesque, many numerous authors such as Dante, Cervantes and Shakespeare contributed to the extension of the grotesque in the 18th century. Those authors formed the grotesque and used it in their works to rich grotesque fiction. Although an absurd, derogatory, and distorted the structure of grotesque can be observed, at the end of the 18th century the significance of the grotesque became more important and remarkable with the Romantic period. In contrast to the Medieval Ages and Renaissance, the Romantic period established its characteristics against the rules of the classic period. Classicism stresses order, mind, objectivity, and formal and logical themes. On the other hand, Romanticism idealizes the soul of the Renaissance. According to Bakhtin, "The images of Romantic grotesque usually express fear of the world and seek to inspire their reader with this fear" (1983: 39). Bakhtin also examines the theme of madness in Romanticism. 'Madness' makes all forms grotesque because it signifies abnormality and it gains power in Romanticism as being tragic part of individualism (39). Especially in the Romantic Era, Romantics used intuition, emotion, and imagination. In the same way, using powerful feelings broke down them from the convention. Thereby, the grotesque is combined with fantastic and parodic features under the light of Romantics' thoughts. However, while romantic writers preferred dealing with more emotional and natural subjects, they did not use the grotesque as a critical method. Mostly, the type of fantasy characters started to seem in literature.

There was a tendency towards mystery, extravagant, bizarre, and supernatural things in nature. It is possible to say that the grotesque in this period is artificial production blended with

great imagination. For instance; as a Romantic poet Robert Browning may be thought of as a master in using the grotesque. In Lily Campbell's Master of Arts thesis called "The Grotesque in the Poetry of Robert Browning" (1906); she introduces him as a poet of grotesque. Champell expresses her ideas about Browning's grotesque: ‘

He was a man of the world, not blind to existent facts, yet he was a man above the world and hence able to see to some extent the ultimate truth of things. It was, then, in this struggle between his idealism and his realism that he became the poet of the grotesque (1906: 17).

Especially, The grotesque characteristics are used in Robert Browning's *Caliban Upon Setebos* (1864). The settings, plots, and characters are surrounded by grotesque elements. To illustrate the romantics' Gothic mode, the Grotesque has been a major characteristic of the nineteenth century. Gothic writers used the grotesque by enhancing the feelings. In this process some remarkable authors used the grotesque form, including works of Francisco Goya, Herry Fuseli, William Hogarth, Jacques Callot, E.A.T. Hoffman, Sir Walter Scott, Edgar Allen Poe and Victor Hugo (W.B. Eerdmans, 1997: 10). For example; French Romantic Victor Hugo's Preface to *Cromwell* (1827) which is accepted as manifesto of Romanticism adopts and emphasizes the grotesque. Bakhtin mentions Hugo's thought about the grotesque: "grotesque is in everywhere: on one hand, it creates the formless and the terrifying, on the other hand the comic, the buffon-like" (43). So the indivisible characteristics of the grotesque combine both monstrous and comic inside itself.

On the other hand, Kayser expresses that "the grotesque the spectator becomes directly involved at some point where a specific meaning is attached to events. In the humorous context, on the other hand, a certain distance is maintained throughout and, with it, a feeling of security and indifference" (118). Based on his explanation, Kayser clarifies the comic and grotesque. It is possible to say that both the comic elements and grotesque elements reveal a great effect on the reader and spectator.

In using the grotesque Edgar Allan Poe and E.T.A Hoffman used this new technique in their works. Edgar Allan Poe's *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* (1840) which is a collection of his stories is full of grotesque elements. As the title suggests, Poe has combined the grotesque and arabesque in his writings. For example; "The Fall of the House of Usher" is a short story of Poe. Despite this short story has Gothic elements because of its dark and gloomy atmosphere, it presents grotesque characters to the reader. Poe mostly uses the themes of death, psychological illness, and decay. The main protagonist Roderick Usher and his sister Madeline Usher carry grotesque features in terms of their mental and mysterious illness. Therefore, Hoffman especially used strange and ornamental grotesques.

In the same way, Kayser in his *The Grotesque in Art and Literature* (1963) presents the reader with three categories of grotesque figures in E.T.A Hoffman's works; grotesque figures with appearance and movement, eccentric artists, and demonic characters. To make clear the characterization of Kayser, it is important to give more details about the typology of characterization. The first characterization of the grotesque is to illustrate the physical impairments of the characters that come from birth or diseases such as crippled, lame, deaf or paralyzed. Then, the eccentric artists have a bizarre and disturbing bodily expressions and they illustrate weird behaviour. Lastly, the demonic characters are connected with supernatural and satanic powers.

They are also uncanny and disturbing characters (105-106). Actually, it is possible to say that he improves the new form of grotesque based on Kayser's identification.

Based on Kayser's character analysis, it can be found many grotesque characters in American literature. Due to the fact that the South had a tragic past, grotesque attains power with the pen of Southern writers. The process beginning with Edgar Allan Poe continues with James Joyce, William Faulkner, Tennessee Williams, Carson McCullers, Truman Capote, and Flannery O'Connor. Most of these writers constitute grotesque plots, settings, and themes.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, As a Victorian age writer, we see John Ruskin's *The Stones of Venice* (1851) in literature. Ruskin's consideration of the grotesque has different aspects both in art and literature. Ruskin seems grotesque as a true expression of mind; the noble grotesque and the ignoble grotesque. To Campbell, Ruskin says that "the true grotesque represents mind in repose, the false grotesque represents mind in activity" (1906: 11). Ruskin reveals the grotesque features to make symbolic depictions. Ruskin does not simplify grotesque in aesthetic terms; he bases his theory on a social and not psychological analysis in that he views mental states as being influenced by cultural condition. Ruskin expresses that usage of aesthetic does not illustrate the deterioration of the society. He uses the symbolic grotesque to reveal human's imaginative fantasy world. As Ruskin claims that the grotesque must have used as a device for political satire, unreal fantasy and the horror of the unknown. For Ruskin, the concept of grotesque deals with the degeneration so the aesthetic side of grotesque does not illustrate the space between reality and imagination (Edwards and Rune, 2013: 16-2). By the way, Ruskin introduced grotesque as a real genre for the first time in literature. In his article, Steil thinks "Although Ruskin's terms are almost invariably genetic, he never ties down the grotesque to particular conflicts in the author; he is trying rather to discover universal qualities, and terms like ludicrous and fearful refer as much to effect as to cause" (1970: 255). Ruskin adopts real, true, and noble sides of the world as well as supernatural things. He tries to search for the truth under the combination of both fear and ludicrous.

Moreover, the idea of the grotesque has been changed in the modern period of the twentieth century and prevalent in art and literature. In the modern era, the changing and deteriorating language, movements and forms have prominently appeared in art and literature as grotesque. Philip Thomson offers the reader a new perspective on the modern grotesque: "to make us see the real world anew, from a fresh perspective which, though it be a strange and disturbing one, is nevertheless valid and realistic" (1972: 17). Precisely, the modern grotesque establishes a connection with the human and the environment. The alienation of human beings affected humanity after the most destructive events such as economic depression and two world wars. The human position in the twentieth century is considered isolated. Kayser states that "In the modern age, however, it is the Self which is divided; and the unknown, the mask, has become part of the person" (1963: 137).

Kayser also adds that "THE GROTESQUE IS THE ESTRANGED WORLD" (184). As it is understood, there is alienation and illusion. The man is in a strange world. Everything in the world is meaningless for the men. The human being started to question the meaning of life. So the modern grotesque is mostly related to the physical and social world of humans.

Modern and postmodern theories divide over the psychological source, social purpose and philosophic meaning of grotesque; questions remain over whether is found only in the visual image or also in larger structures and fictional worlds. In the

first half of the 20th century, the grotesque was finally accepted as a meaningful aesthetic category, owing to the efforts of Kayser (Makaryk, 1993: 85).

With the contributions of Kayser, grotesque started to be used as an aesthetic genre to express human situations in the 20th century. The importance of the grotesque improves because of the departure of humans from society's beliefs and values and the fairy tales of the modern world. "It was the breakdown of the distinction between tragedy and comedy that made the grotesque the 'most genuine style of modern art'" (McElroy, 1989: 17). Lastly, The grotesque in modern literature deals with human's struggle with the self. In other words, the grotesque appears in the alienated, isolated, exaggerated, and dehumanized world. All things considered, the purpose of the grotesque in modern literature is to illustrate modern concerns such as gender, race, disability, and humiliation. According to Bakhtin, there can be two different perspectives of grotesque in the twentieth century. Bakhtin generally expresses:

The first line is the modernist form (Alfred Jarry), connected in various degrees with the Romantic tradition and evolved under the influence of existentialism. The second line is the realist grotesque (Thomas Mann, Bertold Brecht, Pablo Neruda, and others). It is related to the tradition of realism and folk culture and reflects at times the direct influence of carnival forms, as in the work of Neruda (46).

It is clear that both realistic and romantic approaches reveal the deterioration of the modernist grotesque. The realization of a human in a world that is full of meaningless and fake values of life supports the idea of existentialism. In this period, the tendency of humanity to concentrate on a dark pessimistic mentality. The previous structure of the grotesque is broken down and the devastating and tragic events like World War II constitute new different fictional works such as Kafka, Joyce Cary, and Faulkner. For example, Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis* (1915) which is his most famous novella gets its power from body images and identity confusion. It is the most perfect example of human alienation as grotesque. The main character, Gregor Samsa wakes up as an enormous insect one morning. The transformation of Samsa is grotesque because the physical and mental degradation of Gregor Samsa is both disturbing, monstrous, and comic. The plot of *Metamorphosis* demonstrates the isolation of humanity and it is full of comic and disgusting elements to make clear Gregor's position. In his article about Kafka's grotesque, Evans states: "Kafka, in other words, achieves a grotesque effect precisely by making Gregor seem pitiable, ugly, laughable, and sympathetic all at once" (2015: 2). As Kayser said that our customs can subvert into strange and disturbing things.

The contributions made by Kayser are more important as Bakhtin analyzes the concept of grotesque. Bakhtin focuses on grotesque realism and grotesque body in his *Rabelais and His World* (1984) which gives a historical and critical approach to the grotesque. For Bakhtin, there is a strong relationship between culture and nature. Bakhtin emphasizes laughter that is one of the most important symbolic figures to connect the environment and culture in the grotesque structure. It is possible to say that laughter is freedom of culture and history even human's spirit. Although there have been different perspectives on laughter, it depends on human view; mostly satanic or innocent so the relationship between the grotesque and laughter is based on the human point of view. Thus, laughter may acquire a characteristic structure in a character and position. Therefore; Bakhtin connects the body images with laughter by combining carnival culture. Platter says "This culture in Rabelais is characterized by "the material bodily principle, that is, images of the human body with its food, drink, defecation and sexual life". These images embody the principle of " grotesque

realism " the function of which is degradation..." (1993: 201-202). According to the perspective of the twentieth century, the grotesque takes its place in a life that is meaningless and empty. Based on modernist perspectives, both satire and laughter take place in a grotesque structure. For Kayser, "Laughter originates on the comic and caricatural fringe of the grotesque. Filled with bitterness, it takes on characteristics of the mocking, cynical, and ultimately satanic laughter while turning into grotesque" (187). Both the grotesque and comic are blended with human's tragic and comic life so it can be said that grotesque is an absurd figure in literature and art.

In addition, there is a comparison between Wolfgang Kayser and Mikhail Bakhtin to understand the nature of grotesque in the modern period. McElroy analyzes their definitions of grotesque in the *Fiction of the Modern Grotesque* (1989):

Kayser concludes that the grotesque is a game with the absurd, and that it conjures up the demonic to exorcise it, and such works depict an alien, estranged, inexplicable world in which comedy has a little essential function. For Bakhtin, the grotesque is the people's triumphant laughter dethroning the shibboleths of the 'official' world view and substituting in their place the carnival spirit of abundance and renewal, thus defeating fear (14).

These two significant theorists made contributions to the extension of the grotesque. Thus, in defining the grotesque might be enlarged its content with the efforts of Kayser and Bakhtin. The explanations generally show that the grotesque is the fusion of the alien and the human. It involves the blending of witches, ghosts, and demons with weird, morbid, and enigmatic circumstances. But it should not forget that the grotesque is not only related to monstrous things but also it is connected with the alien world and human beings. There have been unlimited definitions of the grotesque. Nonetheless, in order to understand the notion of grotesque, Kayser's studies on the grotesque make it best semantically. Firstly, Kayser says that "THE GROTESQUE IS THE ESTRANGED WORLD" (184) and then, he improves the concept of grotesque: "THE GROTESQUE IS A GAME WITH THE ABSURD" (14). Kayser creates a relationship between the estranged world and the Self with the grotesque. Thus, Kayser conveys the idea of the grotesque to a higher position beyond the fantasy world. Kayser's approach to the grotesque is an attempt to invoke the demonic side of the world. Furthermore, this point of view transforms the grotesque to the peak.

Based on historical revolutions of the Grotesque, Maria Haar (1983) categorizes the grotesque in her book *The Phenomenon of the Grotesque in Modern Southern Fiction*: the macabre grotesque, the repulsive and frightening characters and the comic character. First of all, the word ' macabre ' means 'unpleasant and strange because connected with death and frightening things (Oxford English Dictionary, 1884). The macabre grotesque is used for multiple purposes for the sake of entertainment, criticism of society, and transforming the religious ideas in the works of many more American writers. The relationship between macabre and grotesque is generally seen in the works of both Gothic and Southern Gothic writers such as Edgar Allan Poe, William Faulkner, Carson McCullers, and Flannery O'Connor. The macabre grotesque is mostly connected with theme, characters, and settings. In the realm of the grotesque, macabre connecting with death and decay correlates the frightful and horror monsters or human shapes. Significantly, the macabre character invokes the feeling of death in the mysterious events. For example; William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* (1930) constitutes the macabre characterization by harmonizing dark humor and physical distortions that support the theme of death. Moreover, Faulkner uses the macabre with

both parody and comic incidents. Haar gives an example of the macabre grotesque for the sake of entertainment: “A good example of a macabre-grotesque scene that is to all appearances written for entertainment is Faulkner's description of Red's funeral wake in *Sanctuary*” (1983: 50). Then, it is also conveyed religious messages for the reader despite the macabre grotesque is used for criticism. As a Southern Gothic Writer, Flannery O'Connor uses religious themes in her works such as *Wise Blood* (1952) and *The Violent Bear It Away* (1960), constituting macabre- grotesque. She underlines the relationship between the individual and God. By describing human distortion and corruption, O'Connor creates the macabre incidents in her works.

Based on Maria Haar's characterization, the repulsive and frightening characters are the basic characteristics of the grotesque characters. In most of the Southern writers' works, the characters are mostly terrifying and repulsive. Especially, the physical impairments of the characters in the works make them repulsive and frightening. For example, As a character, Antonapoulos in *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter* written by Carson McCullers (1940) is a good example of a repulsive character. Haar recognizes that "Antonapoulos is one of Carson McCullers's most repulsive characters. Unlike many grotesques of his kind, he seems at first too harmless to be menacing—he simply appears to be a very loathsome figure with certain comical traits. As the story proceeds, however, he, too, displays a frightening side" (91). For that reason, the frightening and repulsive appearances and behavior of characters combine and strengthen the grotesque.

Provided that the repulsive and frightening characters appear in the works, the reader confronts the feeling of fear and ludicrous simultaneously. Based on Haar's characterization, the comic grotesque improves its structure within the grotesque by enhancing horror, fear, and distortions. The most striking feature of the comic grotesque is to analysis of the contrast situations, forms, behavior, and appearances such as beautiful and ugly, normal and abnormal, real and fantasy, or sublime and simplicity. The contrasting situations of the characters invite the reader to think about them deeply. Therefore; it is essential to say that the structure of the comic grotesque certainly involves a particular critical point of view because the comic grotesque occurs in the distortions of characters or figures to criticize a particular features of the society. In short, the modes of the comic-grotesque signify the emotional sense of the reader.

