

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Satire of Secular Culture in O'Connor's *Wise Blood*

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This thesis entitled "*Satire of Secular Culture in O'Connor's Wise Blood*" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by **Mr. Prem Bahadur Khadka** has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

The present research work studies O'Connor's *Wise Blood* as a satire on secular American culture. In order to expose the satire, the study focuses on the grotesque activities of the characters and the extensive use of animal imagery in the text. It studies the symbolic significance of the grotesqueness, eccentricity and animal imagery so as to expose spiritual decline in human beings in modern times in America. The work has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter gives a general introduction to the work. The second chapter makes the study of satire and secularism. The third chapter analyzes the text to reveal the satire that human beings are turning into animalism in modern times. The fourth chapter is the conclusion of the work.

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I: INTRODUCTION

Life and Works of Flannery O'Connor

Flannery O'Connor, an American short storywriter and novelist is accepted as an important literary genius of the South. She was born into an Irish Catholic family in Savannah, Georgia, on March 25, 1925 and was raised as a devout Roman Catholic in Milledgeville, Georgia. She was the only child of Edward F. O'Connor and Regina Cline O'Connor. Her father is considered to be an early creative influence on his daughter. He took some interest in writing and he encouraged her to write and draw. As a child O'Connor was in the local newspaper when she taught a chicken that she owned to walk backwards.

O'Connor attended St. Vincent Grammar School and Sacred Heart Parochial School. Later, The O'Connor family moved to the North East Atlanta where she attended the Peabody Laboratory School and graduated in 1942. After that O'Connor entered Georgia State College for Women, where she majored in English and Sociology, and became art editor of the Colonnade, the school's student run newspaper. Later, she joined State University of Iowa. By 1946 Miss O'Connor was accepted into the prestigious Iowa Writers' Workshop.

By all accounts, O'Connor was shy girl with a penchant for starting unique behavior that foreshadowed the highly individualistic vision with which she later imbued in fiction. She preferred to be left to her own pursuit, which involve studies in painting. Art and writing while at Peabody. Her father died on February one.1941 just as Flannery was completing her studies at Peabody. She was deeply affected by the loss of

her father. In 1951, O'Connor was diagnosed as having the same type of lupus that killed her father. Incurable and terminal, O'Connor persevered through increasing physical debilitation and completed her first novel *wise Blood* which appeared to critical acclaim in 1952. She went on despite the disease, to write two novels and thirty-two short stories, winning awards and acclaim, going on speaking tours when her health permitted, but spending most of her time on the family farm, Andalusia, in Milledgeville with her mother. She died of the same lupus, which killed her father on August third, 1964 at the age of thirty-nine.

She was a determined regionalist whose work never lapses into a comfortable provinciality. As a devout Catholic, she finds her themes and characters in the Christ haunted southern protestant Biblical belt and much of her adult life, a confined, invalid who could be as resistant to sentimentality and what she called 'lazy compassion' as the most hard-boiled detective novelist.

She hated abstraction. The first and most obvious characteristic of her work is that deals with reality, with things that can be seen, heard, smelt, tasted and touched. Following the great catholic philosopher St. Thomas Aquinas, she believed that human knowledge begin through the senses.

In Flannery O'Connor's own critical articles collected posthumously in *mystery and manners* (1969), she talks about the essential mystery of art. Her stories are filled with images of the grotesque and her characters include a gallery of man and women who are mentally or physically twisted. A devout if ironic catholic, she believed in both evil and grace and she

chose extremity as her subject in order to prove the mystery that she felt lay beneath all of life's plausible explanations.

She found in the south a metaphor for theology and her tales set out the consequences of the original sin and fall. She gave her paramount intellectual allegiance to the church but her afflictions of Jesuit theological scientist, Pierre Tailored Chardin. She wrote admiringly of Thorne and Melville as masters of Romance.

The themes of her stories and novels have the same rigidly defined religious concerns. The same theological pattern, Christian symbols and biblical references are prevalent everywhere in her novels and stories. She herself has written in her posthumously published *mystery and manners*" I have found that my subject in fiction is the action of grace in territory largely held by the devil" (qtd. in Katz 54). Practically all of her fictions have had a religious theme and her characters confront spiritual and most problem. Robert Fitzgerald rightly say' "Almost all her people are displaced and some are either aware of it or become so" (393).

In her stories, the prosperous and sophisticated city is a place of estrangement and alienation. Most of her characters are not from the city rather they are poor and rural folk dominated by old ancestral fear- of death, the unknown the foreign and all the shadows of evil.

Joyce Carol Oats views O'Connor as one of the great religious writers of modern times, unique "in her celebration of the necessity of succumbing to the divine through violence that is immediate and irreparable. There is no mysticism in her work that is only spiritual; it is physical as well" (qtd. in Charters 1036). The protagonist in her fiction is humiliated in order to

recognize his state of sin, and is thus open to grace and redemption. Claire Katz writes, "Again and again she creates a fiction in which a character attempts to live autonomously, to define himself and his values, only to be jarred back to what she calls 'reality' – the recognition of helplessness in the face of contingency, and the need for absolute submission to the power of God" (55).

O'Connor began writing after the World War II. Obviously, the catastrophe of the war had shaken faith on moral basis, coherence, and durability of western civilization, and raised doubts about the adequacy of traditional values. As O'Connor often uses southern America as the setting and the southerners as her characters in her fiction, it can be said that she is much more concerned about the growing loss of spiritual values in the south. O'Connor writes, "My audiences are the people who think God is dead. At least, these are the people I am conscious of writing for" (qtd. in High 193). She could not bear the rampant evil, especially the loss of moral and spiritual values in the South. She vigorously attacked the secularization of religion in her other works as well.

O'Connor has sometimes been regarded as a southern Gothic writer of America as she uses frightening characters and events in her works. Peter B. High comments, "Her stories and novels are filled with horrible events and grotesque characters. There are murderers, haters and madmen. This makes her typical of 'Southern Gothic' school of writing" (178).

O'Connor has made extensive use of image and symbol in her fiction. Commenting on her use of images and symbols in her writing, Clinton C. Trobridge writes, "For Flannery O'Connor, images, symbols and figures of

speech, in general, were not simply ways of saying things. Rather, they were tools of language to penetrate into the heart of mystery. She took them so seriously that she would have us taken them literally" (298).

Wise Blood is her first novel, which appeared in 1952. When the novel appeared in the very early 1950s, it signals talent-breaking style, content and intensity from somewhat more established group. Hazel Motes is by a metaphysical ordination a man of God who resists his calling only to order to justify his behavior and than continues to sin in order to justify his unbelief. At the start of the novel, approaching a woman on a train says, "Do you think I believe in Jesus?" (16), Hazel said leaning towards her and speaking almost as if she were breathless," well I wouldn't even if he existed even if he were on this train"(16).

The collection of her stories *A Good Man is Hard to Find* present abundance of victims of grotesque fate and weird villains. Manichean dilemma appears in each of her stories and novels. A perusal of O'Connor's fiction reveals that Christ haunted-figures furnish the author her principal subject matter. Through the conflict often violent ones, often her protagonist who oscillate between belief and unbelief, forces a crisis that reveals to him his haughty and willful misconception of reality at which time he experience, what O'Connor's has called his moment of grace. Thomas, a doubting protagonist in *A Good Man is Hard to Find* is unable to feel the wounds and witnesses the resurrection of Christ, denies all possibilities for good in this world and the next. Since, it is easier for matter to fall than to rise, belief in the resurrection of the body comes with

difficulty to the materialist Thomas, so is Mr. Shiftet in *The Life You Save May be Your Own*, Julian in *Everything that Rises Must Converge*.

For Miss O'Connor's materialists, the means becomes the end. All of O'Connor's intellectuals fall into the error of Marlow's Dr. Faustus, who listens with mind and not the heart to Mephistopheles' confessions, "this is hell nor I am out of it" (84). The image of fatherhood is missing for all of Miss O'Connor's adolescents. Their choice is usually between the womb, a heretical grandfather or the spiritual father, the way of the hero.

Flannery O'Connor's second novel *The Violent Bear it Away* (1960) takes its title from Mathev 11:12 to the effect that the "Kingdom of heaven sufferth violence and the violence take it by force." The characters presented in the novel are grotesque yet they represent the true human situations. The structure of the novel is formed by vertical line based on an extended family. The whole novel revolves round an orphan who has been reared up by his great uncle to be a prophet. When the novel opens, the great uncle of Young Tarwater is dead and a Negro boy is digging the grave. The same deceased man had kidnapped Young Tarwater fourteen years ago when the boy was on the crib. His first task as a prophet, the old man repeatedly told him would be to baptize Bishop, the dimwitted son of the schoolteacher named Rayber. Rayber is also his uncle and the openly represents non- belief and wishes to indoctrinate Tawater in the ways of atheism. He rebels against the old man's saying, " Jesus is the bread of life" (324). Even he resists it, however he is effected by old man's prophesying. The novels end where it began with the acceptance of the hero's role as a prophet making full circle literally.

Theme and style of Flannery O'Connor

Thematic Elements

Flannery O'Connor's is one of the great religious writers of modern times, who shows religious concern in her whole fiction. As a devout Roman Catholic, O'Connor was uncompromising in her religious veins. She says: "For I am no disbeliever in spiritual purpose and no vague believer. This means that for me the meaning of life is centered in our redemption by Christ and what I see in the world I see in relation to that" (qtd. in Charters 1036). O'Connor's conscious purpose is evident enough, and has been abundantly observed by her critics: to reveal the need for grace in a world grotesque without a transcendent. For in each work, it is the impulse toward secular autonomy, the smug confidence that human nature is perfectible by its own efforts, that she sets out to stir and destroy, through an act of violence so intense that the character is rendered helpless, a passive victim of a superior power.

Since O'Connor had identified her theme as Christian, it is no surprise to find critics discussing this prototypical pattern in religious terms: the protagonist is humiliated in order to recognize his state of sin, and is open to grace and redemption. Characters are classified analogically, Christian symbols and biblical references noted, and what emerges from these studies is the portrait of a writer tracing a timeless moral schema instead of engaging imaginatively with her felt experience.