In conclusion, the extension of the meaning of the grotesque has strikingly changed and improved itself within both art and literature. It should be said that the grotesque is an aesthetic form of artistic production. Based on its historical developments, the grotesque originates from the caving that describes the embodiment of humans and animals for architectural goals and develops as the ornamental figures, arabesques, and the grotesque. For centuries, Firstly, the grotesque is linked to the art in the works of many Renaissance painters for the sake of delight. Beyond the ornamental or decorative purposes, the grotesque transforms itself into the field of science of monsters fantastically in the Victorian age. After Montaigne's attention to literature, the grotesque started to be used in fictional works. The conception of the grotesque breaks the traditional views and the rules of nature. To the authors, the grotesque demonstrates cultural elements and particular ideologies of the period. In the Enlightenment age, the grotesque is a logical device to convey human rationality that reaches only the true way. As the reader sometimes sees the grotesque physical and mental deformation of the characters, on the other hand; the grotesque is seen in the dark and gloomy side of the Gothic novels. The inspiration of the Romantic Gothic writers emphasizes the more intuition and horrible fantastic imagination. In contrast to the Medieval age, the grotesque started to deal with demonic and obsessive creatures. Ultimately, From a modern

point of view, the meaning of the grotesque has two distinct features; fantastic and ironic which becomes the most perfect representation of the period. The Soul of the twentieth Century illustrates the decay of the spirit. The modern grotesque characterized the estrangement of the Self by satirizing and combining the imagination.

Overall, German thinker Wolfgang Kayser's *The Grottesque in Art and Literature* defines the nature of the grotesque and explains the historical developments of the grotesque. Kayser's examination of the grotesque focuses on the different modes of the grotesque. Structurally, the grotesque is a confrontation of opposite feelings such as normal and abnormal that awakes the repulsive and empathy in readers or spectators.

At this stage, To summarize, the grotesque “refers to a work in which abnormal or macabre characters or incidents are presented in a mix of comedy and pathos or horror. The incompatibility of this mix creates in the reader the kind of conflicted response that one makes to a "sick joke": on the one hand, funny; on the other, nauseating or horrifying” (Quinn, 2006: 187). Thus, the grotesque in literature makes a connection between the real, comedy, and distortions.

2.2.2. Southern Gothic Literature and Grotesque

In the beginning, Southern Gothic Literature finds its roots, techniques, and themes in Gothic writing. The origin of early Gothic fiction dates back to the 18th century with the work of Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) that is about exotic and supernatural things.

The Gothic is a literature of crossing borders, often forbidden borders, between consciousness and nightmare, known and unknown, civilization and savagery, the living and dead ... and the list could be extended almost forever. Gothic confronts taboos and universal fears, but it also provides a chart of the fears of a particular culture, at a particular time (Crow, 2020: 1).

In this sense, Crow explains that Gothic is a fiction of mystery, fear, anxiety, death, and terror with supernatural elements and obsessed characters of particular culture. Thereby, it is clear that the origin of Southern Gothic is based on Gothic writing. It is influenced by Gothic writing. We can say that Southern Gothic is a sub-genre of Gothic writing. In the 19th century, the Gothic tradition was seen in some remarkable authors' writings such as Edgar Allen Poe, Bram Stoker, and Sheridan Le Fanu's works. Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* (1798) parodies the Gothic (Mikics, 2007: 137). American Gothic writing became popular with the works of Edgar Allen Poe and Washington Irving. Although Southern Gothic appeared in the nineteenth century, it became a more dominant genre in the twentieth century.

As the name suggests Southern Gothic is related to the South itself. In a particular way, Gothic writing deals with the horror, mystery, violence, madness, and dark side of life. Even though Southern Gothic is influenced by Gothic elements, Southern Gothic is more different than Gothic literature in terms of plots, characters, and settings. According to Maria Haar: “There are also essential differences between the Gothic and the grotesque protagonist. The former is a dynamic non-conformist, and the latter is a puppet, a misfit, an outcast and a victim. The Gothic hero scorns, the grotesque protagonist is scorned” (1983: 34). As a literary style, Southern Gothic deals with almost all social issues. The most important issues in Southern Gothic are generally ethnicity, racism, violence, discrimination, social breakdown, and psychological and physical oppression. Unlike Gothic writing, Southern Gothic does not focus on only supernatural or horror things to explain the plot, but also there is dark humor in the stories. Because the main purpose of

this genre is to draw attention to the society. In this approach, John Babujee explains the Southern Gothic's main characteristics with these words:

Since the setting is the American South, it tries to explore the social conflicts and issues related to that place. Racial conflict is apparently one of the most unavoidable themes. It exposes the problems of the society through complex characters. Moreover, it unveils the fragile social order following the war which was highly detrimental to all the institutions of the society. Instead of the Gothic castles, Southern Gothic stories present the decay of the southern plantations in the Post Civil War period (Babujee, 2021: 4963).

Based on Babujee's words, within the context of American history, Southern Gothic reveals the climate, culture, and social approaches of the South. The South signifies the particular region. That's why, the Southern Gothic' setting, themes, and characters are significant. While there are castles and dark and horror places in Gothic writing settings, Southern Gothic is the exact opposite side. To make Southern Gothic clear, it is essential to analyze American history. Because Southern Gothic is the product of the region as cultural and historical. It points to social disorders, fragmentation, and the past.

In retrospect, the South experienced The American Civil War (1861-1865). The American Civil War was a war between the United States of America and the Confederate States of America. It lasted for four years and more than 620.000 soldiers died in battles (Parish, 1975: 10). Historically, The North and The South have a certain segregation as socially, economically, and politically as if they were two different countries before the war. One of the main reasons for the Civil War is substantial slavery which is the source of The southerner's plantation. The agriculture of the South was based on slaves so the ideologies of the North and South conflicted. The North wanted to change the South's lifestyles and abolishment of slavery in the South. In this sense, thousands of people died more than millions were wounded and the rest of the people were destructed psychologically, socially, economically, and politically. In this sense, The South began reconstruction after the Civil War and Southern Gothic appears in works as a mirror of the period. The authors reflected or highlighted the South history to present the social conflicts.

The relationship between the Civil War and Southern Gothic is a determinant factor of the settings, themes, and characters of stories. Both Street and Crow underline the characteristics of Southern fiction: "In the South, ghosts and men in white sheets are real, as are shackles and clanking chains, and the Southern Gothic is a genre that arises from the area's often violent and traumatic history" (2016: 2). It can be said that Southern fiction is a view of past to the present.

In a larger sense, Southern Gothic examines gender, slavery, ethnicity, sexism, violence, discrimination, and religious and social corruption. Human otherness is another problematic theme in terms of race and gender in Southern fiction because African American characters are also depicted as other in the Southern Gothic. In addition, this genre illustrates psychological and physical disorders in the South. In conjunction with themes, the most significant feature of Southern Gothic is grotesque. The grotesque in Southern fiction may be found in the tone, plot, setting, and character of Southern writers so the grotesque is an aesthetic style of Southern writers while conveying both the past and present. Grotesque appears in characters, settings, and themes of Southern Gothic literature. Kayser in his *The Grotesque in Art and Literature* underlines the significance of the grotesque to make the unity of the novel:

The grotesque perspective gives the novel its unity and, at the same time, determines the nature of its content. Structurally, the scenes follow each other in such quick succession that little room is left for summarizing reports or elaborate descriptions. And almost all the scenes are inherently grotesque. The apparently meaningful things are shown to have no meaning, and familiar objects begin to look strange. The author intends to shake the reader's confidence in his worldview by depriving him of the safeguards provided by tradition and society (1963: 61).

Based on Kayser's explanations, it is probably say that Southern authors can expose deeper social meanings in their works thanks to the grotesque. Southern authors enrich their scenes by adding a little exaggeration to simple settings or plots that people see and know all the time by employing grotesque to make unity and cohesion of their works. Most of the stories and novels in the Southern Gothic are written by some significant writers. The Southern Gothic writers were inspired by Gothic writings' styles but they generally focused on American South's culture and history. William Faulkner, Flannery O'Connor, Tennessee Williams, Truman Capote, Harper Lee, and Carson McCullers are representative writers of Southern Gothic. Particularly, many more Southern writers emphasize the sense of the past in the present. These writers used the elements of Gothic fiction but they wrote as regional. These writers deal with the decay of the South and the families that lost their roots over time.

Moreover, Southern Gothic writers choose grotesque characters in their works. Though the selection of the character sometimes signifies the transformation process in the South, it generally illustrates suffering, unforgettable grief, alienation, and decaying of society. In using the grotesque, it is clear that authors generally use characters with freaks, mental illnesses, obsessed, isolated and crippled. The influence of war on humankind is realized in the works of Southern authors as characters. It can be thought that physically and psychologically impaired characters have great significance by illustrating the long tradition of the South. The selection of crippled, wounded, or obsessed characters also illustrates the type of Southern Gothic in terms of grotesque.

As a Southern Gothic Writer, William Faulkner (1897-1962)'s short stories and many other significant works reflect the psychological portraits of the characters and include Gothic elements such as *As I Lay Dying* (1930), *Sanctuary* (1931), *Light in August* (1932), and *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936). For instance, "A Rose For Emily" (1930) by William Faulkner, who is representative of Southern Gothic, can be accepted as a great example of Southern Gothic writings in literature. The protagonist Emily Grierson is a necrophiliac, obsessed, and isolated character in the story. She has mental problems and is disturbed psychologically. In this story, the conflict between the Old South and the New South is strikingly presented. Grierson is the only person who resists the change with her old house and old laws in the South. The representation of the town and characters as grotesque makes more powerful the story. Her mental defect and behavior make her a grotesque character in Southern Gothic.

According to Spiegel, the grotesque in Southern fiction not only refers particular quality of a story and mode of expression but also refers a type of character (1972: 428). To be more explicit, Southern Gothic aims to demonstrate the moral corruption of society with the abnormal characters. The concept of grotesque in using abnormal characters refers to aspects of human beings.

The grotesque always appears in Southern Fiction as either a physically or mentally deformed figure. If he appears as one of the physically deformed, he may be a cripple, a dwarf, a deaf-mute, a blind man, or an androgynous adolescent. But

whether he appears as a physical cripple or a mental cripple, he succeeds as a literary creation because his deformity never exceeds his humanity; that is, if we find him meaningful, his deformity will not separate him from us (Spiegel, 1972: 428-429).

Spiegel expresses that deformities can be seen in Southern Fiction but it is not more important than humanity. It is not true to separate them because of their disabilities. Thus, though a character with deformity sometimes signifies grief in *The Old South*, he or she sometimes represents the evil side of human beings. Correspondingly:

In addition to the defeated history, the tradition of Christian culture has also contributed a lot to the grotesque in Southern Gothic. A large number of early immigrants were Puritans and loyal followers of Calvinism, which had a strong influence on the United States. Calvinism emphasized the views of "original sin" and "human nature is evil", and considered that people could not improve themselves. It did not believe in change and progress of the society and holds a skeptical, boycotting and opposing attitude towards all kinds of new ideas. It was precisely because of the influence of the theory of original sin that southern writers generally believed that people could not overcome some fundamental problems, especially the tendency of "evil" in human nature (Hu and Zhong, 2022: 40).

Hu and Zhong claim that the human soul also has demonic sides since the original sin. Whatever they do, they cannot change and improve themselves against the evil side. Some significant Southern writers focus on the evil and demonic side of human nature to illustrate original sin. Namely, As a regional and modernist writer, Flannery O'Connor (1925-1964) creates and forms a new kind of grotesque character in order to illustrate the nature of the human side in her short story "The Lame Shall Enter First" (1962). The main character Rufus Johnson who has a high intelligence is disabled. Sheppard wants to make Rufus good. But he will get disappointed about Rufus. Because Rufus is incapable of being good. There is a tendency towards evil or demonic things inside of Rufus. Because of this reason, Sheppard will not reach his goal in the end. It can be understood that O'Connor emphasizes his defects as physical and she illustrates the dark side of Rufus nature as human by combining spirituality and deformation.

It is essential to keep in mind that Southern authors illustrate human deterioration. On one hand, the grotesque characters in Southern Gothic fiction demonstrate the collapsed morality and values of the South. On the other hand; the grotesque characters sometimes demonstrate only the evil side of humans because both evil and good things must be inside of human nature. Because human passions and desires lead to the evil. Being abnormal, crippled, disabled, or physically impaired does not change the truth. Some significant writers such as O'Connor and McCullers use crippled, deformed, and alienated characters in their works in order to demonstrate the truth of human nature as evil or good.

Based on the grotesque features in Southern Gothic fiction, it can be thought that characters are common with their behaviors aside from deformities. Especially, psychological traumas and diseases, ethnic conflicts, and economic collapse appear in each of the characters after the war. Each character has a tragic and symbolic significance in the fiction so the reader feels more closer to the grotesque characters. Also, Southern Gothic characters deal with the problem of racism and slavery as in the work of John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* (1937). Crow expresses "The American South, with its legacy of profound social and economic problems, became a major focus and source of American literature in the twentieth century, and the principal region of American

Gothic” (Crow, 2009: 124). In this spirit, Southern writers used plantations, farms, and swamps that are used as fertile grounds in order to enrich grotesque features.

Grotesque which is the most significant feature of Southern fiction constitutes a typology of Southern fiction. The twentieth-century authors such as O'Connor, McCullers, Williams, and Capote brought a new perception in Southern Gothic fiction by questioning and criticizing the older values and beliefs with the new modern world's values. Based on the premise explanations about the grotesque, the modern structure of the grotesque emerges from the fantastic imagination and ironic thought of the estranged world. In addition, As structural, the grotesque appears in the works of Southern Gothic writers such as Flannery O'Connor's *Wise Blood*, Truman Capote's *Other Voices, Other Rooms*, Carson McCullers's *The Ballad of Sad Cafe*, and *Reflections in a Golden Eye*.

The Gothic hero is demonic, horrifying, and offensive. On the other hand; the type of character in Southern Gothic represents “a passive hero, a victim, a scapegoat” (Spiegel, 1972: 433). Spiegel makes a distinction between the Gothic and Southern Gothic characterization. For instance; the protagonist, John Singer in *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (1940), written by Carson McCullers and Lennie in *Of Mice and Men* supports the typology of grotesque character. Also In his article Spiegel says that “the Southern grotesque signifies the end of the old order, on the other hand, it stands for “the physical and mental distortions shaped by the new pressures of industrialism and the modern city” (1972: 431). For instance; Jake Blount in *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* reflects the idea of social equality and rights in the book. The grotesque nature of these characters demonstrates physical and psychological deformities in a changing world rapidly. As grotesque characters who resist the transformation, they became part of Southern Gothic fiction so there are so many grotesque characters in Southern Gothic fiction. More importantly, the representations of grotesque characters in Southern fiction present old values and beliefs of society. On the other hand; Spiegel notes that: “Mick Kelly, the young girl in *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*, who demonstrates the extent of his exclusion and victimization in the very distortions of his physical or mental make-up” (429). She can be regarded as a type of grotesque character as a victim of the modern world.

From the very beginning, Southern Gothic literature is a sub-genre dealing with several important issues. Many of these several issues take place in the works of Southern Gothic literature. Lloyd says that “Southern culture is often interested in how the contemporary world is constituted and textured by the past, substantiated and disturbed by its presence” (2016: 81). Lloyd summarizes the point of view the Southern Gothic literature. In this context, as a literary genre, the Southern Gothic demonstrating the local color of the particular region became like a bridge between the past and present eventually. It is essential to understand how historical traumas and cultural traditions affect the American South. For that reason, the American South became a source of Southern Gothic literature. It is also necessary to point out that this fiction's desire for the past tends to the grotesque.

Due to several reasons, the relationship between the Southern Gothic Literature and the grotesque is very important. With the structure of the grotesque, Southern writers enrich the situations and incidents in the works by harmonizing cultural and historical perspectives. There is a mixture of grotesque features as characters, settings, and plots in Southern Gothic literature. The identity problem of Southern writers creates regional works that gain power with the grotesque. The general thought and observation of Southern Gothic works illustrate that the grotesque is an

aesthetic and practicable figure to reach their goals. Unlike the grotesque in Gothic writing, the grotesque in Southern fiction employs the tension in the South.

It is essential to express that the characterization of Wolfgang Kayser (physical, intellectual, and behavioral) in his book provides an easiness in order to understand Southern writers' ideologies and the identification of the characters. When many more works of the Southern writers are considered, the physical and mental deformation of the characters will be clarified based on Kayser's typology of the character.

As a result, the grotesque representations of the American South occur in Southern Gothic literature as behavioral, appearance, and mental distortions. The macabre, repulsive, and distorted characters find themselves within the grotesque characteristics. The American South's body images or disabled bodies are used to evoke the reader's attention so the exaggerated description of the characters in the stories presents a powerful grotesque structure. Many notable writers used the bodily grotesque in order to illustrate the clash between the Old South and the North and reconstruct the traditional established beliefs and values. All seem to point out that the grotesque representations in Southern Gothic literature refer to gender, racism, disability, and an estranged world. As time progressed, the grotesque became a perfect figure in the expression of the Southern Gothic Writers. In any case, the mode of the Southern grotesque reached its peak point thanks to the most remarkable writers of the twentieth century such as William Faulkner, Carson McCullers, Flannery O'Connor, Truman Capote, and others.