In addition to her religious concern, O'Connor raised many humanely significant issues such as family relationship, homesickness, alienation and salvation. Commenting on her themes, Josephine Hendine writes,"

O'Connor wrote in praise of a hard coolness about the human predicament. She celebrated the emotional coldness that freed her characters. From an agong of human needs, ties and longing" (251). O'Connor was well- known for her use of the grotesque and the bizarre to rivet a reader to her tales. Here the sudden revelation of Manley pointer's malevolence is both dramatic and smocking, but a fitting climax.

In her fiction, she explores her own private world, which seems to be connected to Roman Catholicism. But she rarely discusses religion directly. On the surface, her stories and novels are filled with horrible events and grotesque characters, but deep down they provide us with adequate insight and knowledge about people and the world. Although O'Connor lived for a short span of life of thirty-nine years, she was able to produce two novels and three dozens of short stories, which won her National Book Award for fiction in 1972.

Of the various themes of the writing of Flannery O'Connor, perhaps the most fascinating and certainly one of the most discussed, is that of the grotesque. Critic Gilbert H. Muller compares the grotesque imagery of O'Connor with that of the *Millennium* triptych of Hieronymus Bosch, going on to state that "for these two artists, the grotesque does not function gratuitously, but in order to reveal underlying and essentially theological concepts" (20). Indeed, the various grotesque characters serve both as an example of the folly of denying the true religion and as, in some cases, Christ figures themselves. O'Connor rejoins with, "In any case, it is when the freak can be sensed as a figure for our essential displacement that he attains some depth in literature" (21).

This concept of "displacement" runs throughout O'Connor's work, and it is essentially a displacement from the world of the one true God, a theological displacement, although within the context of the story it is more social, based on the nature of the freak's position in the society. In the case of the Polish immigrant Guizac in "The Displaced Person," it is his foreignness, the fact that he is an outsider perceived as a threat by the various rural types in the story that makes him a freak. Yet he winds up becoming a kind of Christ figure when he is crushed by a tractor that is "allowed" to roll over him, essentially crucifying him. Other freaks include the club-footed Rufus Johnson ("The Lambs Shall Enter First"), the wooden-legged Joy/Hulga Hopewell ("Good Country People"), the nymphomaniacal Sarah Ham ("The Comforts of Home"), and the retarded and deaf Lucynell Crater ("The Life You Save May Be Your Own").

Very often, the grotesque elements of O'Connor's stories are balanced out by anagogical ones. Again, the latter are not specifically symbols, for symbols work contextually to represent interactive story elements, whereas O'Connor's anagogical elements are just there, they wander in and out of the action; they may have symbolic significance, but it never comes directly into play as a plot element. They are there as reminders of the presence of the unseen, mysterious God. "These liturgical objects," says Muller, "whether a peacock in 'The Displaced Person,' a water stain in 'The Enduring Chill,' or a tattoo in 'Parker's Back,' permit Flannery O'Connor to neutralize the world of the grotesque and to clarify those mysteries which serve as an antidote to it" (22).

Facing death is another thematic element that recurs often in O'Connor, for obvious reasons, both personal and religious. Her "affliction, which she carried with her during the major part of her literary career, forced a certain austerity upon her fiction; inevitably she transferred personal agony and suffering to her work." (23). O'Connor admits as much herself, in an essay in which she discusses "A Good Man is Hard to Find": "The heroine of the story, the Grandmother, is in the most significant position life offers the Christian. She is facing death" (24). This last quote speaks volumes; it is probably the single most significant and telling remark the student of Flannery O'Connor can have in his attempt to understand her work. Clearly facing death as a Christian was the motivational engine that drove her writing, and the theme that emerged from it often, as is common in O'Connor, got turned on its head, becoming stories in which people are facing death *not* as Christians. Perhaps this was O'Connor's catharsis, her solace, that however terrified she was at the prospect of her own looming death, at least she was prepared; at least she wouldn't wind up like the grotesque wretches that peopled her stories.

In a letter written to Winifred McCarthy, Flannery O'Connor writes, "There is a moment in every great story in which the presence of grace can be felt as it waits to be accepted or rejected, even though the reader may not recognize this moment" (25). We touched briefly on the concept of grace earlier, and a more in-depth discussion is necessary here, when considering thematic elements, because just as the idea of grace figures prominently in Catholicism, so it does in O'Connor. Critic Carter W. Martin notes:

Most of the short stories are constructed in such a way as to dramatize the sinfulness and the need for grace..." and goes on to delineate two different kinds of grace normally received by the characters, prevenient grace- which moves the will spontaneously, making it incline to God--and illuminating grace, by which God enlightens men to bring them nearer to eternal life. (26)

That is to say either a kind of spark that ignites a low smolder of realization, or full-blown revelation. Usually the character recognizes his need for repentance and either accepts or ignores the opportunity. In a few stories there is no indication as to the response of the character to his new insight. The latter is the case in "Parker's Back," "The Enduring Chill," and "Good Country People" among others.

O'Connor is willing to go to draconian lengths to mete out her particular brand of divine grace, utilizing such techniques as matricide, strangulation, suicide, impaling, beating, shooting, and whipping, to name a few. "I have found that violence is strangely capable of returning my characters to reality and preparing them to accept their moment of grace," she tells us. She goes on to explain that "This idea, that reality is something to which we must be returned at considerable cost, is one which is seldom understood by the casual reader, but it is one which is implicit in the Christian view of the world" (27). To sum up, I have found, in short, from reading my own writing that my subject in fiction is the action of grace in territory held largely by the devil.

Elements of Style

Having looked somewhat at the morbidly Catholic mindset that is the essential infrastructure supporting the fiction of Flannery O'Connor, let us move on to those techniques and idiosyncrasies that make up her writing style. It should be said at the outset that O'Connor is not as "colorful" or "lyrical" as other writers in the great Southern Gothic tradition, although she did share their fascination with the grotesque. Along with her more conservative Catholic detractors (mentioned above), who find, as critic Melvin J. Friedman puts it, "her brand of Catholicism not orthodox enough," there are also the more "'textual' literary critics who find her language too bare and her experiments with structure not eccentric enough" (16). This last comment points to what I would refer to as a Cult of eccentricity in literary academia that obsesses on the obscure, the abstruse, the vague, and the confusing in literature in what is, by now, a reflexive effort to legitimize literature study by making it as difficult as possible to understand. It is reflexive, in that it is no longer necessary, as it once was, some 100 years ago, when the study of literature still sought legitimacy among the accepted academic disciplines. But nevertheless, the good news is that O'Connor's genius is recognized and accepted by the bulk of the intelligencia, proving the truth of the motto, "less is more." For this truly is the secret weapon in her stylistic arsenal: a stark, spartan, perhaps dour, possibly mundane regularity, a steadiness in the narrative that at times may seem plodding to the neophyte reader, yet all the while something is bubbling beneath the lid; at any moment, the pot is likely to boil over, even spew forth something unexpected and, usually, profoundly disturbing.

Also significant in the writing style of Flannery O'Connor is a tendency to take on the character point of view in the narrative. However, it is done in such a way that although the omniscient third-person narrator takes on the particular viewpoint of the character in question while describing this or that, the effect is more of a mirror than an advocate. For example:

He knew, of course, that his mother would not understand the letter at once. Her literal mind would require some time to discover the significance of it, but he thought she would be able to see that he forgave her for all she had done to him.

When people think they are smart--even when they are smart--there is nothing anybody else can say to make them see things straight, and with Asbury, the trouble was that in addition to being smart, he had an artistic temperament. (17-18)

In these quotes from "The Enduring Chill," the use of "of course" and "literal" are reflecting the point of view of the son, Asbury, in the first passage, and the business about being smart is clearly the mother's opinion in the second, but within the context of the story, as the description shifts democratically throughout, O'Connor's narrative maintains its impartiality while emphasizing the viewpoint of its various characters. This technique leads itself to greater economy of description and exposition, therefore making it perfectly suited to the short story genre.

One feature of O'Connor's writing which is none-too-subtle on the Christian fiction front is her use of character names. The worst offender seems to be the aforementioned Mary Grace, the overweight messenger of

doom that hurls a book at the head of the pompous Mrs. Turpin and then proceeds to throttle her severely. Other such tell-tale names include O.E. Parker (for Obadiah Elihue, a prophet and a friend of Job respectively), Mr. Fortune, Mrs. Cope, Joy Hopewell (a 32-year-old embittered Ph.D. with a wooden leg who changes her name to Hulga because it sounds uglier), Sheppard, old Tanner, the list goes on. Most names are ironic rather than symbolic, such as Sheppard, a naive man whose lack of judgement leads to the suicide of his son, or Joy Hopewell, who is joyless, hopeless, and unwell. The fact that the names are most usually a mockery of the characters adds to the cryptic Christianity that characterizes O'Connor's work.

There is in O'Connor what I would term an exquisite gelidity, an icy quality that I cannot help but attribute in part to her awareness of her own encroaching mortality. From all accounts, her personality was laconic and droll, self-possessed. Her religion gave her strength, but little joy. For O'Connor, salvation was ice, not fire, as is made clear in "The Enduring Chill," a story that concerns a young intellectual named Asbury who is convinced that he is about to die. Perhaps I've read too much into this little story, but for me it resonates with a certain despair not present in the other works I've read, which I attribute to the author's own despair at watching what was really every writer's dream career (early recognition, critical acclaim, awards, speaking engagements, readings) rapidly waste away from the lupus she'd inherited from her father. For me, the most chilling aspect of the story is the description of a prophetic water stain above Asbury's bed:

Descending from the top molding, long icicle shapes had been etched by leaks and, directly over his bed on the ceiling, another leak had made a fierce bird with spread wings. It had an icicle crosswise in its beak and there were smaller icicles depending from its wings and tail. It had been there since his childhood and had always irritated him and sometimes had frightened him. He had often had the illusion that it was in motion and about to descend mysteriously and set the icicle on his head. He closed his eyes and thought: I won't have to look at it for many more days. (19)

As the reader will recall from the beginning of this thesis, the same ice bird is recalled at the end of the story, this time as the Holy Ghost, bearing down on Asbury in its entire fierce icy wrath.