3. DISABILITY AND GROTESQUE IN *OF MICE AND MEN*

John Steinbeck's novella *Of Mice and Men* (1937) will be examined in two parts: Disability in *Of Mice and Men* and Grotesque elements in *Of Mice and Men*.

3.1. John Steinbeck's Life, Works and Literary Career

John Steinbeck who was born in Salinas, California, in 1902 is one of the most significant twentieth century writers of America. He is beloved and still read from past to the present. John Steinbeck's influence on literature is still impressive. John Steinbeck became a successful writer in American literature with his unique literary style and works. It should be noted that Steinbeck's early life made many significant contributions to his literary career. The valley of Salinas which is rich and fertile lands and about 25 miles from the Pacific Coast became mostly inspiration while he sets up his settings for his works. Steinbeck's love affair with the valley of Salinas and the Coast reflected to the most of his works as positive. As a young boy Steinbeck spent his time with the migrants, workers and small rural valley 's people. He worked on local farms as a worker and had a chance to know different people's life. Thanks to his working experiences Steinbeck saw the real and dark side of life and human. At the same time his critical thinking and perception toward life changed largely. Thus, when he was only fourteen, his passion for writing started to show itself. To improve his profession on writing, John Steinbeck entered into Stanford University with his family's attempts in 1919. Later he left without a degree but he was always interested in English Literature. Thus, he especially attended writing courses that improved her passion for writing. Following the years he focused on writing in New York and eventually returned to California. At that time it is too difficult to publish what he wrote. His literary career started with the publication of *Cup of Gold* (1929) even though it does not make sound. On the other hand; John Steinbeck worked on as a carpenter, factory laborer, salesman, caretaker and reporter to survive his life. *Tortilla Flat* (1935) is the first successful work which is about beauty of simple things and some friendships after the World War.

Broadly, John Steinbeck writes most of his works in 1930s; *The Pastures of Heaven* (1932), *To a Good Unknown* (1933), *Tortilla Flat* (1935), *In Dubious Battle* (1936), *Of Mice and Men* (1937), *The Long Valley* (1938), *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939). It is possible to say that there are many successful literary pieces which give popularity and fame to John Steinbeck. Especially, John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* (1937), which is one of the most well-known books, is about decline of American dream, loneliness and tragedy of humans. In the meantime, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) is also an another successful piece in his creative writings which is study of migrant workers, reflection of poverty and the darkest days in California after great depression. This successful work was awarded Pulitzer Prize in 1940. In this sense *East of Eden* (1952) and *Cannery Row* (1945) are one of his major works.

As a literary talent, John Steinbeck's major themes are related with history, politics and social issues. As a social writer Steinbeck dealt with the social problems such as racism, ethnicity, the decline of American Society, misery and the environment. Since he has experienced many various jobs, John Steinbeck's consciousness of environment improved and reflected in his works. Steinbeck talks about realistic ways of society and survival of American society. It is essential to underline realistic way of John Steinbeck. Therefore, John Steinbeck expresses that "Things are as they are because they must be". Anyway, everything must be seen as it is. John Steinbeck's style is

may be expressed in many ways but it is important to emphasize that his style has been impressive, exciting and interesting with his imaginative skills. Although Steinbeck has a very broad and comprehensive content in his works, he uses simple, striking and realistic language. Steinbeck draws attention to the unchanging and inevitable results of Great depression on lower class. In his early youth, John Steinbeck, who improved empathy towards factory labourer and migrants, portrays the positions of migrants and factory labourer. The migrants and factory labourer were still seen as defective, miserable, corrupt, thieves and devoid of any feelings. Experiencing the Great Depression, which is “worldwide economic downturn that began in 1929 and lasted until about 1939. It was the longest and most severe depression ever experienced by the industrialized Western world” (Romer, 2003: 1). Steinbeck reflected ordinary people and their struggles in depression. Generally Steinbeck focused on social injustices, poverty, modernization, gender roles, prejudice and racism in his works.

As great writer of American literature, Steinbeck’s literary style is mostly influenced with modernization and realism and naturalism. According to Benson :

Steinbeck was born and reared a romantic, wrote his first novels as a romantic, and maintained certain poetic-religious-mythic schemes of thought and feeling throughout his lifetime. At the same time, he adopted certain attitudes and approaches, as expressed in his fiction, which brought him closer to a scientific perspective than any other important modern American writer (1977: 252).

At this point, it can be said that Steinbeck heavily used both illusions and dualism to support his main theme in his works. Both realistic and romantic dualism are scientific perspective of Steinbeck. Benson also explains Steinbeck’s literary language and technique with: “Seeing and not-seeing, reality and self-delusion, these are the materials that Steinbeck plays with, sometimes seriously, sometimes humorously” (1977: 257). At the height of power, Steinbeck uses dilemmas to reveal his hardest characters in the stories. Actually, he uses many different characterizations in all his books. Oliver claims about Steinbeck’s characterization: “John Steinbeck develops his theme by taking the reader into the recesses of the mind. He allows the reader to see the existence of good or evil and its development as he develops the characters” (1969: 18-19). Thus, Steinbeck portrays real characters and his characters can be analyzed in terms of social expectations.

Notwithstanding the fact that Steinbeck is heavily influenced by Great Depression, Modernism and Realism, he reached the success by providing the balance. As a romantic, realistic and modernist writer most of his characters are shaped by earthy men and women’s struggle in life. In certain circles, it is possible to say that Steinbeck is like a mirror of the time. His writing styles are full of symbols. The titles used by Steinbeck in his works are mostly symbolic and have deep meaning to convey and support his stories’ themes. For instance; John Steinbeck’s *Of Mice and Men*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Cup of Gold* and other significant works are symbolic as title.

As a literary talent, as it is known John Steinbeck’s actions and language are simple. On the other hand; Steinbeck always uses ‘doc’ figure in his works. This figure is observer of life in the stories and it is like a wise man. It is referred also non-theological thinking of reality. Also, the non-theological view can be found in Steinbeck’s fictions. At this point, Steinbeck’s character selection is more significant such as migrants, workers, cripples and farmers. According to Carpenter:

He has employed a variety of techniques to describe an assortment of characters; pirates, farmers, storekeepers, paisanos, Communists, half-wits, children, and migrants have appeared

successively in romantic, realistic, mystical, mock-heroic, dramatic, psychological, and sociological novels. His readers have come to expect the unexpected; his critics have taken refuge in enthusiasm or despair (1941: 454).

Carpenter focuses on the variety of his characters. He uses so many different character types to describe the positions of the characters. He presents the unexpected to the readers. Ultimately, it can be said that Steinbeck's novels are more different than others as literary technique. In the context of this thesis, disability is another concern of John Steinbeck. As we know that people are said what to do and how to behave in the societies for ages. In the light of disability studies, Steinbeck draws attention to the disability concept. For instance; *Of Mice and Men* is a perfect novel. His characters in *Of Mice and Men* illustrate the behaviour of society towards disabled person. There are barriers and discrimination in the society. While Steinbeck illustrates the social attitudes and established assumptions in the societies, he also creates complex and strong characterization in his work. The lack of characters made importance in the story. Consequently, John Steinbeck who died in 1969 became a legend in literature and was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1962.

3.2. Disability in *Of Mice and Men*

Steinbeck uses many different characters in *Of Mice and Men* published in 1937. Steinbeck generally uses a realistic and descriptive tone for the readers throughout the novel. Each character symbolizes important issues and themes such as race, isolation, and discrimination. Garland-Thomson states "disability is a representation, a cultural interpretation of physical transformation or configuration, and a comparison of bodies that structures social relations and institutions" (1997: 6). Thomson emphasizes how disability constitutes race, gender, and sexuality in the bodies. In parallel with this explanation, there are three physically disabled characters in the novel but disability emerges in all the characters differently throughout the novel because each symbolizes different social norms. The portrayal of disability is visible in each of character. First of all, the beginning of the story focuses on the description of the setting. The novel passes in California around the Salinas River. As a place, the preference of the narrator is not surprising but also it is conventional because Steinbeck uses Salinas where he was born, and demonstrates his loyalty to the hometown. The novel begins with the descriptions of the characters.

They had walked in single file down the path, and even in the open one stayed behind the other. Both were dressed in denim trousers and in denim coats with brass buttons. Both wore black, shapeless hats and both carried tight blanket rolls slung over their shoulders. The first man was small and quick, dark of face, with restless eyes and sharp, strong features. Every part of him was defined: small, strong hands, slender arms, a thin and bony nose. Behind him walked his opposite, a huge man, shapeless of face, with large, pale eyes, with wide, sloping shoulders; and he walked heavily, dragging his feet a little, the way a bear drags his paws. His arms did not swing at his sides, but hung loosely (Steinbeck, 1937: 3).

These depictions of the characters in this scene are significant in terms of disability. The representations of the characters are clear and striking. While the narrator introduces the characters, the distinction between George and Lennie appears in the story because as they were walking, one stayed behind the other. It can be concluded that the first one can be a guide and the second one has to follow the first. Also, it can be thought that the main characters are not equal and the same from the perspective of the narrator. Then, the narrator draws attention to the physical features of the

main characters. There are two dominant characters in the novel. According to the novel, the first man is George Milton and the other man is Lennie Small. Although George is introduced as normal, smart, small, and good-looking, Lennie is described as an ugly-faced, huge creature and an abnormal person. Disabled persons are considered monsters in the Western cultures and “the notion of monster is necessarily related to that of disability” (Stiker, 1999: 72). Obviously, Lennie is related to a monster in a dominant culture. Thus, the description of Lennie is not introduced as a normal human but also demonstrated as a monster. Furthermore, Lennie’s surname can also be considered as an indicator. Normally, the term ‘small’ is used for little or minor things but Lennie’s physical appearance is introduced as a huge man. Thus, that indicates Lennie’s disability in the story in terms of cognitive.

Lennie Small is a central character in the work. The story is based on Lennie’s interactions with other characters in the story. The narrator points out Lennie’s disability with these dialogues among the characters: “I forgot, Lennie said softly. I tried not to forget” (Steinbeck, 1937: 6). Lennie is presented throughout the novel as being more forgetful and dependent like a child. On the other hand, the role of George is presented as a guard and caregiver. In this scene, it is seen that Lennie struggles with a mental disability. His mental disability limits his life and he has to live with George and his life rules. Like a child, Lennie always insists on George in order to say over. Steinbeck describes George as a smart and curious person. Mostly, George knows how to behave and manage situations, especially Lennie. George mostly thinks about Lennie as a miserable boy and calls him a ‘crazy bastard and crazy fool’. Those addressing Lennie refer that George signifies the ‘normal’ as Lennie signifies ‘abnormal’. He can not survive without alone so Steinbeck tells us a story of two different men who abide faithfully each other. Steinbeck’s *Of Mice and Men* is written in the hard times of America when disabled persons were considered burdens in society. Thus, Steinbeck employs segregation and avoidance of Lennie in the novel. Lennie is not allowed to speak and behave freely because he fails to make connection the true and false. He does not have understanding of wrongdoings. Otherwise, he will attract the attention of society because of his cognitive disability. Thomson also says “Both segregation and elimination are social and political practices based in part on the interpretation of physical disability as not only anomalous but dangerous” (36). Lennie becomes a threatening and dangerous character as well as his mental disability. In this context, power is a dangerous weapon when it is uncontrolled. Steinbeck shows Lennie’s power like a monster. Lennie does not recognize his power physically. The unrestrained power of Lennie generally gets him into trouble. Like an innocent child, Lennie is interested in soft things like a mouse, rabbits, dresses, and hair that will be the reason for his death. It is seen that Lennie carries a mouse in his pocket in the following lines: “Lennie reluctantly reached into his pocket. His voice broke a little. “I don’t know why I can’t keep it. It ain’t nobody’s mouse. I didn’t steal it. I found it lyin’ right beside the road” (10). Lennie’s unrestrained power causes the death and troubles. As Lennie tries to love it, he breaks the mouse’s neck with his huge hands. It is understood that Lennie has the instinct to kill without realizing it. As migrant workers, they were working on a ranch in Weed in the North but they had to escape because of Lennie’s behavior. The girl whose dress is loved by Lennie accuses him of harassment. Society does not care about Lennie’s disability and when he makes a mistake or commits a crime, society having prejudices about disabled persons wants to kill or harm Lennie. They don’t want to interrogate and see the truth and underlying reason. As being a disabled person for Lennie in the novel makes his life more difficult. “Steinbeck’s work emanates from an era when intellectually disabled individuals were

primarily regarded as burdens on society and were often institutionalized” (Jensen-Moulton, 2012: 130). Like Jensen-Moulton mentioned, disabled persons assumes the role of burden in the society and live under the hierarchical world so Steinbeck emphasizes the position of disabled persons. From beginning to the end, we recognize that George tries to hide Lennie’s disability and protect him from the society. In this context, Reddy makes a clear distinction between impairment and disability. “First, impairment and disability are two distinct constructs; impairment is individual, private, and a personal tragedy, while disability is structural, social, and externally imposed. Second, disability as a social creation distinguished disability from individual deficit” (Reddy, 2011: 292). It is absolutely true that Lennie’s cognitive disability is his personal tragedy that makes his life so hard. Reddy emphasizes the social constructions with the concept of Disability. Within the historical context, disability studies demonstrate that there can be a solution for the physical or mental disability as medical but it is not possible to live in a society which has prejudices, barriers and status so Lennie’s life turns into a tragedy.

Like Lennie, disabled persons are accepted as burdens so Lennie demonstrates segregation, isolation, and exclusion. In connection with these subjects, Lennie speaks with George in a weird behavior in this quotation: “Lennie crawled slowly and cautiously around the fire until he was close to George. He sat back on his heels” (13). Undoubtedly, Lennie is a pathetic figure and the only solution of Lennie is to behave like a dog and accept George as his owner in order to live this life. This tragic behavior illustrates the feeling of isolation and loneliness in Lennie in terms of psych-social. Lennie who is ostracized by society establishes an emotional relation with George. Similarly, Disability studies employ disabled people’s souls as emotional and social constructions that are restricted by society. “The disability rights activists in North America and Europe began to oppose considerations that placed the body at the centre of explanation” (Reddy, 2011: 291). These activists start to question the sense of the body that takes precedence over the sense of self. Society has ignored Lennie’s identity but he has feelings beyond the body. We should accept the presence of disabled persons as they are.

The next character that will be examined in the light of disability studies is Candy. In the same vein, Candy is a ranch hand and physically disabled person in the novel. The portrayal of Candy in the novel is important in terms of Disability Studies. The narrator describes him in this quotation:

The door opened and a tall, stoop shouldered old man came in. He was dressed in blue jeans and he carried a big push broom in his left hand. He pointed with right arm, and out of the sleeve came a round stick like wrist, but no hand (19).

It is understood that Candy represents a physically disabled person. He is an old and tall man. He loses his right hand on the farm and becomes a useless person so he continues as an old swamper in the bunkhouse. Gnanasekaran (2017) in his article expresses that Candy: “His function in the novel is to show the reader what happens to an old man beset by physical disability, loneliness, and rejection. He is a pathetic figure” (146). As Gnanasekaran said Candy demonstrated to the reader the discrimination and isolation of old disabled people. Steinbeck underlines the pressure of biased society on disabled persons. Steinbeck depicts Candy from the point of view of the bunkhouse and the ranch. Candy’s dog also has a significant role in the story. But Carlson who is a bulky man in the ranch becomes obsessed with Candy’s old and miserable dog. Candy focuses on how his dog had been sufficient once upon a time but when it became an

old and useless dog, this society which is full of values of capitalism does not have a place for the crippled and old dog.

Candy looked a long time at Slim to try to find some reversal. And Slim gave him none. At last Candy said softly and hopelessly, "Awright--take 'im." He did not look down at the dog at all. He lay back on his bunk and crossed his arms behind his head and stared at the ceiling. From his pocket Carlson took a little leather thong. He stooped over and tied it around the old dog's neck. All the men except Candy watched him (48).

The scene of an old dog's death tells more things about Candy who lost control of his life. As it concludes from the above lines, Candy who is a physically disabled person suffers from the bad behaviour of people on the ranch. Based on those lines, the other workers even do not respect Candy's feelings and decisions anymore because of the reason that he is an old and useless disabled person. The dog is an iconic figure in this context. Like Lennie and George, the only fellowship of Candy is that dog. As normal humans need, he needs an emotional relationship. After Carlson shoots his dog, Candy is pulled into the loneliness. It can be inferred from those lines if you are an old and disabled person, you have no place in the social environment. You lose your identity as Candy lost his own free life. In addition to all these expressions Candy expresses his life with those lines:

They'll can me purty soon. Jus' as soon as I can't swamp out no bunk houses they'll put me on the county. Maybe if I give you guys my money, you'll let me hoe in the garden even after I ain't no good at it. An' I'll wash dishes an' little chicken stuff like that. But I'll be on our own place, an' I'll be let to work on our own place." He said miserably, "You seen what they done to my dog tonight? They says he wasn't no good to himself nor nobody else. When they can me here I wisht somebody'd shoot me. But they won't do nothing like that. I won't have no place to go, an' I can't get no more jobs. I'll have thirty dollars more comin', time you guys is ready to quit (61-62) .