Critical Summary of the Text: *Wise Blood*

Wise Blood is O'Connor's first novel published in 1952. When it appeared in the print for the first time, there was a great rush to oversimplify it, given the provenance of the writer, and the southern aspects of her characters. Commentators tended, in the light of their own prejudices and preconceptions, to see her as another chronicler of Southern grotesqueries. They disliked it for what they saw a mockery of themselves and of Protestantism, and in her own location it was regarded as a shockingly immoral book. Some critics dismissed the novel as a most deficient book as they found its ending unconvincing.

Wise Blood is a complex novel which deals with several topics: ways in which people are displaced and marginalized; the arrogance that keeps

people from seeing themselves; the centrality of Christ in the salvation of humankind, and the suggestion that one's awareness of Christ is the mark of one's very character. Through violent, perverse, and monstrous images, O'Connor satirizes the secular practices prevalent in America. She gazes boldly at evil and shocks readers into seeing with new eyes, the injustices and pride they overlook in their daily lives.

Wise Blood is a savage satire of America's secular, commercial culture. It is a comedy with a fierce, *Old Testament* soul. O'Connor has no truck with such newfangled notions as psychology. Driven by forces outside their control, her characters are as one-dimensional and mysterious – as figures on a frieze. The major character, Hazel Motes, for instance, has the frieze. Hazel, for instance, has the temperament of a martyr, even though he spends most of the time trying to get God away. As a child, he's convinced that "the way to avoid Jesus was to avoid sin" (10).

When that does not work, and when he returns from Korea determined to be converted to nothing instead of evil, he still can go any where without being mistaken for a preacher. He becomes a source of humor as he wears a blue and shiny glare-blue suit, similar to that of a preacher. However, he vehemently protests that he does not believe in God.

O' Connor links all of her characters to animals so as to expose the fact that they lack spiritual and meditative aspect. Every character is linked to animal by animal name and nature. Hazel Motes, who has a nose like a shrike's bill" (4), buys a "rat- colored car" (5) and sets about preaching on street corners for the church without Christ where the blind don't see and the lame don't walk and what's dead stays that way.

Other humorous characters are Asa Hawks, a fake blind preacher and Hoover Shoats, who start the rival church of Christ without Christ. These characters are completely immersed in material quest. Both of them want to make easy money out of preaching, but in reality they hate religion. Hazel Motes meets Enoch Emery, an eighteen years old boy, who acts as his parallel. He works for the city zoo. He follows Hazel as he has money. Enoch is a most alienated character in the novel. When he sees the Gorilla show, Enoch is attracted by its popularity. Later, he beats up the actor in the Gorilla suit, and puts on the ape-suit. As a representative of modern man, he is correct in believing that the way to succeed in the modern world is to act like an animal. But the irony is that Enoch as Gonga fails to win the friendship and recognition for which he has been searching desperately. When people see him, they flee in terror. Thus, the human animal has come to the limit of his freedom, and he symbolically finds himself alone in his cage.

Every character in the novel is thrown into enclosed and confined places. Haze cannot resist his love for such places, though he moved half way round the world while in the army. He always dreams of being shut into the coffin-box. His old, rusty car is like his cage as he uses it as his permanent home. No spiritual thought can come to him as long as he sticks to it. Moreover, he is always in search of private and lonely places throughout the novel. The references of toilet stall, zoo cages, museum cases, caskets coffin-box etc. are the other example of enclosed places with animal associations.

The other thing that links the characters to animals in the novel is their love for material gains, comfort and sexuality. Haze always takes pride in his car and prostitute, Leora Watts. As long as Haze sticks to them, he cannot think of anything else. Enoch too loves going to movie theatres, whore houses and restaurants for enjoyment. The other characters also sit idly at home eating and drinking all the time. Haze's girlfriend, Enoch and the landlady's greed for money is an example of this. Haze and Enoch always get jealous of the animal comforts during their visit to the zoo.

The characters' motion in the novel is animal-like. What they do throughout the novel is move round where they live like the animals in zoo cages. Haze's movement inside the train, car, prostitute's room etc. is similar to that of animal. Enoch always roams about the zoo in the same manner. The other characters move about the narrow rooms, alleys and city corners.

Literature Review

Wise Blood has drawn the attention of a number of critics since its publication. Viewing the novel as imbued with the theme of God's redemptive act of mankind in the depraved world, Jonathan Baumbach writes, "*Wise Blood* explores the world of corrosion and decay invested with evil, apparently god-forsaken, but finally redeemed by God through men's renunciation and extreme penance" (87).

The 1950s were a period of widespread cultural stasis and neurosis. The American authors at the time show that they are very uncomfortable in the post-war world. In their work, the sad, heavy weight of the past can be felt. The central theme of their work, however, is often loneliness, the

'search for the self' and spiritual values. While comparing the novel, *Wise Blood* with Eliot's *The Waste Land*, Sally Fitzgerald finds striking similarities between the two works in terms of the setting and theme:

In *Wise Blood*, O'Connor's counterpart of Eliot's sordid London is the debased city of Taulkinham, inhabited by rootless individuals, sleazy, hostile, self-seeking, untrustworthy, cut off from each other and from every source of spiritual, intellectual, or emotional nutriment. The figure she planned to set against this ground was a young country boy, dragged by the army from his home in Eastrod, Tennessee [. . .] and sent half way around the globe to fight in some corner of the Second World War; then returned, wounded in body and soul, to a broken-down society, his family and home gone and his bearings hopelessly lost. (qtd. in O'Connor, Intr. x)

The novel was written by an author congenitally innocent of theory, but with certain preoccupations. Her major preoccupation was with her religiosity. One of the critics O'Connor often feared was Freud whose was an approach she consistently disparaged. According to Jeffery Gray, Freud's essay "The Uncanny" provides not merely an adequate but a superlative instrument for an analysis of *Wise Blood*. So, avoiding the idea of religious encounter, Jeffery Gray reads the novel from Freud's psychoanalytical perspective:

Indeed, the violent events of *Wise Blood* form the "realist" component of the novel; the roots of that violence, the

uncanny split between mind and body, are what give it its horror. Indeterminacy in this case-- of literary genre as much as of subjectivity of characters-- is vital to the success of uncanny effects. (41)

Frederic Asat in a more secular reading, writes, at the end of the novel, "as Enoch, the protagonist's parallel plunges downward into bestiality, the protagonist, Hazel Motes rises upward into a desperate spirituality" (24). Similarly, Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury take the novel as the reflection of moral pain and rising alienation as they write, "*Wise Blood* offered a dismayed, disturbing moral vision" (375).

As the critics found O'Connor's setting and characters strange and horrific, they rated her as another one of the grotesque writers of the south. But she has a special purpose in distorting the events in her fiction that is to make her readers see the reality. In this regard, she writes:

To this end I have to bend the whole novel, its language, its structure, its action. I have to make the reader fed in his bones if nowhere else, that something is going on here that counts. Distortion in this case is an instrument; exaggeration has a purpose and the whole story or novel has been made what it is because of belief. This is not the kind of distortion that destroys; it is the kind that reveals or should reveal. (qtd. in Fitzgerald 162)

This O'Connor's typical technique has been observed in the same light in *Wise Blood*:

The hero, Hazel's denial of God is his grotesque act. Blasphemer, murderer, penitent and ascetic without a god, he still remains a pin point of light in a society that knows only spiritual sloth. Freakish though he may be, the grotesque seeks desperately to express spirit, denying the practicalities of daily life, in favor of an outlandish hope. (Robert E. Spiller et al.1422)

Some reviewers and critics have charged O'Connor with sociological, psychological and religious provincialism. According to David Eggenschwiler, "these critics neglect the humanism which was central to Miss O'Connor's background, and accordingly is essential for an understanding of her writings" (14). All of the O'Connor's fiction is concerned with the historical and religious division of society and man, the loss of physical and spiritual place. She has depicted man as one of the major complexities of the world. Thomas M. Carlson observes:

It can be seen that the enveloping action in all her fictions follows the archetypal pattern of traditional myth, the fall of the divine man into the rational world and his subsequent struggle with the conflicting multiplicities of the world. (44)

In *Wise Blood*, the characters suffer from every kind of alienation as they emphasize only on material and finite aspect of the reality. Comparing the hero, Hazel Motes to Saint Anthony, Lewis A, Lawsan writes: "Both are possessed with an overpowering sense of the importance of religious belief [. . .]. And both use self-abasement to express their realization of the gulf which separates the human from the spiritual" (39).

There has been a tendency to describe O'Connor as a religious fanatic and an ideal writer who looks upon heaven rather than earth as a site where human well being is to be achieved. But she believes in the metaphysical conception of man as a synthesis of the finite and infinite. She sees the holistic development of man in this synthesis. In this regard, reading the novel, *Wise Blood* from a revised understanding of the relationship between eschatological and socio-historical frames of references, Susan Edmunds writes:

Wise Blood sets up an analogical or "mirroring" relationship between contemporary history and Christ's second coming in order to measure communities of the present day by divine standards. This analogical relationship is dynamic and open-minded, allowing humans the freedom to participate actively in the fulfillment of God's historical vision. (5)

When *Wise Blood* "reached the age of ten" in 1962, O'Connor countered the early reviewers' opinion of the novel by saying that it was "a comic novel about a Christian *Malgre Lui*, and as such very serious, for all comic novels that are any good must be about matters of life and death" (O'Connor 2). With this clarification, critics have since highlighted the general comic effect of the grotesque in O'Connor's writings, and her reputation as an ironist has been secured. The most common critical approach has been to juxtapose her grotesque scenes of Georgia life against O'Connor's devout Catholic background, and examine the humor implicit in the exaggerated counterpoint. On the thematic level, the grotesque is seen as a social or religious aberration and the comic as a regional element; on

the level of character, the comic is regarded as O'Connor's device to present the paradoxical proportions of belief and action represented by her characters. In this regard, Surya Prasad Rath views *Wise Blood* as "an archetypal comic novel, which suggest that its comic effect results from confrontations among characters which form comic polarities within the frame work of the story" (par. 2). Similarly, Miles Orvell begins his treatment of O'Connor's writing by usefully placing it within the American tradition of satiric romance. Like Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Poe, O'Connor creates a fiction of surfaces, which concomitantly reflect the aspect of "psyche's traumatic investigation of reality" (542).

II: THEORETICAL MODALITY

Satire

Satire is both a specific literary genre and a literary manner. As a genre, it has reference to a poetic form originated in the second century B.C. by the roman satirist Lucile's, practiced with distinction by its successors, Horace, Persius, and Juvenal, and best described by Quintilian in his *Institutio Oratoria* (about 5 A.D). This formal verse satire, written in Latin hexameters, was dramatic, with the satirist, through a dialogue with an Adversary, exposition vice and folly, but means of critical analysis. Alexander Pope's epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot is an eighteenth century English example.

The word "Satire" is derived from the Latin (lanx) "Satura" ("full plate"; plate filled with various fruits"- hence, a melody). By implication, it means a hotch-potch in literature. But its origin often has been confused with the Greek satyr play- the forth play in the dramatic bill, with a chorus of "goat men" and coarse comic manner. According to Gilbert Highet, "the essence of the original name was variety in a certain down-to-earth naturalness, or coarseness, or unsophisticated heartiness" (231).

A satire, generally speaking, is an attack on foolish or wicked behavior by making fun of it often by using humor, sarcasm and parody. C. High Holman defines satire "as a literacy manner in which the follies and foibles or vices and crimes of a person, humankind, or an institution are held up to ridicule or scorn, with the intention of correcting them" (293). This manner may be present in various art forms and may employ many methods. Satire is also applied to magic songs and ritualistic invective in

Greek, old Irish and Arabic literatures, where the ritual curse was believed to have powerful effects.

Satire has usually been justified as a corrective of human vice and folly. Satires are the jokes about serious things. So, although satire is often comic, its object is to evoke not mere laughter but laughter for a corrective purpose. It always has a target such as pretense, falsity, deception, arrogance- which is held up to ridicule by the satirist's unmaking of it. Because the satirist usually cannot speak openly or does not wish to do as he chooses means that allow him to utter the unspeakable with impunity, with regard to a Satirist, C. High Holman comments:

His viewpoint is ultimately that of the cold eyed reality, why penetrates sham and pretense for a didactics purpose. The portrayals generally are at variance with outward appearances, but they contain recognizable truth, and it is this truth that gives the satirist his license to attack. (293)

Thus, satire is commenting on others' weaknesses in a humorous way to correct human follies. It is belly laughing weapon in literature.

However, satire differs from the "comic" though both use laughter in that comedy evokes laughter mainly as an end in itself, while satire derides; that is, it uses laughter as a "weapon and against a butt that's exists outside the work itself" (Abrams 275). That butt may be an individual, or a type of person, a class, as institution, a nation, or even the entire human race.

A satirist thus attacks them with a motive for corrective of human vice and folly. In this regard, Alexander Pope remarked, "those who are ashamed of nothing else are so of being ridiculous" (qtd. in Abrams 276).

Its frequent claim has been to corrigible faults, excluding those for which a person is not responsible. As Swift said speaking of himself in his ironic "Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift" (1739):

Yet malice never was his aim;
He lashed the vice, but spared the name . . .
His satire points at no defect,
But what all mortals may correct . . .
He spared a hump, or crooked nose,
Whose owners set not up for beaux. (qtd. in Abrams 276)

Thus, Satirists like ironists, say one thing and mean another. Wayne C. Booth introduces the term "stable irony", by which he means that once a reconstruction of meaning has been made, the readers are not then invited to undermine it with further demolitions and reconstructions. But irony to D.C Muecke is:

A way of writing designed to leave open the question of what the literal meaning might signify: there is a perpetual deferment of significances. The old definition of irony-saying one thing and giving to understand the contrary- is superseded; irony is saying something in a way that activates not one but an endless series of subversive interpretations. (31)

In this way, Satirists present one thing or situation under the grab of another, which may appear ridiculous at the surface. The combination of just and earnest is a permanent mark of satiric writing – the central method of device. A satirist, though he jokes and makes readers laugh, tries to reveal human vice and folly, which (to him) is the truth. Satirists declare

that their truth is what people do not want to hear. While tracing the history of satire back to the ancient time, we find there prevailing two main conceptions of its purpose: one is not to cure but to wound, to punish, to destroy, and the other is to warn and cure. The first types of satirists believe that the rascality is triumphant in the world, and are pessimistic. Jonathan Swift says that though he loves individual, he detests mankind. These misanthropic satirists look at life and find it, not tragic, nor comic, but ridiculously contemptible and nauseatingly hateful. Filbert Highet draws the distinctions between pessimistic and optimistic satirists and their writings:

The misanthropic believes it (evil) is rooted in man's nature and the structure of society. Nothing can eliminate or cure it. Man, or the particular gang of miserable mankind who are under his scrutiny, deserves only scorn and hatred. . . The satirist is close to the tragedian. (235) He (optimist) believes that folly and evil are not innate in humanity, or, if they are, they are eradicable. They are disease which can be cured. They are mistakes which can be corrected . . . sinners are not devils, fallen forever. They are men self-blinded, and they can open their eyes. (236)

The two most important satirists were Juvenal and Horace, who represent pessimist and optimist respectively. Juvenal illustrates rhetorical or tragic satire, of which he is at once the inventor and the most distinguished master. His satire attacks vice wrongs, or abused in a high-pitched strain of impassioned declamatory eloquence. Horace and his followers assail the enemies of common sense with the weapons of humor

and sarcasm so that the wrong doer will get rid of the wrongs. These types of satirists believe in the doctrine "No one errs willingly." The optimistic satirists write in order to heal and the pessimistic satirists in order to punish. In Horatian Satire, according to Abrams (188), the character that the speaker manifests is a witty and tolerant man of the world, who is moved more often to wry amusement than to indignation at the spectacle of human folly, pretentiousness, and hypocrisy. But in Juvenalian satire the character of the speaker is that of a serious moralist who decries modes of vice and error in a dignified and public style.

Satirists always aim at revealing the bitter truth; no matter whatever motives they may have behind their works. Early experiences of life make the people view the world differently. In this regard Highet says:

In fact, most satirists seem to belong to one of two main classes. Either they were bitterly disappointed early in life, and see the world as a permanent structure of injustice; or they are happy men of overflowing energy and vitality, who see the rest of mankind as poor ridiculous puppets only half-alive, flimsy fakes and meager scoundrels. (241)

Thus Satirists wish to stigmatize crime or ridicule folly, and thus to aid in diminishing or removing it. Dryden says he who draws his pen for one party must expect to make enemies of the other. According to him, the true end of satire is the amendment of vices by correction. He says he who writes honestly is no more an enemy to the offender than the physician to the patient, when he prescribes harsh remedies to an inveterate disease; for those are only to prevent painful surgery.

A satire, at the surface, appears to be full of aesthetic feelings or like a romance, but its underlying intentions are attacking a particular target in a disguise. Satire, according to Abrams, is "the literary art of diminishing or derogating a subject by making it ridiculous and evoking toward it attitudes of amusement, contempt, scorn, or indignation" (187). *New Encyclopedia Britannica* defines it as "artistic form, chiefly literary and dramatic in which human or individual vices, follies, or shortcomings are held up to ensure by means of ridicule, derision, burlesque, irony or other methods, sometimes with an intent to bring about improvement" (467). But all ironies are not satires. However satires are often stable ironies. Morton Gurewitch, in his Ph D. Dissertation on European Romantic Irony, describes irony as only corrosive.

Irony, unlike satire, does not work in the interests of stability. Irony entails hypersensitivity to a universe permanently out of joint and unfailingly grotesque. The ironist does not pretend to cure such a universe or to solve its mysteries. It is satire that solves. The images of vanity, for example, that world's satire are always satisfactorily deflated in the end; but the vanity of vanities that informs the world's irony is beyond liquidation. (qtd. in Booth 92)

Thus, all satires are ironies and all ironies are not satires.

Irony, as dictionaries tell us, is saying one thing and meaning the opposite. For its clarification, quoting Booth, we have:

Irony is usually seen as something that undermines clarities, opens up vistas of chaos, and either liberates by destroying all

dogma or destroys by revealing the inescapable canker of negation at the heart of every affirmation. It is thus a subject that arouses passions (preface IX).

Northrop Frye, in *Anatomy of Criticism*, says the ironic fiction-writer, deprecates himself and, like Socrates, pretends to know nothing, even that he is ironic. Highet says: "Any author, therefore who often and powerfully uses a number of typical weapons of satire-irony paradox, antithesis, parody, colloquialism, anticlimax, topicality, obscenity, violence, vividness, exaggeration-is likely to be writing satire" (18). These are different ways of satirical writings.

Practice of Satire

There has been common and widespread practice of satirical writings. Highet's oversimplification on history of satire is: "Most of us are apt to think that the history of satire begins with the Romans of Republic, continues in Latin for three centuries, and diverges into Greek with Lucian" (35). Highet sees it as one of the most original, challenging and memorable forms of literature, and says: "it has been practiced by some energetic minds-Voltaire, Rebelais, and Swift; by some exquisitely graceful stylists-pope, Horace, Aristophanes; and occasionally, as a paragon, by some great geniuses-Lucretius, Goethe, and Shakespeare" (1)

One of the chief kinds of Greek satirical writings was philosophical criticism, which is supposed to have begun with Lonion Xenophanes. The lines below, from his poem "Leers or Looking Askance", satirize the whole human race:

Now, if hands were possessed by oxen, by horses and lions, and they could paint with their hands, and carve themselves statues as men do. Then they would picture the gods like themselves with similar bodies. Horses would make them like horses, and oxen exactly like oxen. (qtd. in Hight 36).

It is already mentioned the satire is almost as old as literature itself. But in England in the eighteenth century it was the basic form of literature. There was social, political and religious unrest among the people. People of the Augustan age wanted certain freedom and excellence in their constitution. There were naturally different groups of people holding different views and opinions demanding different kinds of freedom.

In this concern Halifax, a statesman, demands in his character of Trinner (1688) an impartial law based on faith and a healthy compromise between monarchy and mob republicanism. Though James II a Catholic, threatened constitutional tradition, it was reduced by William III and he was praised by Locke calling him our great restorer. Any how conventional parliament was reinstated in 1688. Thus we see that the aim of politician of that age was to deal with the needs of normal man. It was not philosophical. The authors from 1668 to 1800 such as Samuel Butler, Dryden, Cowley, Burke and others were concerned more with current practical practices' that with philosophical principles. At that time religion politics intermingled with a party, business, election contests, foreign policy, church and state. The prevalence of corruption, perpetual agitation, pamphlets and news sheets and cries for liberation were the catchwords voiced by the people. Richard Sargged wrote in his "Epistle to Sir Robber Walpole"

From liberty each nobler science spring
bacon, brightened and a Spenser song;
a clerk and Locke new treats of truth expose
and Newton reaches heights unknown before.