Furthermore, Candy's situation is obviously clear to the readers. Candy expresses his fear about his future when he becomes useless and older with the passing years. He is a miserable man. In order to be part of a good fellowship, Candy wants to join the dream of George and Lennie that they will have their small place. For this reason, Candy wants to escape from this cruel world where people treat him like garbage and exist in a place where he would be seen as a normal person. Thus, Candy is ready to give him all the money for a world where his disability and agedness will not be a problem. It is also essential to accept that being an old disabled person like Candy is a hard situation because Candy struggles with the diseased point of view of society. Again, it is seen that disability is not related to the body but is also connected with social barriers and traditional rules of a biased society. In this spirit, John Steinbeck uses Candy to constitute sympathy and empathy for the disabled persons in the novel. On the other hand, the tragic condition of both Candy and his dog will be a pre-experience about Lennie's position in the oncoming process because these tragic events provide a basis for how Lennie who has a cognitive disability will behave under the barriers of the patriarchal and segregationist society.

Based on Disability Studies, Davis asserts that "An impairment involves a loss or diminution of sight, hearing, mobility, mental ability, and so on. But an impairment only becomes a disability when the ambient society creates environments with barriers-affective, sensory, cognitive, or architectural" (1999: 506-507). For this reason, it is possible to say that there is a

strong relationship between discrimination and race. It is not only connected with impairment of body but also it is oppression and domination of body because society creates social barriers according to their social status, genders and disabilities. The term 'other' is used for negro and those black people are classified and discriminated against in many different cultures because of their skin color. In this spirit, another important character that will be examined in the light of Disability Studies is Crooks. Like Candy, Crooks suffers from his physical disability. The difference between Candy and Crooks is that Crooks has experienced both racial discrimination and physical disability. Based on the speeches among the characters in the bunkhouse, Candy gives clues about Crooks' life to the readers in the following quotation :

Where the hell's them new men?' An' he give the stable buck hell, too. George patted a wrinkle out of his bed, and sat ' down. "Give the stable buck hell?" he asked. Sure. Ya see the stable buck's a nigger. Nigger, huh? (20-21) .

This is the first time that Crooks is introduced to the readers. As explained, Crooks is a stable boy and the only black human on the ranch. Due to the fact that he takes care of the horses, a horse kicked him and became a hump person. Based on these lines, the name of nigger is not given like the other characters at first glance. Therefore; the physical disability of these characters is not amusing and interesting when the position of the niggers is thought so far. Even if Crooks does not make a mistake, his boss always gets angry with him because of Crooks' deformity and skin. On the other hand, the physical disability of Crooks 'hump' can be considered an ironic symbol of the discrimination that society imposed on him and his ancestors from the past to the present. It is obvious that Crooks illustrates racial discrimination.

About Disability Studies, it is possible to say that there is a strong relationship between discrimination and race. The term 'others' is used for negro and those black people are classified and discriminated against in many different cultures because of their skin color. In this spirit, another important character that will be examined in the light of Disability Studies is Crooks. Like Candy, Crooks suffers from his physical disability. The difference between Candy and Crooks is that Crooks has experienced both racial discrimination and physical disability. Based on the speeches among the characters in the bunkhouse, Candy gives clues about Crooks' life to the readers in the following quotation: "CROOKS, the Negro stable buck, had his bunk in the harness room; a little shed that leaned off the wall of the barn" (67). It is understood that Crooks does not live with other white ranch hands in the bunkhouse because of his race. Being the only black person living in another place results in loneliness and the marginalization of Crooks in society. In this context, Crooks' race represents his disability based on disability studies as well as his physical disability. In connection with this marginalization, Gnanasekaran says that "Crooks is lonely because society shuns a cripple and a negro, counting for nothing the intelligence that lies beneath his skin and his deformity" (2017: 148). Being an intelligent is not important if you are negro. All things considered, Lennie's interaction with the Crooks is important to evaluate the marginalization of two disabled persons on the ranch.

Well, I got a right to have a light. You go on get outta my room. I ain't wanted in the bunk house, and you ain't wanted in my room. Why ain't you wanted? Lennie asked. Cause I'm black. They play cards in there, but I can't play because I'm black. They say I stink. Well, I tell you, you all of you stink to me (68-69) .

In a sociocultural model of disability studies, Steinbeck employs the social barriers one more time. The interaction of Lennie with Crooks emphasizes that the marginalization of Lennie and

Crooks combines in common grounds. Based on some significant theorists' views about disability, Titchkosky expresses: "Disability is still viewed as an unexpected, undesired, asocial, apolitical, bodily condition" (2000: 213). Titchkosky focused on how disabled people are accepted as a problem by the physical and social environment. This point of view of Titchkosky shows that social and political approaches affect their lives. Both Crooks and Lennie are seen as stigmatized because of their defects. As an intellectually disabled person, Lennie suffers from both his physical appearance and intellectual disability, Crooks is physically disabled and nigger and is isolated from the others. Those disorders cause the estrangement of Lennie and Crooks from the others. At this point, Lennie attempts to communicate with Crooks to make friends without having any bad thoughts but Crooks who has lived alone for many years reacts to him at first. Then, when he recognizes that Lennie is an innocent man and has no social rules and prejudices about him, he can not resist this emotional need as a human. Lennie does not understand the barriers and divisions in society and he asks why he is not wanted. In this spirit, the oppression of black people is seen with the answer of Crooks. It does not matter if he is an intelligent or hardworking stableman so there is discrimination towards black people because of their race and skin color. Gnanasekaran summarizes Crooks' position in the Disability Studies : "Crooks is an example of Steinbeck's compassion, and a further illustration of the way in which loneliness can corrupt and destroy a man. He has a double burden in that he is not only a cripple but also a negro in a society that will not recognize negroes as anything approaching an equal" (2017: 148). Based on previous assumptions, it is possible to say that disability is a disadvantage in many different cultures but if you are both disabled and negro, you have double isolated from the society in many ways. Both Lennie's and Crook's disabilities are accepted as burdens on society because deformity of the body represents the deformity of the soul for that society. In addition, Crooks says as they were talking in his room : "Crooks bored in on him. Want me to tell ya what 'll happen? They'll take ya to the booby hatch. They'll tie ya up with a collar, like a dog" (73). Crooks tries to illustrate the point of view of society on people who have disabilities. In that patriarchal- ableist society, they can not live alone without a warden like George and they behave Lennie and the others like a dog not as human. "Books ain't no good. A guy needs somebody -to be near him. He whined, A guy goes nuts if he ain't got nobody. Don't make no difference who the guy is, long's he's with you. I tell ya," he cried, I tell ya a guy gets too lonely an' he gets sick" (73). Crooks expresses his thoughts and feelings with those lines. Disability Studies is a research field that employs social constructs historically, political, and cultural. Steinbeck reconstructs the idea of the disability based on social divisions like Crooks and adopts the wrong attitudes of the society towards the disabled. With the description of Crooks' feelings, Crooks emphasizes on his loneliness, marginalization, and otherness. It can be concluded that Crooks has been completely suffered and destroyed by both physical and emotional violence in the patriarchal-ableist society whose only aim is to humiliate and exclude the abnormal ones.

Therefore; the evaluation of the disability of the woman character based on Disability Studies would be a descriptor. As well as Lennie, Candy, and Crooks, Curley's wife has a significant role in terms of Disability studies.

A girl was standing there looking in. She had full, rouged lips and wide-spaced eyes, heavily made up. Her fingernails were red. Her hair hung in little rolled clusters, like sausages. She wore a cotton house dress and red mules, on the insteps of which were little bouquets of red ostrich feathers (32).

She is described as a more feminine and beautiful lady with her cotton dress. While she is seen as a bitch or seducing woman by the ranch hands, Steinbeck illustrates her as a victim of the society. In the context of Disability Studies, feminist disability studies claims that perception of societies are important towards women. At this point, "Feminist disability studies defines disability as a vector of socially constructed identity and a form of embodiment that interacts with both the material and the social environments" (Garland-Thomson, 2005: 1559). It can be concluded from this quotation that disability is not only related lack of body but also social environment. In patriarchal societies, women had no any rights. For this reason, throughout the novel, her name is not given, and called Curley's wife. Based on gender problems in Disability Studies, it is essential to express that Curley's wife signifies the women's positions at that time. She does not have a special identity and she is an oppressed and marginalized or isolated woman. Because of her loneliness, she attempts to talk to the other ranch hands. However, the important thing here is that the role of Curley's wife is to illustrate women's broken dreams and humiliation under the traditions of patriarchal society. Being a woman at that time is like a burden. On the other hand; even though she is ostracized by society, She is also cruel and thinks that she is superior to the others. When Lennie and Candy are in Crooks' home, she comes and behaves carelessly and mercilessly with her words: "They left all the weak ones here" (77). She obviously reveals the social barriers and divisions among them. In addition, when Candy and Crooks tell her that she is not wanted in that room, she becomes offended towards them:

She closed on him. You know what I could do? Crooks seemed to grow smaller, and he pressed himself against the wall. Yes, ma'am. Well, you keep your place then, Nigger. I could get you strung up on a tree so easy it ain't even funny (81).

In the same vein, the oppression and violence against Crooks is noticeable. She reduces him and does not care about his identity as a normal human. Everyone can torture him and do whatever they want as if he is not a human. Therefore; the cotton dress of Curley's wife also is symbolic of the future and will provide some predictions about the end. Lennie who loves soft things is impressed by Curley's wife. Her obsession with the soft things would be trouble for him. She also tries to attract Lennie's attention and forces him to speak with herself about what happened to Curley's hand. However, because George warned him earlier about Curley's wife, Lennie avoids and is scared of her. He knows as if what happens when he talks with her.

In line with the ideas of Disability Studies, Lennie is identified as a nonhuman character. Lennie has experienced many difficulties because of his impairment. Having a disability makes Lennie dangerous from the point of view of the society. But Steinbeck tries to illustrate that disabled people are as ordinary as the non-disabled: they are normal and they have good feelings. Slim, a mule driver, in the novel points out that : "He's a nice fella, said Slim. Guy don't need no sense to be a nice fella. Seems to me sometimes it jus' works the other way around. Take a real smart guy and he ain't hardly ever a nice fella" (41). Here, Steinbeck explains that there is no relationship between disability and malignancy because being good is not bound to the mind. Our central character Lennie mostly is controlled by his impairment. However, he does not have any kind of malignancy. "Sure he's jes' like a kid. There ain't no more harm in him than a kid neither, except he's so strong" (44). George who becomes aware of Lennie's cognitive disability expresses his thought about Lennie. Therefore; Curley who is son of the boss is uncomfortable with the physical appearance of Lennie from their first confrontation. Without any logical reason, Curley attacks Lennie who does not get into trouble himself. "Lennie's hands remained at his sides; he

was too frightened to defend himself ” (64). Although Lennie is very powerful, he does not bring his mind to fight him because of his innocence. After George commands him, Lennie attacks him and crushes Curley’s hand. It is understood that Lennie is a person who has no sense of proportion. It is necessary to express that Lennie did not do anything wrong intentionally.

On the other hand; while Lennie spends his time with small puppies in the barn, he causes their deaths again accidentally. Lennie said: “Now I won't get to tend the rabbits. Now he won't let me. He rocked himself back and forth in his sorrow” (85). With the death of small puppy , Lenny is identified as dangerous as if monster lives in his inside. It is a tragic scene for Lennie. He knows that he constitutes a distance among their dream of owner farm by getting into trouble himself. Then, Curley ’s wife comes to talk with Lennie in order to suppress her loneliness with those lines: “Why can't I talk to you? I never get to talk to nobody. I get awful lonely” (86). Her forced conversation brings Lennie’s end . When she insists on Lennie to touch her hair , Lennie who is interested in soft things loses his control and hurt her. After she became panic in his hands , Lennie breaks her neck accidentally. Up to this point , Lennie damaged so many things but they are not human so he felt that he was really in trouble so he escaped the brushes that George said him before when he made an important mistake. As a conscious and realist person , George knew this pathetic scene would happen. Nevertheless, He tries to convince Curley : “The poor bastard's nuts. Don't shoot 'im. He di'n't know what he was doing” (97). George realizes that his efforts will not help him, so he makes a hard decision and shoots Lennie in order to save his life.

Finally, the killing of Lennie is drastically salvation for him from that cruel world. If Lennie had not died, he would have experienced all forms of lynching and torture. Probably, he will be closed in a cage forever. It should not be forgotten that Lennie is controlled by his cognitive disability. All of these uncontrolled events are the result of his disability.

3.3. Grotesque Elements in *Of Mice and Men*

As a significant Southern writer, John Steinbeck uses grotesque characters in his fiction. Steinbeck’s characters occur as physically, behaviorally and intellectually grotesque characters. As it is known, grotesque is one of the most significant features of Southern Gothic genre. Steinbeck’s purpose is to illustrate the faults of the Western societies by using grotesque characterization. Based on Wolfgang Kayser’s three character analysis in his *The Grotesque in Art and Literature* (1963) on E.T.A Hoffman’s works; grotesque with the appearance and movement, eccentric artists and demonic characters, those three features can be found in his fictional figures (105-106).

Looked at as whole, there are many grotesque characters physically and behaviorally in *Of Mice and Men*. In using the grotesque, Steinbeck uses freak, obsessed, isolated, crippled and mentally disabled characters in order to show alienation and decay of society. The grotesque with the appearance and movement generally comes from birth or diseases such as crippled, lame and deaf. Therefore; mental disabilities also come from birth or some tragic traumas and events. The main character Lennie is portrayed as intellectual, physically and behaviorally grotesque character. Lennie is a intellectually disabled and bulky person. Lennie’s physical appearance is presented as “a huge man, shapeless of face, with large, pale eyes, with wide, sloping shoulders; and he walked heavily, dragging his feet a little, the way a bear drags his paws. His arms did not swing at his sides, but hung loosely” (Steinbeck, 1937: 3). His physical appearance is grotesque because he is presented as if he is a monster. Therefore; Bakhtin who gives historical and critical approach emphasizes grotesque body and grotesque realism. For Bakhtin, the concept of the grotesque is

constituted of human points of view based on culture and nature. He mentioned human traditions based on carnival at Medieval ages. Because he believes that there is no hierarchic order in the carnivals but this Carnival spirit lost in the Romantic period. Unlike Kayser, Bakhtin have positive views the concept of grotesque. He destroys the limits and does not defend the estrangement of the self. According to Bakhtin's *Rabelais and His World* (1984), the grotesque body is "a body in act of becoming" (317). It can be said that the body formation process is never completed and always goes on to create for new body. At this point, Bakhtin who defends grotesque realism focuses on the material body. He downgrades all noble things to the material level. In this context, the image of the ideal human body is destroyed by Bakhtin. Thus, it can be stated that Lennie's huge body, Crooks' color skin, and Candy's disability challenges established body formation. Also, Bakhtin's grotesque realism can be seen in *Of Mice and Men*. Steinbeck's grotesque characterization reconstructs the body image again in the light of Bakhtin's theories. In Contrast to classical body figures, Lennie portrays a new body form and challenges traditional forms because Lennie is representation and challenging of 'other' he is not identified standards body formations.

It is obvious that people like Lennie are not accepted in a patriarchal- ableist society and recognized immediately. For instance; when they meet with the Boss on the ranch, the Boss disturbs and suspects Lennie because of his physical appearance. The bodily grotesque presentation of Lennie arouses the readers' attention because 'Lennie Small' indicates both a physically huge man and a mentally small man which makes him a powerful grotesque character. Therefore; Lennie's movements can be seen as grotesque. At one stage, the narrator tells Lennie's behavior as in: "Lennie dabbled his big paw in the water" (4). The narrator describes him as completely incompatible and weird like a monster. The grotesque nature of his bodily and mental malformations drags him into alienation. It is possible to say that mental illness of Lennie signifies the tragic traumas and effects of the Great Depression and The Civil War when people lost their identities and were isolated in society.