After various struggles among themselves they got political liberty. As they (the people of the 18th cent.) got freedom they wanted "full freedom." There was a sudden and speedy change among the people. They wanted to jump from one pole to another at once. Most of them, particularly aristocrats unutilized their rights and duty. They broke some conventions which were necessary for harmony in the society. Consequently there was a lack of social order. Flirtation of girl was very common. W.H. Hudson says that "the manners of the Augustan Age were coarse; politics was scandalously. Corrupt Dryden (comparatively) it would be better to quote Dr. Johnson views as revealed in his *The Lives of Poets* he says;

Dryden drew more of man in his general nature and pope in his local manners. The notions of Dryden were formed by comprehensive speculation and these of pope by minute attention. There is more dignity in the knowledge of Dryden and more certainty that of pope. (123)

The style of Dryden is precious and varies, that of Pope is cautious and uniform, Dryden obeys the motion of our mind, and Pope constrains his mind to mind to his own rules of composition. Dryden is sometime vehement and rapid; Pope is always smooth, uniform and gentle. Again he says, "The dilatory caution of Pope enabled him to condense his sentiments to multiply his emerged and to accumulate all that study might produce or chance might supply. The flights of Dryden therefore are higher, and Pope

continues longer on the wing if Dryden's fire ablaze brighter, of Pope's the heat is regular and constant. Dryden often surpasses expectation and pope never falls below it Dryden's read with frequent astonishment and pope with perpetual delight.

Jonathan Swift was satirist of more rapid and sweeping type than Pope. His *Gulliver's Travels* (1763) is a bitter satire on the human race. Swift once said to Pope, "I hardly hope or detest that animal called man" (265). This remark is an elaboration of his cynical attitude. He is also considered as misanthrope. All these aforesaid authors though there are others too contributed in the amelioration of the 18th century society by their satirical writings.

Pope has a unique place among them. He does not write personal satires only. For instance *The Rape of the Lock* a poem which most people would accept as a true master piece of light satire that is to say, which is amusing and good tempered, yet not with an element of serious social criticism. The poet has universalized the poem making Belinda, a symbol of the fashion of the 18th century.

In the 19th century, Mark Twain became the best-known American satirist, publishing satires in a variety of forms, including 'news satire' and full-length books. In Britain at roughly the same time W.S Gilbert created seemingly harmless and unobjectionable comic operas that often tore apart the customs and institutions held so dear by the British public. In the 20th century, satire has been used by authors such as Aldous Huxley and George Orwell to make serious even frightening commentaries on the dangers of the sweeping social changes taking place throughout Europe. The film, *The*

Great Dictator (1940) by Charlie Chaplin is a satire on Adolf Hitler and his Nazi army. A more humorous brand of satire enjoyed a renaissance in the U.K. in the early 1960s with the *Satire Boom*, led by such luminaries as Peter Cook, Alan Bennett, Jonathan Miller, David Frost Eleanor Bron and Dudley Moore and there is an increasing perception that satire must be explicitly humorous, which has not always been the case.

Humor

Although the purpose of satire has always been to correct the fault and weaknesses of human beings, it has been expressed in different forms as humor has been always a means of satire; it is desirable to discuss humor here.

Humor means to arouse laughter or it creates comic situations. The origin of the word 'humor' is Latin, which is used for 'Liquid', "fluid" or "moisture."

In early Western physiology, one of the four fluids of the body that was thought to determine a person's temperament and features, were four humors (fluids) of the body (yellow bile, black blood, and phlegm) were in proper proportion. When one fluid exceeded its normal amount, then disproportion occurred. These four fluids are to remain in balance otherwise the normal temperament of a person happens to be misbalanced.

It was believed that the individuals in whom this disproportion occurred would be in a choleric humor if yellow bile were predominant. There would be melancholy humor if blood were predominated and phlegmatic humor if phlegm were predominant. Whatever humor

predominated, the lack of balance indicated a deviation from normal, an excess that requires correction.

As far back as Plato and Aristotle, they took laughter as a proper corrective of the excessive. When we laugh there emerges excessive of one element. The object of humor is to create laughter to satirize the event or situation. Humor is an artistic device to correct one's excessiveness and to ridicule upon an incident and situation. The person who possessed an excess of any humor became a humorist.

The New Encyclopedia of Britannica defines humor as "the only form of communication in which a stimulus on a high level of complexity produces a stereotyped predictable response on the psychological reflex level" (20:682). It means the response can be used as an indicator for the presence of the illusive quality that is called humor. The study of humor provides clues for the study of creativity in general.

Satire is activated through humor. In humor, both the creation of the subtle joke and the secretive act of perceiving the joke involves the delightful mental movement of a sudden leap from one plane of associative context to another.

An example of a masochist is taken for the humorous state. A masochist is a person who likes a cold shower in the morning so he takes a hot one. It is a twisted matter. One does not believe that the masochist takes his hot shower as a punishment: he only pretends to be believed.

There is a bewildering variety of moods involved in different forms of humor including mixed or contradictory feelings. In the subtler types of

humor, the aggressive tendency may be so faint that only careful analysis will detect it like the presence of salt in a well – prepared dish.

In Aristotle's view, laughter was intimately related to ugliness and debasement. Cicero held that the province of the ridiculous lay in a certain baseness and deformity. Rene Descartes believes that laughter was a manifestation of joy mixed with surprise or hatred or both. In Francis Bacon's list of what causes laughter, the first place is given to deformity. One of the most frequently quoted utterances on the subject is this definition in Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* (1651). "The passion of laughter is nothing else but sudden glory arising from a sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves by comparison with the infirmity of others or with own formerly" (683).

How the humor came into use in western literature is a wide range of research, it goes back to the time of Plato and Aristotle in Greek Literature. In Greek tragedy, the humorous characters were presented in plays, and later in Shakespearian comedy there appeared as successfully as in the Greek stages.

James Bergson says "laughter is the corrective punishment inflicted by upon the unsocial individual" (683). In laughter we always find a view intention to humiliate and consequently to correct our neighbor. Sir Max Beerbohm, the 20th Century English wit found "two elements in the public humor: delight in suffering contempt for the unfamiliar". The American Psychologist William Mac Doug believes: "Laughter has been involved in the human race as an antidote to sympathy a protective reaction shielding us from the depressive influence of the shortcomings of our fellow men" (683).

Much of theorists agree that the emotions discharged in laughter always contain an element of aggressiveness. Laughter provides relief from tension. It also satirizes the situation considered to be opposite from the reality. Sigmund Freud involves Spencer's theory of humor into his own with special emphasis on the release of repressed emotions in laughing (684). In the mind of man, a vast amount of stored emotions exists, that are derived from various, often unconsciousness, source; repressed sadism, an avowed fear and boredom. These are released by the help of humor.

Humor is a task as delicate as analyzing the composition of a perfume with its multiple ingredients, some of which are never consciously perceived while others would make one wince. People are literally poisoned by their adrenal humor; it takes time to talk a person out of a mood, fear and anger show physical after effects long after their causes have been removed.

The purpose of humor is to laugh at people to rectify their faults. Laughter is not acquired skill but a natural gift. But there are other outlets such as competitive sports or social criticisms which are acquired skills.

Secularization

Secularization is the belief that religion should not be involved in the organization of society, education etc. It is generally thought to be a process of religious decline, the eclipse of religious ideas and institutions by nonreligious ones. This common sense definition seem obvious enough, both the concept and the evidence are among mostly debated topics in American religion as Nancy, T. Ammerman says:

The most basic definition has to do with the separation of religious authority from state authority what is commonly known in the United States as "separation of church and state." In this sense most modern nations are "secular." They are governed by political authorities that owe little, if any allegiance to religious institutions. At least since the last of the colonial established churches gave up its privileges in the early nineteenth century, then, the United States has been secularized (656).

Thus American culture is secular in modern times.

The Hutchison Encyclopedia defines secularization as:

It is the process through which religious thinking, practice and institutions lose their social significance. The concept is based on the theory, held by some sociologists, that as societies became industrialized their religious morals, values, and institutions give way to secular ones. (1046)

Thus, secularism conveys the spiritual poverty and crippled intellect of the modern world.

Secularism is anti-Christian and anti-religious movement as

Everyman's Encyclopedia describes it as a:

Materialistic and rationalistic movement started in England by George Holyoake, a working class agitator, in 1846. Its author defines secularism as a system of ethical principles; and says that it aims to substitute the 'piety of usefulness for the usefulness of piety; though Holyoake himself had in 1842 been

imprisoned for blasphemy . . . Secularism has now become merged in the larger materialistic movement which is being felt throughout the whole of Europe. (212)

Hence, the negative attitude of the original movement into a vigorous anti-Christian propaganda was raised round did not live at the end of the nineteenth century.

However, Nancy T. Ammerman rejects above idea arguing:

But the assertion seems to fly in the face of the immense institutional vitality of American religions and the fact that nearly all of the population regularly claims to believe in God . . . and still others are "mental affiliates," describing themselves as identified with a religious tradition even though not formally a member or a regular participant.(656)

In this way, the strength and weakness of religious institutions and ideas are additional dimensions to the secularization questions that must be taken into account.

The concept of secularism is normally conceived as standing in opposition to religion. While talking about American secular culture in America we can say that American people are free to choose religion on their own; there is no domination from the side of the state. There are various activating factors for this. The advancement of science and technology leads American people towards materialistic tendencies. Therefore, the previous belief upon theology doesn't as the dominant one. American people are following new tendencies in different aspects such as democracy, modernization and industrialization. Life now means spiritually

dry. Norms, values, customs, behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, morality, discipline, knowledge and language of American society are not imposed by Christianity. We can find reformation in them. Because of immigration policy, America has become a melting pot where everything is possible. Now people are beginning to form their own religion. Hybridity, Hippy culture, Beat Movement, Hollywood, development of wine culture, hardcore pornography, homosexuality, gay or Lesbian movement are making American culture a secular one. Besides the advancement of theatre culture, art and movie culture have helped to facilitate the secular culture. Now these abovementioned things are quite common in America. Nancy T. Ammerman states this idea:

Recently scholars have argued that the voluntarism of the religion system in the United States helps to account for this organizational strength. Because a religion was not supported by the state, every religious organization had to generate its own support. Those that did not meet the needs of enough people would cease to exist. And when these were new people and new needs, no legal obstacles stood in the way of religious entrepreneurs who wished to begin new religious groups. Ironically, because government was "secular," ample social space was left for religious organizations to flourish. (657)

Hence, there is flexibility in American culture. Infinite possibilities are always welcomed in this culture. There is reformation and newness with the changing time.