On the other hand; the most important aspect of Lennie's grotesque is seen in his behavior. As a grotesque character, Lennie is an obsessed character as well as his mental disability. He is obsessed with soft things like cotton dresses, mice, rabbits, and puppies. His concern for soft things reflects his behavior. Lennie carries a dead mouse in his pocket and this condition awakes both repulsion and curiosity for the readers. The incompatibility of this combination supports the grotesque sensation. In other words, the frightening and repulsive behavior of Lennie on the soft things strengthens the grotesque. Because of his huge body, Lennie has great power but Lennie who is mentally disabled cannot control his strength. His powerful hands make so many deaths in the novel. The atmosphere of death in the novel also constitutes a grotesque structure within the context of Southern Gothic literature. The unconscious behavior of Lennie increases the possibility of his death, isolation, and loneliness. As Kayser said "The grotesque is the estranged world" (184), the estrangement of Lennie is built by his own behaviour and mental disability and society. As well as Lennie's behaviour, Steinbeck emphasizes corruption of the society on behavioural level.

In his novella, Steinbeck demonstrates exclusion, otherness, and racism which are constituted of Western society as related to historical events. The representation of the ranch and characters are grotesque elements because it can be thought that the portrayal of the characters refers to aspects of human beings in the Western society. The physically and psychologically impaired characters in this novella illustrate the tradition of Western consciousness in terms of the grotesque. Based on the grotesque features, psychological traumas, ethnic conflicts, and economic

decline emanate in each of the migrant workers on the ranch. In this way, Lennie's grotesque is reflected by his mental disability and huge body. It should be known that Lennie is a victim of a biased society like a scapegoat. Because of his mental illness, a society that has completely collapsed morally does not allow him to live alone and freely. Like George said : "I want you to stay with me, Lennie. Jesus Christ, somebody'd shoot you for a coyote if you was by yourself"(14) and Crooks said "They'll take ya to the booby hatch. They'll tie ya up with a collar, like a dog"(73). It can be conclude from those lines that society is collapsed and corrupted morally and behaviorally. Lennie is an innocent victim of social environment. The implicit underlying message is here that Lennie is like a mice in this world and he has to escape in order to live because This biased society creates social construction towards him.

In this context, Crooks is also described as physically grotesque. He is representative of black people in the novel in order to portray marginalization and violence on his back. As it is known he is isolated from other people because of his race. Crooks said at one stage : "Cause I'm black. They play cards in there, but I can't play because I'm black. They say I stink"(69). That quotation describes how society behave black people while living in the same world. The society and ranch hands rejects his identity because of his skin of color as if he was born with a burden or big sin. As the society associate Crooks with the idea of damn, his alienation is inevitable. Just as the morality of society collapsed, Crooks lost his presence and self-worth so he is estranged from the community. This is important in terms of grotesque on behaviors towards black people. On the other hand, Crooks is the grotesque with his physical impairment because his hump on his back adds more burden to the his exclusion. "Now and then he poured a few drops of the liniment into his pink-palmed hand and reached up under his shirt to rub again. He flexed his muscles against his back and shivered"(68). It can be inferred that this description is also ironic grotesque because he wants to flex his back but his muscles do not allow him. All the time, his body is accustomed to bending to the violence and oppression so it is a symbolic impairment. Therefore; the other characters in a novel can be accepted as grotesque because of their physical appearance and movements. Candy who has lost his hand and Curley's wife isolated from the all people in the ranch signify freak, weak, and isolated grotesque characters in terms of their singularities.

On the other hand; Kayser transforms the grotesque to its final meaning: "AN ATTEMPT TO INVOKE AND SUBDUE THE DEMONIC ASPECTS OF THE WORLD"(188). Kayser emphasizes the meaning of the grotesque in the twentieth century. In contrast to those characters, Curley can be considered demonic grotesque character because his presence supports the idea that if you are a property owner or richer than others, you deserve whatever you want to do. Curley is the son of the Boss and thinks that he treats everyone the way he wants because he is the owner of the ranch and he can use random violence on the ranch hands as he did Lennie at one stage. Within the capitalist system that ranch hands lived in, the boss like Curley will not punish or hitch. Based on Curley's behavior, Steinbeck uses these characters to demonstrate social realism that is mostly connected with the harsh conditions of the ranch hands. Thus, he criticizes the society that behaves unfair to the lower class people. It can be understood from Candy's prediction about forward fight between Lennie and Curley in order to make clear the system:

S'pose Curley jumps a big guy an' licks him. Ever'body says what a game guy Curley is. And s'pose he does the same thing and gets licked. Then ever'body says the big guy oughtta pick somebody his own size, and maybe they gang up on the big guy. Never did seem right to me. Seems like Curley ain't givin' nobody a chance (28).

In every condition, Curley wins because the system always supports the strong and noble ones so Steinbeck's grotesque characterization tries to demonstrate the corruption of the society. Unlike Curley, his wife is presented as a grotesque character in a different manner. Steinbeck shows her grotesque in her manners and feelings. She acts on a fine line between being a seducer and being a victim in the novel. The portrayal of the grotesque characterization of Curley's wife displays the Southern consciousness. Her grotesque is drastically completed with her beauty and danger. She combines two different striking features: beauty and danger. This is important because she is considered a grotesque character. Her physical appearance seduces Lennie and causes her to the inevitable end. On the other hand; her life is completed by emotional violence that leads her to talk to Lennie so she becomes a victim in the end.

To strengthen the grotesque structure, Steinbeck generally uses repetition. The repetition among the characters emphasizes the significant events and conditions. For instance; Lennie always says "I ain't gonna say nothin'.... I ain't gonna say nothin'.... I ain't gonna say nothin'" (8). This repetition shows his mental weakness and another repetition about their dream creates tension whether it will happen or not for the readers. He always asks for George to repeat their dreams with those lines : "Why'n't you do it yourself? You know all of it. No.... you tell it. It ain't the same if I tell it. Go on.... George. How I get to tend the rabbits " (16). This repetition between George and Lennie strengthens the relationship among them and is one of the main grotesque features of this novel based on their friendships. As intellectual characters, both George and Lennie have grotesque potential because they have dramatically different perspectives on life than other ranch hands. Their grotesque nature lies in their purposes for the future. Normally, the migrant workers accept their lower conditions in life and live and act alone. Steinbeck makes clear with George's words :

Guys like us, that work on ranches, are the loneliest guys in the world. They got no family. They don't belong no place. They come to a ranch an' work up a stake and then they go into town and blow their stake, and the first thing you know they're poundin' their tail on some other ranch. They ain't got nothing to look ahead to (15).

The migrant workers throughout the book are portrayed as being lonely and outcasts than George and Lennie. Based on George's explanations, their intellectual aloofness from other workers makes them powerful grotesque characters. George expresses his thoughts: "But not us! An' why? Because because I got you to look after me, and you got me look after you, and that's why" (15). It can be thought that George and Lennie feel themselves free and safe when they act and live together. George thinks that if they live or earn money together, they can reach their goals in a short time. In order to reach their goals, they hold themselves apart from people. Throughout the novel, they hope to have their farm along those lines:

We'd have a little house an' a room to ourself. Little fat iron stove, an' in the winter we'd keep a fire goin' in it. It ain't enough land so we'd have to work too hard. Maybe six, seven hours a day. We wouldn't have to buck no barley eleven hours a day. An' when we put in a crop, why, we'd be there to take the crop up. We'd know what come of our planting (59).

In this spirit, when it is considered Steinbeck's youth life with the migrants, he had experienced many tragic truths about their lives so it is possible to say that Steinbeck is also sensitive about harsh lives of the migrant workers. For that reason, Steinbeck focuses on the harsh lives of the migrant workers and uses these intellectual grotesque characters in order to criticize society and institutions at that time because they have no any rights and will never reap the rewards

for their efforts so Steinbeck focuses alienated and marginalized people in order to demonstrate the tradition of Southern Gothic literature. It is clear that Steinbeck reflects the depression in 1930s and criticizes the new lost world. In this world, Steinbeck highlights the fall of American Dream by using Lennie and George. American Dream is not pursuit of more wealth or other things, it is related with comfortable life within freedom. George and Lennie repeats one more time their dream for having farm:

S'pose they was a carnival or a circus come to town, or a ball game, or any damn thing." Old Candy nodded in appreciation of the idea. "We'd just go to her," George said. "We wouldn't ask nobody if we could. Jus' say, 'We'll go to her,' an' we would. Jus' milk the cow and sling some grain to the chickens an' go to her (62).

In this context, Based on the historical evolution of the grotesque, Steinbeck still concentrates on the American Dream to show the economic crisis and social anxiety in that period. During the 1930s, the depression occurred because of economic conditions and people felt exhausted social anxiety started among them because they did not have a safe and comfortable life. Based on those lines, the primary aim of Lennie and George is to reach their dream. They do not want excessive things and they want only to live freely and own their small farm to earn a living. At the end of the novel, the main characters can not their reach, and the fall of the American Dream is seen dramatically.

The reason why these characters are considered intellectual characters is that they behave contrary to expectations. They do not behave in what is expected from a migrant worker because they dream of having a warm pitiable. It is possible to say that George controls Lennie all the time and wants him to hide their secrets about the farm as if the magic would be lost if he told everyone. Lennie who is under social pressure psychologically and mentally disabled has experienced difficult circumstances. Thus, the unconscious fear and anxiety over the possible loss of their dream of having a farm turns Lennie into a marginalized and dangerous person. George keeps Lennie out of other ranch hands. Like Kayser said in his book (1963) "THE GROTESQUE IS ESTRANGED WORLD" (184). Lennie is an isolated, estranged, and marginalized character throughout the novel. At the end of the novel, Lennie first kills the puppy and the first thing that comes to his mind is that he would lose their dream of having a farm so he feels panic and causes another death. Then, To summarize, Lennie's relationship with George Milton is also grotesque because as migrant workers they act together and dream of their farm. They do not behave as expected.

Steinbeck's ideas support the grotesque structure with his grotesque characters as physical, behavioral, and intellectual. As well as their intellectual aloofness, they demonstrate tragic-comic grotesque characterization because the novel's protagonists struggle with the established and hard rules of the patriarchal society. Therefore; they believe that they could cope with the capitalist system but it is impossible for them. Unfortunately, they can not overcome all the social divisions because these divisions have continued for centuries. In addition, the friendship of two different characters made it impossible as Lennie has an especially cognitive disability in that society. For that reason, this dream is both tragic and comic for the ranch hands.

The main purpose of the writer from beginning to the end to illustrate the truths by using grotesque features such as satiric and fantastic elements. Lennie's tendency to get in trouble is seen from the beginning. In the first chapter, Steinbeck emphasizes a plan between George and Lennie in his book : "Well, look Lennie - if you jus' happen to get in trouble like you always done be fore,

I want you to come right here an' hide in the brush'' (17). In fact, this scene is a depiction of Lennie's escape when he gets into trouble. Although George knows what will happen in the future, he believes that their dreams will come true. At the same time, it can be concluded that their friendship was at the end of the dream in such a hard world. In any case, despite George wanting to keep Lennie out of trouble, Lennie's world is disturbed by the others and this condition causes his tragic end. Kayser's interpretations about human nature can be regarded as presence of human's demonic sides: "it is as if an impersonal force, an alien, and inhuman spirit, had entered the soul" (184). Looking at Lennie from a different aspect with Kayser's views, Lennie can not controlled by the reason, he portrays his demonic side and innocent side. The monster lives with him. This tragic feature of Lennie shows that there is no guarantee in this life. It is possible to confront the demonic side because people can be controlled by their demonic souls in every time. He blends two opposites incompatible elements within his body unconsciously. As Kayser mentioned in his book:

The distortion of all ingredients, the fusion of different realms, the coexistence of beautiful, bizarre, ghastly, and repulsive elements, the merger of the parts into a turbulent whole, the withdrawal into a phantasmagoric and nocturnal world... all these features have here entered into the concept of the grotesque (79).

Based on Kayser's grotesque concept, Lennie, Candy, Crooks and Curley's wife are presented as grotesque characters with their distortions as physical, behavioral and intellectual. Consequently, Steinbeck's grotesque characterization of the history and tradition of the West is discussed by his deep philosophy. "*Of Mice and Men* presents dramatic situations and characterizations that allow us to see and hear and feel ethical dilemmas and such social problems as racism, sexism, and economic exploitation in an immediate, firsthand way" (Hart, 2004: 33-34). Steinbeck illustrates characters who are different and isolated from society as physically and psychologically in order to touch upon social problems. Hence, it can be concluded that Steinbeck's primary purpose is to understand people who live harsh lives and "try to understand man, if you understand each other you will be kind to each other" (Shillinglaw and Hearle, 2002: 6). For this reason, Steinbeck focuses on humanistic values and ethics with his characters and reconstructs the established orders.

4. DISABILITY AND GROTESQUE IN *THE HEART IS A LONELY HUNTER*

4.1. Carson McCullers' Life, Works and Literary Career

Carson McCullers (February 19, 1917- September 29 -1967) was an American novelist, short story writer, essayist and poet. Carson McCullers is regarded as the most notable American author of the 20th century. Notwithstanding that our extraordinary author was successful on piano, she had to give up because of her illness. After this tragic condition she began to form her writing adventure tirelessly. Subsequently, she moved from the Columbus, Georgia where she took her roots and themes for her writing to in 1934. When she left, she was seventeen and moved to the New York. At that time New York is the place of art, music, literature and the artistic productions that make contribution her literary career. Carson McCullers who completed her education at the Colombia University experienced a respiratory infection but her passion for writing continued even though she is bedridden for several months. Carson McCullers has been combined with the elements of Southern Gothic Literature which is really associated with her style. She started her career as a writer in the December 1936 issue of *Story* magazine. “*Wunderkind*” is her first short story that is edited by Whit Burnett. Her literary style was intensively influenced by American Southern Gothic. Carson McCullers was able to develop her ability over the years when she experienced many various jobs and unsettled marriage.

As a modernist author Carson McCullers creates a new perspective which is obviously shaped by the influence of Great Depression in 1920s and Second World War. She uses a grotesque characters to reconstruct society's values or norms like a great mirror. The literary theory of grotesque that is pointed out horror, violence and strange things in the Gothic Literature represents the power of disability in the Carson McCullers' novels. Her first achievement is the novel *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (1940) as a modernist writer. In addition Carson McCullers is mostly known for her novels *Reflections in a Golden Eye* (1941), *The Ballad of the Sad Cafe* (1943), *The Member of the Wedding* (1946) and *Clock Without Hands* (1960). At this point Carson McCullers worked on many plots, themes and characters. Carson McCullers' general themes are isolation, alienation, death, insanity, fear, violence and social struggles. McCullers mentioned about the inner lives of the characters. The main characters in her famous novels are marginalized, fragile and isolated so they display silence and isolation. In order to avoid their loneliness, most of her characters who are isolated try to research their own identities at that period when they do not belong themselves there so it can be said that she give some powerful voices to the struggles of people.

More specifically, Carson McCullers who takes her writing techniques from the South does not ignore the social struggles such as racism, gender, prejudices and harsh facts of the life. Carson McCullers' characters are misfits because of their gender, race and physical appearance. Normally, Gothic Literature deals with the strange things based on extremely horror and violence. On the other hand Carson McCullers emphasizes the grotesque but that is not horror. In her fascinating novels and stories grotesque represents social breakdowns. So the main characters are always physically or mentally distorted. Taking into account all of these Carson McCullers' characters search for meaning life and try to comfort their inner worlds. To Sum up, her novel briefly *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (1940) is heavily written under the influence of Southern Gothic

Literature. In this work she mentions about cultural identity, alienation and loneliness. The novel is about a deaf- mute John Singer's relationship with the other people living in the towns. All the characters are chosen carefully as gender, race and other struggles. There is a complex communication within the characters. They glorify Singer, share their feelings such as hopes and troubles with Singer's deaf ears. When we think whole novel, it is connected with another key term 'love'.

Carson McCullers uses a different method to emphasize established social norms. By combining grotesque and disability in her works Carson McCullers draw attention to the established norms and reconstructs the society's point of view. It is important to say that Carson McCullers had a brilliant creative writing style. The literary technique of McCullers are mostly bizarre. Moreover, Carson McCullers focused on the social breakdowns and established assumptions as the writer of Southern Gothic. Louis D. Rubin as a critic underlines the Carson McCullers' grotesque characterization in his article with these words :

By contrast, Carson McCullers focuses upon her maimed, misfitting, wounded people not as a commentary upon the complacent "normality" of the community which would them freakish, but as exemplars of the wretchedness of the human condition. It isn't that freaks are commentaries or criticisms on normality; they are normality. Their physical grotesquery merely makes visible and identifiable their isolation and anguish; "normal" people do not confront these on quite such immediate and inescapable terms, perhaps they are really no better off, no happier. Everybody that is human is on the chain gang; on some the stripes and chains merely more readily visible (Rubin, 1977: 275-276).