The role played by religious thought and practice is of immense importance to a full understanding of American life. Neil Campbell and Alasdair Kean write: "Religion is a 'central part of human experience, influencing how we perceive and react to the environments in which we live" (Giaddens 1993: 452). So, the influence of religion in a society is important to understand life there.

Social surveys suggest how importantly the faith on religion is declining in the contemporary United States as the Neil Campbell and Alasdair Kean write:

In 1994, for instance, 90 per cent of Americans said they were religious. And 93 per cent of those claiming to be religious said they were Christians. Nearly 70 per cent of the population belonged to churches of some kind, and around 40 per cent attended a church service every week. A 1992 survey found that per cent of Americans believed of in life after death, compared to 38 per cent of Germans 44 percent of Britons and 54 per cent of Italians. Half of the population claim they pray at least once a day. There is no country in the world where the Christian religious retains a greater influence over the souls of men than in America. (101)

Hence, the faith on religion is declining in America in modern times.

The reference to American secular Jews is inseparable to bring the clear- cut concept of secular American culture. Though Jews arrived in the United States primarily as merchants and shop-owners, many of them were middle class and secular. As a result of persecution in parts of Eastern

Europe, Jewish Americans immigration increased dramatically in the 1880s, with most of the new immigrants coming from the poor populations of Russia and Eastern Europe. A large number of these immigrants settled in New York City and its immediate environs, establishing what became one of the worlds, major concentrations of Jewish population. Jewish American writers of the time urged assimilation and integration with the wider American culture, and Jewish quickly became the part of American life. American Jews fought in World War II. After the war, Jewish families joined the new trend of suburbanization. There, Jews became increasingly assimilated as rising intermarriage rates with non- Jews combined with a trend towards secularization. Neil Campbell and Alasdair Kean write the same idea as: "the great waves of Jewish immigration twentieth centuries made the United States a major centre of Judaism. In the twentieth century a range of other religions have grown significantly including Islam, and a lost of New Age Groupings" (100). In this way, Jews migration is dominant in making American culture hybrid – a secular one.

Although secular culture tends to be used in a restricted sense today, it, however, retains philosophical aspects, particularly when it comes to political and social situations. Throughout its history the concept has carried with it a strong connotation of the desire to establish an autonomous political and social sphere which is naturalistic and materialistic as opposed to a religious realm where the supernatural and faith take precedence as Neil Campbell and Alasdair Kean writes:

The religious dimension to the story of America, where good and evil exist alongside each other, has been a pervasive theme

in the country's expressive culture, giving it powerful resonance beyond the history of specific churches and often endowing its language with special meaning and force. From this perspective, religious imagery and religious themes have had a considerable influence on the way Americans have reflected and acted, not only in the literature they have produced, but also in political language and rhetoric. (101)

So, secularism is directly or indirectly influencing every sector in America i.e. politics.

Due to rampant secular culture in modern America there are various evil aspects in the present America. Sexual abuse, drug abuse, iconoclastic activities like open kissing, money mindedness, prostitution, drinking, Hollywood etc. are widely spread. It shows pleasure seeking tendency to make native culture to a secular one. These social ills in American society are associated with popular culture where what one wants s/he does. One is free to worship or reject God as Neil Campbell of Alasdair Kean writes:

Secularism went hand in hand with modernization which by its very nature offered a series of irresistible challenges to traditional form of religious influence. Economical growth, technological provision, and the development of new forms of popular culture would all weaken the grip of religion on ordinary citizens. And usher in a society where the blinker of religious belief would be discarded in favors of rational and self determined choices about how to live the good life. . .

Church going does not necessarily imply profound belief . . .

(101-102)

Thus, secularism in America is encouraging hippy culture there.

As the concluding agreement, the question of secularization in contemporary American culture is complicated. Legally secularization was long since effected. Culturally, many aspects of everyday life and mass media operate without apparent religious influence. And there has been significant decline in the organizational strength of the religious bodies that formerly held privileged positions in American society. As Nancy T.

Ammerman writes:

However, other religious bodies have gained in strength, and . . . by the country's voluntaristic religious system. . . Religious ideas are sometimes questioned by science but just as often exist alongside science . . . while secularization is commonsense assumption about American society, it is far from a uniform fact that is universally accepted (657)

The need for cultural adaptation, which has led to so many modifications of religion, is not just a matter of religion meeting of different cultures.

Challenges also are posed by within the culture to which religion belongs.

These changes are most important in the west where the rise of modern science and other secular ideologies tends to override traditional religious commitments. Neil Campbell and Alasdair Kean also support the same above idea by writing:

Moreover, religious freedom has not necessarily meant neutrality about the importance of religion in American life.

As the social indicators appear to suggest, religion is clearly of central importance in American culture, even though it is not 'established' in any formal sense through a national Church.

The motto of the country is 'In God we trust; the federal congress has chaplains who watch over its business and pray for its successful conclusion; church properties are able to claim tax exemption . . . the pledge' so help me God. (102)

Hence, there is still importance of religion for some people. It is the slogan of the day.

A secularist is a person who is always ready to enjoy the present. S/he has the principle of eating, drinking and being merry, for tomorrow we die. Moreover, a secularist is a commercial-minded and always seeks pleasure. Hence, s/she is a materialist one. In this connection, Michael Green writes: "Get more money, better prospects. Get a car, and a house and a wife. Get a family and better house and a second car. Get promotion, Get a good pension . . . and then fill your life up with as much as you can before you die" (122). Thus a secularist always seeks how to seize the opportunity.

However, scholars are generally, in such parlance, men who have attained in some academic discipline or segment of learning. Generally, it may be granted, those who acquire such knowledge or expertise, are clever people. In this connection, E.M. Blaiklock in his *The Answer's in the Bible* writes:

There are first- class minds in thousands, which accept the authority of Bible, the reality of God, the deity of Christ which

the associated beliefs which constitute the Christian faith . . .
along with rank, office, and degrees, the men of global
standing in arts and science, who firmly stand for Christ. . . .
The faith is not unreasonable. (130-132)

This shows even great minds accept the existence of God.

The astonishing advances in technology, the breakthrough into the atomic Era, the prospect of interplanetary travel have opened up unimagined vistas to the human spirit, and have induced such a feeling of self- confidence in the boundless abilities of man that the God hypothesis seems strangely dated and unreal. In this connection, Michael Green writes:

In this age of scientific humanism Christians are ridiculed for their old- fashioned, unscientific ideas. With their talk of God and Satan, of heaven and hell, of salvation and loss they are not only hopelessly off target, not only burbling complete irrelevancies, . . . the man in the street reckons that science has killed religions . . . and who can blame him? (39-40)

In this way, due to the influence of science and technology there is a decline in faith.

The growth of modern science took place in a Christian civilization, recently liberated from the shackles of authoritarianism by the Renaissance and the reformation. Moreover, it was pioneered by Christian men. In this connection, Michael Green writes:

Francis Bacon saw God's works in nature and his words in the Bible as the twin facets of his self- disclosures. So, did Kepler, who revolutionized the astronomical prejudice of his day,

derived from PlatoGalileo and Copernicus remained devout Christian men, convinced that their work glorified God, . . . Newton wrote principle in the assurance that this world could originate from nothing but the perfectly free will of God'. . . Spent more time in Bible study than in scientific research. (40-41)

This shows before science there was Christian civilization. So, we cannot deny Christianity totally. Bible is the source of all science today.

III: TEXTUAL ANALYSIS: SATIRE OF SECULAR CULTURE IN *WISE BLOOD*

O'Connor's *Wise Blood* is a complex and comic novel attacking the contemporary secularization of religion in America. It is a savage satire on the secular world as the novel is filled with profuse animal and bird images which represent the lack of spiritual aspects. O'Connor, basically, relies on humor for the purpose of satirizing the secular practices. Humor is created through the association of human beings with the animals and birds. There are many abundant images of confinement and isolation into which the characters are placed. O'Connor brilliantly fuses images of confinement with animal imagery so as to intensify the point: the world, without its spiritual dimension, is merely a prison for an odd collection of inmates – a zoo for the human animals. Thus, by presenting the characters as eccentric and grotesque who oppose Christianity and projecting animalistic nature upon them, O'Connor satirizes the secular American culture in the modern times.

There is not a single page in the novel where strange activities and animal references are not used. On nearly every page of the book, human figures are well on their way to being absorbed into grotesque beings and the lower orders of animals. While people are frequently depicted as aggressive or gaudy birds in *Wise Blood*, they are often more disgusting or bizarre creatures. One of the major characters, Hazel Motes is the most eccentric and grotesque characters in the novel. In the novel's opening paragraph, as Hazel Motes, the protagonist hereafter referred to as just Haze is sitting at a forward angle on the train seat, "looking one minute at the

window as if he might want jump out of it" (3). This abnormal behavior shows his animalistic nature. The predatory Haze, though he will hunt and kill his prey with his broken-down "rat-colored car" rather than his sharp beak, has "a nose like a shrike's bill," and pushes his way through the crowd "with his elbows spreading out like sharp wings" (35). Haze can always be seen in motion in the novel. By presenting Haze in a frenetic but futile motion, O'Connor links him to animal. As the novel begins, he has just come back "from half way around the world" (11), where the army had sent him to some unnamed war. After returning from the war, he visits his old deserted home place. He is now one of O'Connor's displaced people— a restless wanderer in search of a place to be as his relatives are all dead and neighbors displaced because of the war. He is seen moving in a small, closed system that is itself being carried along within a larger moving system. But Haze seems completely oblivious to the absurdity of his restless movements on the train, for example: As he lurches up and down the aisles, he is pushed by the porter and the steward; next he is humiliated in he packed dining car as the steward prevents Haze from going inside.