It is clearly seen that Carson McCullers discusses the Southern people's perception to the disabled people. For her, McCullers emphasizes on the normality of freak characters. Carson McCullers mentions about the stories of marginated and alienated people. With her powerful and creative writing Carson McCullers destroys the normality and traditional point of view and questions what normal is. In this frame, this thesis aims to demonstrate Southern people's antagonistic behaviors. It is an obvious fact that disabled is seen as a burden or big sin in the societies of the South America. Carson McCullers believes that there is an undeniable truth between the society's values and the disability. The traditional point of view about disability cannot accepted as normal in the perspective of Carson McCullers.

In the light of this information Carson McCullers used a simple, narrative, specific a realistic language which is really associated with her Southern roots. As a master, Carson McCullers uses a powerful language to found setting and characters. With her striking literary style Carson McCullers evokes readers' interests to the story. Her eccentric, disturbing, flawed, miserable characters make her stories more powerful. As well as her creative language, she tries to be an objective narrator but Southern Gothic Literature's influences can be seen in her writings. As a notable example to Carson McCullers' best literary known novel *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (1940) illustrate the dialect variations. Many multiple voices rise in her novel. Carson McCullers' strong language made her works classical and notable. Consequently, Carson McCullers' literary techniques give social messages interrupting established assumptions and make difference in American fiction. Of course her position in literature is undoubtable great.

4.2. Disability in *The Heart Is A Lonely Hunter*

Carson McCullers's novel *The Heart Is A Lonely Hunter* (1940) is set in a small town in Georgia in the South. McCullers who is one of the Southern Gothic authors examines the social struggles of the South culturally and geographically. In her novel, she uses isolated, freak, and queer characters who are affected by the Great Depression in the 1930s and World War II in the 1940s. This wonderful novel examines sex, gender, slavery, and racial problems of American society to draw attention to people with different abilities and features. In other words; Most of the characters in the novel serve the problems of the American South such as physical and mental disability, and racial and gender issues. All these problems push the characters into loneliness and isolation.

The novel begins with the description of the 'two mutes': John Singer and Spiros Antonapoulos. There is a simple statement "In the town there were two mutes, and they were always together" (McCullers, 1940: 3). Although they are both 'deaf-mutes', they are different from each other. The central character, John Singer who is a deaf man works as a silverware engraver and devotes himself to his only friend Antonapoulos. Therefore; All the characters in the novel try to speak with him and spend their time in his room. On the other hand; Antonapoulos is not a logical character and is also lazy and fat. While Singer knows lip reading and sign language, Antonapoulos does not give importance to the communication so their communication is generally one-sided so it can be said that their communication is continued by their common disability.

The novel's examination in the framework of disability studies is essential. McCullers reconstructs the idea of 'abnormal' and stereotyped perceptions towards disabled persons. Disability studies demonstrate that social construction shapes the normalcy and abnormalcy towards disabled persons. Analyzing Antonapoulos in the light of disability studies is necessary because he starts to behave like a mad and becomes mentally sick at the beginning of the story. Pernick states that "defectives as a repulsive, dangerous, and costly menace to society" (1996 :143). Thus, it becomes obvious that Charles Parker who is Antonapoulos's cousin wants to get rid of him. Parker demonstrates the deformity soul of the American society. Antonapoulos's mentally disease who is also deaf man is regarded as a burden and problem by Parker even if he is one of his family members. Parker sends Antonapoulos insane asylum to remove him from the society and solve the problem. In same vein, In one article called "Embodied Listening: Singer as Feminist Listener in *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*" (2017) Waggoner proves the society's point of view with "John J. Flourney's claim that Deaf people "unfairly suffer 'rejections and consignments to inferior places' by hearing people" (Edwards, 2012: 98). It can be said that Parker's unacceptable behavior demonstrates that Disabled persons still are not accepted and wanted in society. Even though Parker is the only person in the novel who has stereotyped beliefs, conventional beliefs of the past follow Antonapoulos and cause him to become isolated from society. After Antonapoulos's separation, John Singer who is central character moves the house of Kelly's family to avoid his deep sorrow for his best friend. Thus, Singer who had previously lived in his small world with his best friend, is forced to enter the society physically. It is essential to express that McCullers's fiction destroys the conventional prejudices and beliefs towards disabled persons. She enlarges the role of a deaf man in *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*. Contrary to popular myth, she reconstructs the social constructions again. Although the name Singer refers to an ironic condition for the readers,

McCullers shows the powerful role of a deaf man in *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*. The singer is different from ordinary typical disabled persons. His disability is at the central of the novel.

In the first chapter of the novel, Singer's memory draws attention to the framework of disability studies. Disability studies emphasize that predominant beliefs shape attributions toward impaired people. Carson McCullers highlights the predominant ethos towards disabled babies at that time through Singer's memory:

There was one particular fact that he remembered, but it was not at all important to him. Singer recalled that, although he had been deaf since he was an infant, he had not always been a real mute. He was left an orphan very young and placed in an institution for the deaf. (McCullers, 12)

Based on his memory, it is possible to say that his family may have left him behind because of his physical disability. A baby who was born with disabilities was abandoned in old times. Their parents see them as a stigma. Eli Clare states that "Disability has been soaked in shame, dressed in silence, rooted in isolation" (1999: 91). Clare condemns those shameful actions. It must be known that leaving a child behind in the institutions is not a justifiable reason because of his physical or mental disability. Leaving Singer in an institution for deaf-mutes means excluding him from real society. McCullers reveals the underlying wrong predominant ethos. For society, everyone should be with people at their level, and like Singer should live in their community. This is an unacceptable and merciless truth.

His experiences while attending a school for the Deaf and the cultural attitude toward deafness during the time period shaped McCullers's depiction of Singer's worldview and taught him the value of listening. Singer has felt the pang of isolation throughout his lifetime (Waggoner, 2017: 66).

Based on Waggoner's expression, it can be said that an institution can add more positive things in a disabled person's life. Thus, McCullers shapes the idea of being disabled in the *Heart Is A Lonely Hunter*. McCullers uses John Singer's disability as a powerful feature, not a freak or stigma. Throughout the novel, Singer is a good listener, wisdom and gentle person. All the characters in the novel admire him rather than see him as a burden or problem. Mick Kelly, Jake Blount, Dr. Copeland and Biff Brannon are attracted with his silence and sharp glance. Waggoner (2017) also comments that McCullers's demonstrates the reader "how the "deaf mute" character of Singer is not passive and oppressed but active and able" (61). Contrary to general perception, Singer is not an oppressed character. He portrays a powerful person who has no limitations because of his disability. While most scholars believe that Singer's loneliness and isolation bring him limitations, obstacles, and silence in life because of his inability to speak, McCullers gives him a powerful personality because he is a good listener and adopts everybody with his wisdom even he can not hear. McCullers brought a new interpretation in the framework of disability studies because Singer's power comes from his deformity in the novel. Therefore; it can be said that Singer's disability in the novel is related to the people's perceptions. They always claim wrong stories about him. Because Singer can not hear them, he does not recognize what they say about him in his environment. Everyone in the town is interested, respects, and tries to talk to him but Singer can not express himself and communicate with the others. Singer accepts and listens to all people but their communication is not mutual like Antonapoulos. Thus, he has experienced a lack of communication and feels lonely because of his disability. Like Singer, all the characters in the

novel feel loneliness and isolation so they visit Singer to express their feelings and thoughts. Because all of them have different characteristics in the society.

Furthermore, McCullers tries to reveal the social struggles and issues of people in the South through John Singer. In the historical context of disability studies, the medical model states that disability is physical and mental impairment but a social model of disability demonstrates that disability is a cultural, political, and social construction. In ancient times, disabled people who were accepted as freaks or monster was born with a deformity. However, in the 19th century and 20th centuries, there was a new transformation in disability because the word 'freak' was used for disability, race, and ethnicity. Thus, it is seen how disability studies reveal the social construction. Each character in *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter* may be explained in the context of social construction. Most of the characters in the novel have experienced isolation and loneliness because of their limitations such as being an African-American, being a woman, or immature adolescent so the gender and racial issues are examined in depth. Their limitations created by society reduce the characters in the context of disability.

Therefore; each character in the novel has a different and special story and their lives, experiences, and points of view are transferred objectively. It is seen that all the characters have different goals and feelings towards life. Based on McCullers's characters, it can be said that all the characters suffer and experience isolation. Thus, it can be seen also how freak characters such as Singer, Mick, Dr. Copeland, Blount, and Brannon are isolated from society. Kelly's characterization is more significant as a freak in the framework of disability studies. Mick is a boyish girl teenager who likes music and she tries to spend his time with Singer because she feels comfortable when she recognizes Singer listens and understands her feelings and thoughts. McCullers introduces Mick as "She was dressed in khaki shorts, a blue shirt, and tennis shoes- so that at first glance she was like a very young boy" (16). Mick's adolescent physical appearance is considered a freak because she disobeys social standards. She does not want to obey the social standards or norms and be feminine. Many critics mention cliches about the relationship between women and disability. As critic Gleeson-White in her article "Revisiting the Southern Grotesque: Mikhail Bakhtin and the Case of Carson McCullers" (2001) mentions about women perceptions historically: "...women have been perceived as freakish lessermen-Adam's rib-and their bodies culturally represented as abjected and amorphous" (111). Gleeson-White explains social perceptions towards women, especially adolescents. People see adolescents as 'freaks' like Mike Kelly because their immature bodies signify 'freak' to them. Mick is seen as a freak character in the social construction. Mick's immature body and tomboyish actions cause her to be considered a freak or disabled person depending on social norms. Furthermore, it can be said that Mick's characterization does not fit the 'normal' woman categorization so she is seen as different and ostracized from society. Her isolation and loneliness create a powerful bond between Singer and Mick. She recognizes that Signer accepts and appreciates her. Another critic Garland Thomson (1997) claims that "...identity, subjectivity, and the body are cultural constructs to be questioned, and that all representation is political comprise" (21). As Garland Thomson claimed, Mick's gender role is questioned by all her environment. Mick's sister, Etta criticizes : "It makes me sick to see you in those silly boy's clothes. Somebody ought to clamp down on you, Mick Kelly and make you behave" (39). It is possible to say that Mick's disability comes from her gender's barrier in society. As a character, Mick demonstrates oppression of the women under the authority of

society. The social, cultural, and political expectations limit women's appearance, thoughts, and behaviour so being a woman or immature called a 'freak' adolescent is considered as disability.

Therefore; the relationship between Mick and Singer also signifies complicated communication. Her passion for speaking with Singer and her thoughts about him is amazing. She imagines he is a wisdom and is a great safe place for her. Mick resembles him to God with these statements "... she used to imagine was God she could only see Mister Singer with a long, white sheet around him. God was silent-may be that was why she was reminded" (109). It is seen that Singer's lack of communication and deep sorrow create different imaginations that are related to how people perceive him.

Afterward, *Heart Is a Lonely Hunter* displays the social limitations of African-American people. "Far from the main street, in one of the Negro sections of the town, Doctor Benedict Mady Copeland sat in his dark kitchen alone" (65). The first presentation of these characters demonstrate that the South's geography is separated as racial. Benedict Mady Copeland is an African-American doctor who focuses on conflicts between whites and blacks and he works for his community in the town. His intellectual status leads him into an isolated world. He admires Karl Marx's ideologies and gives his name to his son. He hopes his sons will give all in his mind: "Hamilton would be a great scientist and Karl Marx a teacher of the Negro race and William a lawyer to fight against injustice and Portia a doctor for women and children" (73). Dr. Copeland's obsession for his own race affects his life. Despite he purposes to reform for better conditions, he is margined from his community. Dr. Copeland and his race suffered for ages because of their race so he thinks he will change and give better life for black people. "Only four Negroes with these real true qualities and backbone" (71) and Portia adds "Hamilton or Buddy or Willie or me- none of us ever cares to talk like you." (72). Dr. Copeland's identity does not accept society's racial division and complains present conditions. On the other hand; Copeland draws attention a deaf boy: "... this deaf boy- I have been meaning to make inquires and find is there is some institutions that would take him" (79). His deaf-mute patient also has barriers to being treated because of his race. After this disorder, he will not obey the standards of being 'normal'. After Portia's advice about Singer, Dr. Copeland also talks to him more than once because he believes:

He was not like other white men. He was a wise man, and he understood the strong, true purpose in a way that other white men could not. He listened, and in his face there was something gentle and Jewish, the knowledge of one who belongs to a race that is oppressed (123).

According to Patterson "The identity Copeland attributes to Singer makes it possible for him to reconcile his words and his actions, the two halves of his felt identity. When anger wells up within him only the thought of Singer calms him" (1997: 106-107). Dr. Copeland indeed sees Singer as the source of motivation and courage. In all those sentences, we see that Copeland motivates and finds hope by speaking Singer. Admittedly, Copeland's struggle with racism and his higher education level causes him to be excluded and despair in life. Even though Copeland has no real physical disability, his skin color or race is a limitation. He can not find a place for himself both in his race and the society. His skin is not 'normal' by the society. To find a person who listens to and understands him like Singer, Copeland trusts Singer and does not feel lonely and desperate.

In the story, all the characters who feel loneliness and isolation in-depth have visited Singer. For example, Jack Blount in *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* has influenced the effects of Marxist

thoughts and ideologies. He is addicted to alcohol and is mostly a drunken person in the novel. He spends most of his time at Brannon cafe where Singer accepts him into his room because of his desperate condition. Blount struggles for social revolution and he believes the working class will resist the system. He also draws attention to the capitalism which is the source of inequality and racism in society. Blount's only communication like the other is Singer. He sees Singer as a father of great ideology and criticizes :

Wherever you look there's meanness and corruption. This room, this bottle of grape wine, these fruits in the basket, are all products of profit and loss. A fellow can't live without giving his passive acceptance to meanness. Somebody wears his tail to a frazzle for every mouthful we eat and every stitch we wear- and nobody seems to know. Everybody is blind, dumb, and blunt-headed- stupid and mean (63)

His thoughts demonstrate the corruption of the South. People live a poor life and social constructions exploit the working class and separate whites and blacks. Copeland's metaphoric disability about people exhibits social constructions. Copeland's disability comes from his beliefs and ideas which are failures against the social construct. It is seen that Blount can not find a safe place in the social structure because of his activist personality so he becomes an angry and lonely person. His biggest disability is the social construct. He does not share the same ideas in his environment but he always thinks Singer understands him. Patterson explains that "His compulsion to "talk to" Singer and "tell him of the thoughts that were in his mind" is an attempt to alleviate his loneliness and thereby construct a social identity for himself" (1997: 100). Blount feels good when he saw somebody understands how he feels. It can be seen that Singer's listening helps Blount to feel comfortable to reach his goals. In addition, Brannon is the owner of a New York cafe which is a place connecting all the characters. After his wife dies, he becomes lonely. He is an observer and sensitive man who also wonders and admires 'freaks'.

He had a special friendly feeling for sick people and cripples. Whenever somebody with a harelip or T.B came into the place he would set him up a beer. Or if the customer were a hunchback or a bad cripple, then it would be whisky on the house (20).

"Neither pitiable nor repulsive, neither a hero nor a symbol, but a part of the community with issues and influences like everyone else" (Nortner, 2021). If Singer had an alcohol addiction, he could give free whisky because of his disability. Nortner emphasizes that people wonder about and examine disabled people but they must not look carefully at their physical disabilities because they are 'normal' like others.

Even though Singer has always visitors, his heart is a lonely hunter without Antonapoulos. From the beginning, Singer is a deaf man who never prefers talking with his mouth in the story because Singer knows he does not need it. His communication with Antonapoulos is more special rather than the other's relationship. All the characters share their feelings or thoughts but Singer can not share his feelings with anybody. His lack of communication because of his deaf-mute drags him into a lonely world. After he learns his only friend's death, he feels deep sorrow and commits suicide. Thus, Mick, Copeland, Blount, and Brannon who believe Singer understands what they said turn back their isolated world.

Consequently, McCullers who is a late modernist uses a silent and resistant character in the story. She brings a new perspective towards disabled persons and reconstructs the characters. Despite Singer being a deaf man, everyone admires him and tries to get contact him. He is not

completely a freak or abnormal. McCullers demonstrates that disabled persons are part of the community and they have personal traits and choices. Therefore; McCullers focuses on the social constructions in the framework of disability studies. Her literary technique emphasizes how people used to 'freak, abnormal, and disabled' in the social constructions because of race and gender oppression, and physical and mental problems.