O'Connor writes, "The man stopped him and said 'Only Two,' and pushed him to the doorway" (6). Again, as Haze returns to his berth, he is blocked by Mrs. Hitchcock, and when "she tried to get past him he tried to let her pass but they were both moving the same way each time (8). Ironically, his incessant movements within the train are meaningless.

Haze's strange activities are in perfect parallel with his rusty old car. This is a stinging satire on growing materialistic world. The emblem of Haze's absurd motion is of course his battered car, Essex, his symbolic

home, pulpit and coffin. He uses the rusty old car as his home as well, and the irony is that he dies at the hands of police in the car. He can never escape this enclosed place as long as his body is not cremated. Despite his claim that "I don't have to run away from anything because I don't believe in anything" (39), he spends most of his time driving around in the car, which "lurches forward about six inches and then back about four" (79), mimicking Haze's unsteady movements on the train. Ironically, he brags to anyone he meets about his car, although several mechanics warn that his good-for-nothing car will soon stop for good.

Haze's futile motions, be it on the train, in the car or even on a ship is analogous to the futile motions of caged animals. While testing his new car out in the country, Haze becomes infuriated when he is blocked by a slow-moving truck carrying a crate "stuffed so full of wet barred-rock chickens that the ones facing him had their heads outside the bars" (38). Here, O'Connor makes the point that imprisonment is possible even when one is moving. For, as it can be seen, humans have been described as birds throughout the novel. Soon Haze finds himself stopped in the middle of the road, reading a sign that says "Jesus Saves" (39). But Haze is not yet ready for this message, so he heads back towards Taulkinham in search of Enoch, his parallel, having been reminded of the zoo by the crate of chickens. Haze once encounters caged animals when his car breaks down on his outing with Sabbath Lily Hawks, a girl of thirteen years, who gets attracted to him. He walks to a gas station and sees a cage there labeled with a sign reading "Two Deadly Enemies. Have a Look Free" (64). O'Connor writes:

There was a black bear about four feet long and very thin, resting on the floor of the cage; his back was spotted with bird lime that had been shot down on him by a small chicken hawk that was sitting on a perch in the upper part of the same compartment. Most of the Hawk's tail was gone; the bear had only one eye. (64)

Here symbolically, the two deadly enemies are, alternately, Haze and Sabbath or Haze and Asa Hawks. Haze, who is thin and wears a black hat, is the bear; the cage is his car. O'Connor will soon explicitly describe Haze's car as a kind of cage like the bear's for Haze dreams that he is trapped in his car while people file past and gawk at him, some showing "considerable reverence, like the boy from the zoo" (82), others laughing. Sabbath Lily Hawks in the first alternative is the small chicken hawk; she shares its name and had hidden in the back seat of Haze's car in her effort to prey on him sexually. After meeting Haze, she gets attracted towards him sexually as well. In another alternative reading, Asa Hawks is Haze's "deadly enemy", because he, unlike Haze, is insincere in his religious stance. Asa Hawks, who is described as "a mandrill" (19) at one point because of the stripped scars on his face, is ironically named in that he is spiritually blind, fake preacher whose physical vision is acute. When O'Connor writes that "most of the Hawk's tail was gone," She alludes in a pun on "tale" (64) to Haze's having gotten away in the previous chapter – with one of Asa's two newspaper clippings – the one about his plan to blind himself at a revival ceremony. Hawks keeps two newspaper clippings - the first saying, EVANGELIST PROMISES TO BLIND SELF, and the second,

EVANGELIST'S NERVE FAILS. (58-59). Although Hawks tries to blind himself for religious reason, he can not do so because of his failure of nerve. Haze does not know about the other clipping which describes Asa's failure of nerve; yet, because he has plucked half of the Hawks' tale and he will soon pluck the other when he discovers Asa can see. Haze is symbolically the one-eyed bear that is half way towards the victory over Hawks of blinding himself. Eventually, Haze fulfills Hawks' forsaken intention – he burns out his own eyes.

As he is impulsive, Haze is openly hostile towards all other characters throughout the novel. While traveling on the train, at the beginning of the novel, he speaks to his fellow passengers in a rude and abrupt way as he says to everybody he meets, "I reckon you think you been redeemed" (6). Sabbath Lily Hawks who has 'the disposition of yellow jacket" (111) becomes his girlfriend for some time. Haze's sexual approach towards her is aggressive and animal-like as she refers to him as "King of the Beasts" (87). In actual fact, he thinks of himself as one who hunts down his enemies. This animalistic aggressive nature of Haze can be found in his note that he had written on his mother's sole remaining possession in their old house. The note reads: "this shiffer- robe belongs to Hazel Motes. Do not steal it or you will be hunted down and killed" (13). Later, from the hood of his battered car, Essex, he proclaims to the crowd gathered around the movie theatre, "your conscience is a trick [. . .] you had best get it out in the open and hunt it down and kill it" (84-85). All these ominous threatening foreshadows Haze's tracking down and killing of Solace Layfield, a hired prophet to preach just to make money. The man who hires

him is Onnie Jay. Haze kills Layfield with his rat-colored car, which "stood half over the other prophet as if it were pleased to guard what it had already brought down" (105). In this way, this hostile and aggressive nature of Haze links him to animal.

Another important thing that links Haze to animal is his enchantment with confined and lonely places. Throughout the novel, he can be seen in these places, or he cannot resist his temptation for such places. After getting off the train in Taulkinham, Haze searches for a lonely place so that he can escape from the hustle and bustle of the city as O'Connor writes, "He walked up and down the crowded waiting room two or three times, but he did not want to sit on the benches there. He wanted 'a private place' to go to" (14). There is a reference of the "toilet stall" in the train station which is an example of another enclosed place in the novel (15). Haze, then, heads towards the prostitute, Leora Watt's place, upon seeing her address in the toilet stall. Her secret "private chamber" attracts Haze rather than his sexual desire (16). Here, O'Connor links her to animal by placing her in "a cage-like white iron bed" cutting her toenails with a large pair of scissors (16). And the prostitute asks Haze, "You huntin something?" (16). This shows animalistic nature of Haze. Haze then buys a second-hand car which has a color of a rat; he uses it as his home, which becomes like his cage. In addition to this, Haze often dreams of being shut in enclosed and confined places like coffin and casket. While he was traveling on the train "he thought where he was lying was like a coffin in his half-sleep" (9). Again, "he saw his mother in his sleep, terrible, like "a huge bat', dart from the closing, fly out of there [. . .]" (13). Later while sleeping in the Essex he

dreams that "he was not dead but only buried [. . .] and waiting on nothing" (94). In this dream he becomes – like the despised mummy – a man on display whom people can see but not touch. The cage which Haze subconsciously fears becomes finally the tunnel – in Mrs. Flood's perception – into which he disappears. Haze has chosen isolation and dies defiantly alone.

In the novel, O'Connor depicts man's sexuality as the essence of his animality. By this she attacks the modern man who lacks spiritual and meditative aspect. As Haze examines the walls of the toilet stall in the train station where he searches for a private place, for instance, he sees a phallic drawing "that looked like a snake" (14). Another similar sexual association is the image of the coffin-like box containing naked woman Haze has seen when he was a boy at the carnival. The carnival woman, who had first looked like "a skinned animal" to Haze, had set off the unfortunate linking in the boy's mind of sexuality and death, a fusion encouraged by his father's crude remark that "Had one of themther built into ever' casket [. . .] be a heap ready to go sooner" (32). Besides his similarities to birds, bears, and jungle cats, Haze too is linked with apes because of his animalistic sexual instinct. As he had prepared to make sexual approach towards Mrs. Watts, Haze's heart "began to grip him like a little ape clutching the bars of its cage" (31). His advance towards Sabbath Lily Hawks is animal-like as she describes Haze as "King of the Beasts" (87).

Although other characters including Enoch Emery care very much for "creature comforts, "Haze places his trust only on two things: his rusty old car, and Leora Watts, both of them the emblem of material comfort and

pleasure. But when he is humiliated by the prostitute at his last visit, and the policemen destroy his car, Haze himself soon comes to the dead end of discovering that his world is his prison. Earlier, he had boasted saying, "nobody with a good car needs to be justified" (58) and "I don't need Jesus," Haze said, "What do I need with Jesus? I got Leora Watts" (28). And only at this moment he seems to gain some insight as O'Connor describes Haze mediating when his car is destroyed:

Haze stood for a few minutes, looking over at the scene. His face seemed to reflect the entire distance across the clearing and on beyond, the entire distance that extended from his eyes to the blank gray sky that went on, depth after depth, into space. His knees bent under him and he sat down on the edge of the embankment with his feet hanging over. (107)

The embankment, like the door opening onto empty space represents the limits of man's power: the point past which reason fails him. Haze's car, the symbol of rational design, cannot take him where he wants to go. Rather it becomes the prison house in which he places himself inescapably. As Hawks had said to Haze the first time they met, "You can't run away from Jesus" (26). The dramatic irony is that he now cannot ignore the religious values. By the time the policeman asks Haze "Was you going any Where?" Haze has finally learned correct answer 'No" (108). Yet while Enoch's gaze had stopped at the skyline of Taulkinham, Haze now penetrates deeper, into the heaven, the dimension of spiritual freedom.

When Haze finally blinds himself after witnessing rampant evil and moral degeneration, he brings further isolation and confinement to himself.

Despite his conscious efforts, terrifying images of isolation pervade his subconscious mind. He limits himself and his movement by putting rocks in his shoes; wrapping barbed wire around his chest, symbolically fencing in the animal of his flesh; living in the ultimate prison of blindness. This is on the physical level. But O'Connor's point is that there is some hope for spiritual salvation when one is ready to make sacrifice by torturing themselves. As long as he lives, he lives a life similar to that of animal. Only his death at the hands of policemen, the keepers of the human zoo liberates him from the imprisonment. Thus, O'Connor exposes spiritual degeneration in Haze.