4.3. Grotesque in *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*

As a grotesque work, *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter* (1940) creates a grotesque world with its sharp and strong characterizations. The grotesque is an inseparable part of McCullers who is a Southern Gothic author. As Spiegel said the grotesque always appears in Southern Fiction as a physically deformed, a dwarf, a deaf-mute, a blind man, or and androgynous adolescent (1972: 428-429). Spiegel implies the cultural and historical tragic traumas of the Old South. Thus, McCullers's fiction can be regarded as grotesque because she uses numerous freak characters like a deaf-mute in her works and she also uses grotesque to turn upside-down old values of the South so she examines Southern history and culture. It is clear that she deals with the grotesque in order to demonstrate the biased sides of society. This work written by McCullers is related to issues and atmosphere of the time in the South. As a regional writer, McCullers sets *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter* in the South. She focuses on the themes of isolation and loneliness after the Great Depression. The function of the grotesque in her novel is to reveal slavery, gender problems, class distinctions and racial problems.

To analyze *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter* as grotesque is more special. This novel examines the distorted and lonely grotesque characters and challenges the traditions and gender perceptions. All characters in the novel are grotesque physically, sexually, and behaviorally. Singer, Mick, Brannon, Blount, and Copeland are grotesque characters because of their physical and spiritual features, and social and racial distinctions so they are mostly unsettled identities. McCullers chooses a physically deformed grotesque character: John Singer who is a deaf-mute central character in the story. McCullers's purpose is to reveal the other character's point of view towards life by using a deaf-mute character. There are three categories of Wolfgang Kayser (1963) for the grotesque: grotesque figures with appearance and movement, eccentric artists, and demonic characters. Singer is characterized as a physically grotesque character. Singer is demonstrated as an active, silent, and intelligent person. Throughout the novel, it seen that Singer's devotion to Antonapoulos who is also deaf-mute lived with him for ten years. It is essential to ask what makes Singer grotesque. Singer who became orphan from an early childhood learns to talk with his hands and speak in the institution even though he was a deaf-mute but Singer does not prefer speaking. In the novel "It was painful for him to try to talk with his mouth, but his hands were always ready to shape the words he wished to say" (10). It is clear that the role of Singer's hands in speaking has important role rather than mouth. Bakhtin emphasizes the grotesque image of body in his book (1984) : "...the most important of all human features for the grotesque is the mouth. It dominates all else" (317). The mouth is important for communication and it is a tool to reach the outside world. However, Singer refuses the use of his mouth and he uses his hands instead of his mouth for communication after he meets Antonapoulos. After he dies, Singer does not use his hands moves always in his pocket so he cuts his communication towards society. Like a mouth, his hands are always active while speaking with him so this is a great example of grotesque characterization.

In addition, Singer hopes that he will be with Antonapoulos one day. Until that day, he alienated himself spiritually for two reasons: the first one is his deafness and the second one is his unwillingness to communication with the others who visit him. Singer's estrangement remembers us Kayser's expression: "THE GROTESQUE IS THE ESTRANGED WORLD" (184). According to Kayser who conveys the meaning of the grotesque into the uncanny grotesque, Singer's individualism or estrangement himself from society demonstrates the fusion of the alien and the human like the grotesque. On the other hand; Antonapoulos who is also deaf-mute demonstrates that he is a repulsive grotesque character. He is a grotesque character behaviorally. At first, despite being normal, he starts to behave like a madman. Structurally, the Grotesque points out the fear, horror, and distortions in the characters. At the same time, McCullers demonstrates Antonapoulos's tendency to violence. Moreover, madness is seen as a tragic event in the Romantic grotesque so people who experience any kind of madness are excluded from society. In the story, Antonapoulos's madness is seen as trouble for his cousin and he sends him into an insane asylum to get rid of his presence because he is a tragic, excessive, and extravagant grotesque figure. It should not be forgotten that society always wants to exclude those who are different.

Unlike Kayser, Bakhtin imposes positive meaning on the grotesque. In the novel, Mick Kelly experiences a gender crisis between boyishness and girlishness. She says "...I don't want to like either of you. And I won't. That's why I wear shorts. I'd would rather be a boy any day" (39). Mick is a adolescent girl and his immature body presents a freak grotesque character physically. Bakhtin's theory about body image in *Rabelais and His World* (1984), he emphasizes that "The grotesque body is a body in the act of becoming. It is never finished, never completed" (317). His description of the body removes the limits on the material body. She symbolizes fertility in the carnivalesque grotesque. Therefore; based on his carnivalesque grotesque, Mick's grotesque appearance is a part of transformation and resistance to the oppression of bodies because there are many certain norms and oppression of the female body. Mick challenges the dominant world and draws attention to the gender problems. In the novel, she imagines being a giant. Her desire also demonstrates Mick challenges the limits of the body because a giant refers abnormal one.

Bakhtin mentions also psychological level of modern body image. Eating, drinking, giving birth and having sexual act is transferred into the special and private field (321). Mick's sexual relationship with Harry also shows that her body exceeds her limitations and goes on growth as Bakhtin said. Psychologically, Mick's behaviour can be regarded as being part of outside world because she experiences alienation and exclusion because of her nature. "...Some kind of music was too private to sing in a house cram full of people. It was funny, too, how lonesome a person could be in a crowded house" (49). It is understood that Mick is a lonely and isolated. She does not find a person who can share her feelings in a crowded house. According to Kayser, the grotesque is related to strange, tragic, and terrible so his grotesque is associated with Freud's uncanny concept (Russo, 1994:7). Both Singer and Mick's alienation is psychological. The concept of estrangement is one of the most common themes in the uncanny grotesque. Both Singer and Mick suffer from their loneliness. They feel like a stranger in a world that they live in. McCullers uses those isolated characters to demonstrate the social and psychological reflection of Southern society.

As a grotesque novel, *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter* mentions the point of view and grief of the characters. McCullers examines the issues of racism and inequality through Blount and Copeland. She focuses on the social problems in a grotesque reality. Both Blount and Copeland are different characters with their knowledge and experience in life. Copeland is a black doctor and

intellectual man who has training in the North and he turns his race in the South to help them. On the other side, Blount is always the drunk and angry man who has Marxist ideas in the novel. Both Copeland and Blount have the same purposes even though they are different races. These characters are as grotesque as the others because they can not find anyone in society to support their ideas. As a grotesque figure, they have distinctive perspectives. Accordingly, Geoffrey Harpham expresses that:

the grotesque may be latent in an idea or a situation as well as in a physical condition; and common usage supports this. The fact that the radical deformity which is the ground base for the grotesque can be intellectual or moral is largely responsible for the twisting and shifting in definitions described earlier: the grotesque depends not only on physical conditions the deformity of which most people would recognize, but also on our conventions, our prejudices, our common-places, our banalities, our mediocrities. (1976: 462-463)

That is to say, McCullers presents social and racial oppression in society through those characters who struggle the hopelessness and loneliness. Copeland and Blount do not have physical deformity but they are distorted mentally because of a dominant world that has stereotyped conventions. "...the hopeless suffering of his people mad him a madness, a wild and evil feeling of destruction" (McCullers, 130). It is seen how historical traumas affect people. Copeland and his race have suffered for the years and his race is humiliated by the whites. There are many certain separations between whites and blacks. Thus, Copeland accepts the role of their liberator but his race does not care about his ideas so he is a distorted mentally and physically grotesque character. As mentioned above, the grotesque structure demonstrates society's prejudices and conventions. Copeland's race is discriminated against because of their skin color. They are accepted as abnormal and like a cursed thing. Correspondingly, the grotesque is associated with the absurd and formless and strange things so his race is excluded over the years. Based on assumptions, it is clear that grotesque is shaped by social conventions and perceptions. Copeland's point of view and ideals are not understood by anyone and he can not achieve what he wants so he feels lonely in this world. Like others, he establishes a bond with Singer. For Copeland, he is different and the only white man who understands him. On the other hand; the most common use of the grotesque is satiric grotesque. Within the structure of the grotesque, McCullers also chooses Blount as a victim of the modern world. Blount demonstrates the mental distortions in a changing world rapidly. As a grotesque figure, he defends social equality and rights in the story. He tries to resist transformation so he feels deeply loneliness. The grotesque nature of Blount reflects the Southern society and he criticizes the system. McCullers uses Blount to criticize the new modern society within the structure of the grotesque. In the novel, Blount's criticisms have often been seen:

They fought a real revolution. They fought so that this could be a country where every man would be free and equal. Huh! And that meant every man was equal in the sight of Nature- with an equal chance. This didn't eighty percent of the means to live. This didn't mean for one rich man to sweat the piss out of ten thousand poor men so that he can get richer (144).

In this quotation, the failure and criticism of the American Revolution and the disappointment of people are reflected clearly in the novel. Blount draws attention to the American Revolution. It is understood that society has not achieved the truth of freedom and social status and racial divisions are also recognized in the society. His mental obsession is to awake the public to

show the truth. He resists the judicial system of the world. However; it can be said that his mental distortion brought him to the peak of madness. This kind of madness is explained in Bakhtin's book (1984):

For instance, the theme of madness is inherent to all grotesque forms, because madness makes men look at the world with different eyes, not dimmed by "normal," that is by commonplace ideas and judgments. In folk grotesque, madness is a gay parody of official reason, of the narrow seriousness of official "truth." It is a "festive" madness. In Romantic grotesque, on the other hand, madness acquires a somber, tragic aspect of individual isolation. (39)

As Bakhtin mentioned, Blount's madness is related to the telling of the truth. He sees the world with different perspectives but all he can do is to continue telling the truth. As a grotesque figure, his madness brought both isolation and alienation. Similarly, Blount assumes Bakhtin's carnivalesque culture. Bakhtin focuses on the atmosphere of the carnivalesque. It points to a place where there is no difference between masters and servants. All are equal (264). Like Bakhtin, Blount focuses on equal life for the public and he imagines that the hierarchical dominant world is disturbed or turned upside-down so he is a rebellious grotesque character. Like others, Blount trusts Singer and mentions his ideals every time because Blount is also a lonely person. Although Copeland and Blount who see social constructions know, they are eccentric grotesque characters because of their perceptions. It is possible to say that they want a new second life in that there is no division and everyone is the same but the life that they live in does not accept these grotesque characters so they become a stranger to the environment.

Subsequently, McCullers explores sexual ambiguity in *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*. McCullers's portrayal of Biff Brannon displays unidentified gender roles again. In contrast to other characters, Biff is a rather conscious person in the novel towards Singer. He is always an observer of freaks and misfits and considers why the others admire Singer. Although he visits Singer, his purpose is more different than others. He wants to learn something about Singer such as his past, feelings, and thoughts. Throughout the novel, he is interested in Mick and Baby and struggles with his desires that are not accepted by the social rules. He thinks that his feelings are considered as wrong and inconvenient. His conflict with his desires and society's expectations makes him a lonely person. Although Biff is masculine physically, he demonstrates the feminine side of his body after his wife dies. Biff's sexual ambivalence and feelings make him a queer character within the structure of the grotesque. The grotesque is a combination of binaries such as male and female. In the novel, Biff wishes "...he was a mother and that Mick and Baby were his kids" (120) and also uses his wife's perfumes instead of shaving cologne. In these sentences, it is understood that he recognizes his inner characteristics. Thus, Biff's behavior and feelings prove that all people have both sexes in body. However, it is not an uncommon situation in the conservative American society. In the concept of gender role in the American South, a man is supposed to have masculine feelings and actions but McCullers challenges the traditional gender roles and demonstrates what might be or change in body. She encourages the reader to rethink what shapes the identities in the conservative patriarchal American society.

Finally, all the characters are powerless against the social and physical world in the novel. McCullers creates a grotesque world. All of them question the meaning of life with their personal experience throughout the novel. Kayser expresses that "...it is the Self which is divided; and the unknown, the mask, has become part of the person" (1963: 137). In the modern age, the grotesque

is associated with the physical and social world of people. Based on Kayser's expression, it can be said that all the characters struggle with the Self. The grotesque sometimes appears in their bodies physically and spiritually because the modern grotesque touches upon social issues such as race, gender, capitalism, and equality. All things considered, Singer commits suicide after he learns Antonapoulos dies in the hospital. His life seems tragic and meaningless as if he loses his reason for being. Then, all the characters who believe and trust him lose their hope and faith in life. They return to their ordinary life which no one can understand and accept again. For instance, Mick Kelly who is a tomboy struggles with being feminine in the novel but she is seen as more feminine at the end of the novel. They are all frustrated, excluded, and isolated in society. Thus, it can be said that they wear their mask to continue life. To sum up, McCullers's characters are grotesque because they are 'freaks' mentally and physically so they are ignored by society. All five central characters are used as symbolic to demonstrate social construction in the Southern culture.



5. CONCLUSION

In this thesis, the concepts of disability and the grotesque are examined in literature under the social, cultural, and historical information. These terms help us how people are judged by society in many aspects. In a broad sense, the term 'disability' means physical and mental impairment of body condition and it is an inevitable part of life because it might happen at an unexpected time. From the past to the present, the history of disability has changed in Western Culture. There are so many different points of view towards disabled people. In Western culture, it is obvious that life was harsh for disabled people in the ancient periods because people mostly believed that they were cursed, and they were a burden, and a reflection of evil things. According to the traditional views, disability is accepted as monstrous and stigmatized so there is a strong division between disabled and non-disabled people. All the people who have impairment are accepted as abnormal. For this reason, they were discriminated, segregated and alienated by society in earlier times.

In the last decades of the twentieth century, with postmodernism disability studies emerged out and became the voice of marginalized people. Disability studies show that disability is a social creation and construction but impairment is related to personal events. All the discrimination comes from social constructs that impose barriers toward people. Thus, disability studies brought new critical points of view and focused on social barriers and divisions like race, class and ethnicity. Then, the meaning of the grotesque has changed historically.

It can be said that both *Of Mice and Men* (1937) and *The Heart Is A Lonely Hunter* (1940) include the elements of disability studies and grotesque. Within the historical context, the grotesque is related to the deformities, monstrous things, and curses in Western culture. According to Wolfgang Kayser's typology, the characterization of Lennie who is mentally retarded in *Of Mice and Men* is evaluated as a physically and mentally grotesque character. Steinbeck demonstrates human and non-human features in his physical appearance. Many theorists also expressed that physical or mental impairments limit someone's life. However, if there is a biased society, these impairments become also a barrier and burden for the disabled and they become a victim of society. In this novel, it is clearly seen how Lennie becomes a victim of society and why he is rejected by society so Lennie is examined as both a grotesque and disabled character. In McCullers' *The Heart Is A Lonely Hunter* John Singer and Antonapoulos who are deaf-mutes are also reflections of how disabled persons live in their small worlds and these characters show what's normal and abnormal in society. Each of these characters invites the reader to reconstruct the idea of disability. The most important question that comes into the minds is who qualifies us as disabled. This question is evaluated in this thesis through the experiences of Lennie in *Of Mice and Men* and Singer in *The Heart Is A Lonely Hunter* because we are all the same. More importantly, they are different persons but these differences do not pull them into the inferior position in life.

In addition, Kayser conveys the idea of the grotesque in the estrangement of people. The theme of estrangement is the most common feature in the uncanny grotesque. Kayser evaluates the grotesque as strange and psychological. Like Disability Studies in the 1990s, The grotesque in the twentieth century touches upon social issues such as race, gender, ethnicity, and disability because the grotesque is shaped in a dehumanized world. All things considered, there are common grounds between disability and grotesque within the historical context. The second characters George, Candy, and Crooks in *Of Mice and Men* and Mick, Dr.Copeland and Blount in *The Heart Is A Lonely Hunter* are reflections of social, cultural, and political interpretations in bodies. It is obvious

how disabilities are produced socially within the physical malformations, black people's exclusion, gender roles, and approaches to the life of these characters.

In this vein, John Steinbeck who is a social critic, generally focuses on social issues in *Of Mice and Men* (1937). He tries to create a realistic atmosphere in his work by examining social injustices, gender roles, racism, and misery. In this sense, *Of Mice and Men* constitutes symbolic characters to demonstrate human's struggle so his characters are not surprising for the readers. He chooses cripples, farmers, and migrants in his work because this perfect novel is a reflection of social discrimination and assumptions in Western culture. On the other hand; Carson McCullers who is the author of *The Heart Is A Lonely Hunter* (1940) is one of the most significant Southern Gothic authors. Southern Gothic is related to a specific region. One of the most distinctive characteristics of Southern Gothic is grotesque. The purpose of the grotesque in the Southern Gothic genre is to reflect American society's corruption, traumas, and experiences. After the Civil War, people who were destroyed and isolated morally, physically, and intellectually were recognized in Southern society. McCullers's characters are grotesque. She mostly chooses misfits, Negroes, and freaks in his work to traditional views. In contrast to Steinbeck's style, McCullers invites readers to think about the concept of 'normal'. She mostly questions what normal is in his work. Her literary technique sometimes reconstructs social outcasts toward her eccentric and deficient characters.

John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* is examined as grotesque and in the light of disability studies in this thesis. In this novel, there are grotesque features because of social exclusion. We saw discrimination and social barriers towards the characters. Throughout the novel, Steinbeck's realist style is seen in every scene of the novel. The history does not change and demonstrates its tragic and disturbing influences on the novel. In the novel, Lennie, Candy, and Crooks represent harsh and cruel aspects of a biased society. For instance; The central character, Lennie in *Of Mice and Men*, and others have also faced with social norms. It is seen how Lennie is accepted as a burden in a biased society. Lennie represents a mentally disabled person and his physical description is presented as a monster. As in the grotesque structure, disabled persons are identified with absurd shapes or abnormalities like a monster. He is an abnormal and defective man in a biased society under all circumstances. As Reddy said "disability is a social creation" (2011: 292). In a biased society, Lennie is ostracized because of his physical appearance and disorder. Although Lennie needs special protection and deep love in society, he cannot live safely and peacefully. Contrary to this protection, he does not earn his life laboriously. Steinbeck's central character, Lennie becomes a victim of society at the end. In short, All the characters live in the same circle like mice and they are crushed in a biased society because of social rules and traditional views. All the characters can not achieve their goals and they become unsuccessful. In the end, it is understood that disability and grotesque combine similarly. Within the historical context, it is possible to say that it is seen biased behaviors of the society in Lennie's exclusion and death, Candy's fear, and Crooks' race in the novel. The concept of disability takes its shape in all the characters' bodies, races, and fear.

The Heart Is A Lonely Hunter which is written under the influence of Southern culture reflects the grotesque elements because the function of the grotesque in the modern age is to touch upon gender, race, and discrimination. It became an aesthetic figure reflecting the characters' isolation in the novel. In this novel, all the characters do not have physical deformities but the thing that makes them grotesque is their alienation from society so they are misfits and freaks physically, sexually, and behaviorally in the society they live in. The central characters in *The Heart Is A*

Lonely Hunter are not normal characters according to social expectations. McCullers presents human struggles such as Copeland's obsession with equality for his race, Blount's ideals for social justice, Mick's and Biff's gender crisis, and Singer's isolation. It is known that the grotesque is a combination of binaries so the binary combinations of the characters in the novel are seen clearly. For instance; Mick's and Biff's gender roles in the novel demonstrate the identity crisis as well as their loneliness because they have both female and male features. The body images and masculine and feminine thoughts of Mick and Biff resist the conventions. We can find the grotesque sometimes in their thoughts and physical appearance because the grotesque is not only related to the deformities but also resisting the conventions. In parallel with this, the basic features of the grotesque can be found in both Copeland and Blount. The social and racial oppression over Copeland's race and Blount's resistance to the system in the novel is associated with the modern grotesque because the modern grotesque deals with discrimination. Because of social and racial discrimination, both Copeland and Blount have obsessions and distortions mentally so they are estranged from society.

Subsequently, Disability studies have demonstrated that the concept of disability is beyond the psychological deformities. It is related to the social constructions or social barriers. From the past to the present, there are more different views towards disabled persons and its influences are observed in *The Heart Is A Lonely Hunter*. If you have psychological deformities like Singer and Antonapoulos who are deaf-mutes or if you are black people like Blount, you will be certainly excluded from the society because black race and physical deformities have been accepted as a curse and abnormality in old times. Antonapoulos who displays dangerous acts became a problem for his cousin, Charles Parker. He immediately sends him insane asylum despite he has no responsibilities. Parker removes him from the society. In addition, Singer's childhood memory gives clues about the deaf-mute. They are left in the orphanage because of their disabilities. Therefore; Copeland's race is mentioned as a sick race because of their skin color. They have been killed, tortured, and excluded for centuries. Although McCullers demonstrates more powerful blacks, the social barriers have been continued and observed. In short, the concept of disability demonstrates the social barriers in the novel.

Thus, McCullers puts forward the concept of grotesque and disability in the Southern culture. They are all grotesque characters because of their desires and hopes. All of them have experienced mental isolation mentally. Like every human, Singer, Mick, Copeland, Blount, and Biff try to find a person who will understand them. It can be concluded that all of them are lonely hunters in their lives. Throughout the novel, McCullers wants to demonstrate that all the issues are constituted by social construction but her central characters behave more powerfully against clichés. Although these characters have experienced estrangement because of their physical, intellectual, and mental structures, McCullers does not demonstrate themselves as a victim of society because they all have more conscious choices in the end but they have experienced alienation and estrangement mentally.

It is possible to express that there is a strong correlation between the two novels. Both disability and grotesque have common grounds in literature socially, culturally, and historically. Both Steinbeck's and McCullers's characters adopt the typology of disability and grotesque. In these two novels, Steinbeck and McCullers touch upon universal social issues. For centuries, many people have been exposed to discrimination in many aspects. Being physically disabled, being black, and being a lower-class person become major problems in the dominant biased society. In

both of these novels, the concepts of disability and grotesque are examined in the social constructions because disabled people and marginalized people have many disadvantages. It is obvious that all disabilities and discrimination come from social conventions in these two novels but it should not be forgotten that social constructions cannot determine all the rules about life. Consequently, in the novels, the characters are different, but they struggle for the same purpose; they want to live in a world that is more free and equal and no one can be judged according to her/his physicality.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Altschuler, S. and Silva, C. (2017). Early American Disability Studies. *Early American Literature*, vol. 52, no. 1, pp. 1–27. JSTOR, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/90009790>. Accessed 8 April 2024.
- Babujee, B.J. (2021). Southern Gothic Genre as a Key to Unlock the Post Civil War American South: A Reading of William Faulkner's *A Rose for Emily*". Accessed 6 March 2023.
- Bakhtin, M.M. (1984). *Rabelais and His World*. Trans. Helene Iswolsky. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. Accessed 8 October 2024.
- Benson, J. J. (1977). John Steinbeck: Novelist as Scientist. *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, vol. 10, no. 3, 1977, pp. 248–64. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1345452>. Accessed 18 April 2024.
- Ben-Moshe, L. and Magaña, S. (2014). An Introduction to Race, Gender, and Disability: Intersectionality, Disability Studies, and Families of Color. *Women, Gender, and Families of Color*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2014, pp. 105–14. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.5406/womgenfamcol.2.2.0105>. Accessed 20 April 2024.
- Carpenter, F.I. (1941). John Steinbeck: American Dreamer. *Southwest Review*, vol. 26, no. 4, pp. 454–67. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43466599>. Accessed 19 April 2024.
- Campbell, L.D. (1907). The Grotesque in the Poetry of Robert Browning. *Bulletin of the University of Texas*, pp. 1-41.
- Crow, C. L. (2009). *American Gothic*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press. 7 October 2024.
- Clare, E. (1999). *Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness, and Liberation*. Cambridge, MA: South End P. Accessed 9 October 2024.
- Dews, C. (2019). Carson McCullers. *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, last modified October 6, 2019. <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/arts-culture/carson-mccullers-1917-1967/>. Accessed 9 October 2024.
- Davis, L.J. (2002). *Bending Over Backwards: Disability, Dismodernism & Other Difficult Positions*. New York: NYUP. Accessed 7 August 2024.
- Davis, L. J. (1999). Crips Strike Back: The Rise of Disability Studies. *American Literary History*, vol. 11, no.3, pp. 500–12. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/490130>. Accessed 8 April 2024.
- Edwards, J. & Graulund, R. (2013). *Grotesque* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203383438>. Accessed 9 October 2024.
- Edwards, R. A. R. (2012). *Words Made Flesh: Nineteenth-Century Deaf Education and the Growth of Deaf Culture*. New York: New York UP. Accessed 9 October 2024.
- Evans, R. (2015). Aspects of the Grotesque in Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphoses* . Accessed 9 October.
- Frederick, A. & Shifrer, D. (2019). Race and Disability: From Analogy to Intersectionality. 5. 200214. 10.1177/2332649218783480.
- Fine, M. and Asch, A. (1988). *Women with Disabilities: Essays in Psychology, Culture, and Politics*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. Accessed 20 April 2024.
- Garland-Thomson, R. (2005). Feminist Disability Studies. *Signs*, vol. 30, no. 2, 2005, pp. 1557–87. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.1086/423352>. Accessed 20 April 2024.
- Garland-Thomson, R. (1997). *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disability in American Culture and Literature*. New York: ColumbiaUP. Accessed 20 July 2024.
- Gnanasekaran, D. (2017). Disability Studies in Steinbeck's *Of Mice And Men*. *Veda's Journal of English Language and Literature JOELL*, Vol.4, no.3, pp. 145-148. Accessed 27 August 2024.
- Gleeson-White, S. (2001). Revisiting the Southern Grotesque: Mikhail Bakhtin and the Case of Carson McCullers. *The Southern Literary Journal*, vol. 33, no. 2, pp. 108–23. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20078304>. Accessed 6 August. 2024.

- Haar, M. (1983). *The phenomenon of the Grotesque in Modern Southern Fiction :Some Aspects of Its Form and Function* : Acta Universitatis Umensis (UmeH Studies in the Humanities, No. 51). Stockholm, Almqvist and Wiksell International. Accessed 26 July 2024.
- Hart, R. E. (2004). Moral Experience in *Of Mice and Men*: Challenges and Reflection. *The Steinbeck Review*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 31–44. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41583611>. Accessed 4 June 2024.
- Harpham, G. (1976). The Grotesque: First Principles. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 34, no. 4, pp. 461–68. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/430580>. Accessed 13 August. 2024.
- Hu, S. and Zhong, J. (2022). On the Grotesque in American Southern Gothic Fiction: A Case Study of “A Rose for Emily. *Frontiers in Humanities and Social Sciences*.VL-38-43.DO - 10.54691/fhss.v2i6.891. Accessed 20 April 2024.
- Jensen-Moulton, S. (2012). Intellectual Disability in Carlisle Floyd’s *Of Mice and Men*. *American Music*, vol. 30, no. 2, pp. 129–56. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.5406/americanmusic.30.2.0129>. Accessed 27 May 2024.
- Kayser, W. (1963). *The Grotesque in Art and Literature*. Ulrich Weisstein (Trans). New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company. Accessed 7 October 2024.
- Koçsoy, F.G. (2021) Evaluation of disability in Carson McCullers’ *The Ballad of the Sad Cafe*. *RumeliDE Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, (25), 1055-1063.[doi:10.29000/rumelide.1036616](https://doi.org/10.29000/rumelide.1036616). Accessed 27 August 2024.
- Kudlick, C. J. (2003). Disability History: Why We Need Another ‘Other. *The American Historical Review*, vol. 108, no. 3, pp. 763–93. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.1086/529597>. Accessed 5 April 2024.
- Lloyd, C. (2016). Southern Gothic. *American Gothic Culture: An Edinburgh Companion*, edited by Joel Faflak and Jason Haslam, Edinburgh University Press, pp. 79–91. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctt1bgzd69.7>. Accessed 16 May 2024.
- Longmore, P. K. and Goldberger, D. (2000) *The League of the Physically Handicapped and the Great Depression: A Case Study in the New Disability History*. *The Journal of American History*, vol. 87, no. 3, pp. 888–922. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2675276>. Accessed 8 April. 2024.
- Makaryk, I.R. (1993). *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory: Approaches, Scholars, Terms*. U of Toronto P., Toronto. Accessed 7 October.
- McCullers, C. (1940). *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*. Penguin Classics, 2018.
- Mc Elroy, B. (1989). *Fiction of the Modern Grotesque*. Palgrave Macmillan UK, London.
- Mikics, D. (2007). *A New Handbook of Literary Terms*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Nineteenth-Century Southern Gothic Short Fiction: Haunted by the Dark. *Birleşik Krallık, Anthem Press*, 2020. Accessed 9 October 2024.
- Novak, M. E. (1979). *Gothic Fiction and the Grotesque*. *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, vol. 13, no. 1, 1979, pp. 50–67. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1344951>. Accessed 9 October 2024.
- Northern, M. (2021). https://wordgathering.syr.edu/past_issues/issue24/essays/northern.html. Accessed 9 October 2024.
- Oliver, C. (1969). *John Steinbeck’s Method of Characterization*. (1969). Master Thesis. Eastern Illinois University. <https://thekeep.eiu.edu/theses/4077>. Accessed 9 October 2024.
- Oxford University Press, (2024). *English Oxford Dictionaries*. [Online] Available at: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/expatriate>.
- Parish, P.J. (1975). *The American Civil War* (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003124313_2. Accessed 9 October 2024.
- Patterson, K.A. (1997). University of California, Santa Barabar Proquest. *Dissertations & Theses*.9819467
- Pernick, M.S. (1996). *The Black Stork*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Platter, C. (1993). The Uninvited Guest: Aristophanes in Bakhtin’s History of Laughter. *Arethusa*, vol. 26, no. 2, pp. 201–16. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26309628>. Accessed 13 May 2024.

- Quicke, J. (1985). *Disability in Modern Children's Fiction*. Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books. Accessed 8 April 2021.
- Quinn, E. (2006). *A Dictionary of Literary and Thematic Terms*. <https://books.google.com.tr/books?id=-r4eQAAACAAJ>.
- Reddy, C. R. (2011). From Impairment to Disability and Beyond: Critical Explorations in Disability Studies. *Sociological Bulletin*, vol. 60, no. 2, 2011, pp. 287–306. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23620921>. Accessed 8 April 2024.
- Rubin, L.D. (1977). Carson McCullers : The Aesthetic of Pain. *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, vol. 53, no. 2, pp. 265–83. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26435912>. Accessed 26 March 2024.
- Romer, C.D. and Pells. R.H. (2003). Great depression. *Encyclopædia Britannica* 225 .
- Ruskin, J. (1875). *Grotesque Renaissance. The Stones of Venice*. Vol 3. Thomas and Cronell&Co, 1875, pp.112-65.
- Russo, M. (1994). *The Female Grotesque: Risk, Excess and Modernity*. Routledge.
- Stiker, H.J. (1999). *A History of Disability*. (trans. by William Sayers).E-book, Ann Arbor, MI:University of Michigan Press, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.11575987>. Accessed 1 Nov 2020. Downloaded on behalf of University of Pennsylvania
- Shillinglaw, S.(2020). Biography in Depth: John Steinbeck, American Writer.” The Steinbeck Institute John Steinbeck: Social Critic and Ecologist. Accessed 8 March 2024
- Shillinglaw, S. and Hearle, K. editors. (2002). *Beyond Boundaries: Re-reading Steinbeck*. University of Alabama Press.
- Spiegel, A. (1972). A Theory of the Grotesque in Southern Fiction. *The Georgia Review*, vol. 26, no. 4, pp. 426–37. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41396901>. Accessed 3 May 2024.
- Steinbeck, J. (1937). <https://dn720001.ca.archive.org/0/items/of-mice-and-men-pdf/OfMiceAndMen%20PDF%20Version.pdf> Accessed 5 September 2024.
- Steig, M. (1970). Defining the Grotesque: An Attempt at Synthesis. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 29, no. 2, pp. 253–60. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/428606>. Accessed 13 May 2024.
- Street, C.S. and Crow, C.L. (2016). Introduction: Down at the Crossroads. In Street, C.S. and Crow, C.L. (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of the Southern Gothic* (pp. 1-6). Palgrave-Macmillan.
- Syracuse Univ., Ny.Center on Human Policy., et al. (2003). *Disability Studies: Information and Resources Center on Human Policy*, November. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=ED498068&lang=tr&site=ehost-live. Accessed 18 April 2024.
- Thomson, P. (1972). *The Grotesque*. *The Critical Idiom*, no. 24. Edited by John D. Jump. London.
- Titchkosky, T. (2000). Disability Studies: The Old and the New. *The Canadian Journal of Sociology / Cahiers Canadiens de Sociologie*, vol. 25, no. 2, pp. 197–224. JSTOR <https://doi.org/10.2307/3341823>. Accessed 9 June 2024.
- Waggoner, K. (2017). Embodied Listening: Singer as Feminist Listener in *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*. *The Mississippi Quarterly*, vol. 70/71, no. 1, pp. 61–80. JSTOR, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26756504>. Accessed 4 August 2024.
- Adams, J.L. and Yates, W. (1997). *The Grotesque in Art and Literature: Theological Reflections*. Great Britain. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.
- Wendell, S. (1989). Toward a Feminist Theory of Disability. *Hypatia*, vol. 4, no. 2, 1989, pp. 104–24. JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3809809>. Accessed 20 April 2024.