Haze's parallel, Enoch Emery bears several resemblances to animal in the novel. Enoch who has "a fox-shaped" face or looks "like a friendly hound dog with light mange" (18) works at the city zoo. Although he is friendly to the master of the zoo, he can not gain Haze's and others' affection. He wanders about the zoo, whore-houses, movie theaters, etc. for the human company. As Enoch himself remarks, "This is one hard place to make friends, in. I been here for six months and I don't know nobody" (24). Later when he finds it very difficult to get human company, he decides to become Gongga, the gorilla in ape-suit in order to win human affection. Enoch who claims that he has got "wise blood" does not know what he is going to do next (30). As he prepares to steal the "new jesus" from the city museum which he frequently visits, Enoch operates as always on instinct, for he is like "a bird that finds itself building a nest when it hasn't been planning to" (66). He is not aware of anything else except his material needs. He does not believe in religion and Jesus. When he hears Haze

talking about Jesus, he asks Haze, "You go in for lot of Jesus business?" (22).

As he works in the zoo, Enoch envies every animal comforts that the different animals and birds are provided with at the zoo. Once in his room, he anthropomorphizes the picture of a "moose" on his wall (68). He finds the superiority on the animal's face [. . .] insufferable," and laments that "if he hadn't been afraid of him, he would have done something about it long ago" (68). Enoch triumphs over the 'moose' by "taking the frame off him," which is to Enoch, equal "to taking the clothes of him (although he didn't have on any)." (68). Apart from comically foreshadowing Enoch's taking the clothes off' another 'animal' – the man in the ape suit--this episode shows Enoch reduced to the level of envying beasts. Since he desires a life of animal ease and comfort avoiding work, slurping milk shakes at the Frosty Bottle, eating candy bars, pursuing random sexual encounters at whore- houses, Enoch naturally envies the luxurious life of the animals at the zoo:

After that he would go to see the animals. They were in a long set of steel cages like Alcatraz Penitentiary in the movies. The cages were electrically heated in the winter and air-conditioned in the summer and there were six men hired to wait on the animals and feed them T-bone steaks. The animals did not do anything but lie around. Enoch watched them everyday, full of awe and hate. (42)

Unlike Haze, Enoch completely accepts the perverse commercialization of human sexuality, which links him to animal. Here, he

totally lacks spiritual aspect. Enoch seeks out enclosed 'sexy' places even though he fears them. Though he promises himself he will not enter because of the uncontrollable urges it will arouse in him, Enoch obsessively gravitates to the place of perverse sexuality, the movie theaters where he frequently visits. After seeing the poster of the monster stuffing the woman in the incinerator, Enoch is mesmerized by films about a sadistic scientist, Devil's Island Penitentiary, and "a baboon" whose heroic exploits win him a medal from "a nice-looking girl" (71). Parallel to Enoch's voyeurism at the movies is his spying on the woman at the swimming pool and his obsessive gawking at the animals at the zoo. O'Connor describes Enoch at the swimming pool, "At first he thought she didn't know it, and instead of watching openly on the bank, he had crawled into some bushes, snickering to himself, and watched from there" (40).

The examples of Enoch's fascination with enclosed places extend beyond those with explicitly sexual associations, even though his first encounter with one had been painful for him. The fake box of candy labeled "A Nutty Surprise" his father had brought home for Enoch from the penitentiary had contained only a coiled steel spring that broke off Enoch's front teeth when he had opened his "present" (91). This scene is comically prefigured in the same chapter when Enoch, while peering in at the "new jesus" (30) in his gold-painted shrine in the museum, sneezes violently and cracks his head. His obsession with the museum, apparently an enclosed place--its cool, tomb-like rooms and its mummy cases – reflects his primitive attempt to grapple with the philosophical issue of human mortality. The mysterious shrunken Arab, with whom Enoch identifies, is

for Enoch the incarnation of Haze's abstract notion of the "new jesus" – a purely secular savior (98). But while Enoch "liberates" the mummy from his glass case and brings him to the cabinet shrine in his room, this sham savior remains a dead man in a box – an emblem of the transience of physical existence.

Thus, Enoch's subplot serves to counterpart Haze's more metaphysical concern. As Haze, after being dragged to the museum by Enoch, faces the mummy, he comes to a full stop for the first time. In the museum case, there is a mummified shrunken Arab. When Haze sees it, he gets lost in deep thought. But his meditation on the shrunken man is broken when he sees on the glass case, the reflection of the woman from the swimming pool, whose face triggers his oedipal memories of the carnival woman and of his fantasy of seeing his mother in a box. As her face appears, Haze does what he always does when he feels trapped, he bolts. That Haze would be mesmerized by the mummy in his glass "coffin" is perfectly understandable, since as child he had seen his fanatically religious grandfather, two brothers, father and mother in their "caskets. Yet as fast as he runs from these terrifying memories, he repeatedly finds himself boxed in symbolic coffins: his berth on the train, the toilet stall at the station, the prostitute Leora Watt's tiny room, and his old rusty car as a means of escaping his past, Haze's motion is as futile as a "rat's on a tread mill," or "a rat-colored car's" down a highway that seems to be "slipping back under" (103-104) its wheels.

As it can be seen, humans in the novel regress into animals, animals have, interestingly, a disturbing tendency to appear to metamorphose into

humans. On the way to the zoo, there is a café, named Frosty Bottle where Enoch and Haze see "a large advertisement for ice-cream showing a cow dressed like a housewife" (45). At the zoo where Enoch works, he and Haze pass the cage of two bears, who "sit facing each other like two matrons having tea, their faces polite and self-absorbed" (48). O'Connor obviously uses the images of the cow as housewife and the bears as matrons to show the animality of human beings whose only desire is to satisfy physical needs with material things, but by metamorphosing animals into humans as Enoch and Haze approach the zoo, O'Connor suggests the idea that the caged creatures symbolize secular man in a profound way in the American society at the present time, for they like human beings without God's grace are hopelessly trapped into the material world.

As the novel teems with the images of confinement and entrapment, *Wise Blood* is permeated with the terror of claustrophobia. There are pervasive such references: to walling up cats as Mrs. Flood, Haze's landlady, says to him of this practice, that "Its something people have quit doing" (116), stuffing people up chimneys-- a horror that occurs in a story Sabbath Lily Hawks tells about a woman and her lover who murder the woman's child (26), and being buried alive that Asals and others have noted the unmistakable echoes of Poe's claustrophobic tales in *Wise Blood* (24-29). O'Connor encloses her characters in a graveyard of symbolic coffins, and often her living corpses are women, all of whom recall the naked woman Haze had seen in the box at the carnival. The grotesque swimmer, a middle-aged woman Enoch always looks at lustfully as she climbs out of the pool and pulls down her swim-suit straps is perhaps the most obvious of

these character doubles. Others are the women at the movie theater, Sabbath Lily Hawks hiding in the back seat of Haze's car, the grandmother who kills herself by jumping into a well in another of Sabbath Lily Hawk's macabre stories, the various waitresses behind counters whom Enoch torments with his crude advances, and a woman on a movie poster being stuffed into an incinerator by a monster. In this last example in particular O'Connor points out the sadism implicit in the commercial idea of sexuality, in which women are turned into objects to be imprisoned, tortured or killed by aggressive males.

The last and most important scene suggesting the identity of humans and caged animal is Enoch and Haze's joint visit to the zoo. This can be clearly seen, for as Enoch drags reluctant Haze past the animals' cages. O'Connor restates the principal image and themes of the novel. The idea that animals and birds represent human beings can be seen when the narrator records Enoch's observation that the "beasts were in the long set of steel cages like Alcatraz Penitentiary in the movies" (42). In addition to the stimulus in the films he has seen, Enoch has a more personal reason for thinking of human being when he sees the caged animals, "his father in prison" and as Enoch and Haze file past the cages, they see "black shapes [. . .] sitting or pacing" (48). Not all the animals behave and act in a similar manner in the novel. Some animals in the zoo are reconciled to their captivity and react with a fatalistic passivity, while others remain restless and calm, though in vain. Similarly in the novel too, most of the characters are resigned to immobility, and are even happier in their imprisonment. Leora Watts, the prostitute, is seen "lounging in her bed" or Mrs. Flood is

rocking on her porch, dreaming of her perfect and luxurious life of sitting "by the radio all day, eating cake and ice-cream, and soaking her feet" (112). These women care for nothing but their physical comfort and satisfaction. When Mrs. Flood sees that Haze does not care about his physical comfort, she remarks, "What possible reason could a sane person have for not enjoying himself anymore?" (109). O'Connor further writes, "The landlady had always been impressed with Haze's ability to pay. When she found a stream of wealth, she followed it to its source?" (110). So, these women share similar animalistic nature with the bears in the first cage, who look "like two matrons having tea" (48).

Haze and Enoch next pass the monkey's cage, which Enoch hopes to hurry past in order to get to the city museum more quickly. While in the zoo, Enoch cannot resist insulting an ape. And O'Connor cannot resist foreshadowing his impending transformation into the gorilla, for she has Enoch sneer, "Look at that ape [. . .] if I had a ass like that [. . .], I'd sit on it. I wouldn't be exposing it to all these people coming to this park" (48). But the movie poster's reference to Gonga as the "Gaint Jungle Monarch" (99) identifies Haze with Gorilla, and, by extension, with Enoch. Yet, Haze though linked with Enoch throughout the novel, is headed to a different direction than his parodic double, even though their divergence cannot occur until Haze sees that neither the "new Jesus," Asa Hawks, his own blasphemous "church without Christ," nor his car can help him escape from the prison of himself. Perhaps at last sensing his identity with the caged animals, Haze pauses in front of the final one-- the emblem of wisdom, the owl. When Haze insists to it that "I am clean" (47), the bird, symbolically

denying the truth of his claim, closes its one eye and turns its face to the wall. For, the wise bird knows that Haze claim is still not free from moral decay.

After they come together at the zoo, in their closest approach to friendship and identity, Haze and Enoch now diverge and act out their respective climaxes. After seeing the mummy in the museum, Haze becomes infuriated by Enoch's incomprehensible behavior over giving him the address of Asa Hawks; and he finally hits Enoch over the head with a rock. His sudden attack is animal-like. O'Connor writes:

As soon as haze let Enoch go, he fell backward and landed against one of the white-socked trees. He rolled over and lay stretched out on the ground, with an exalted look on his face. He thought he was floating. A long way off he saw the blue figure spring and pick up a rock, and he saw the wild face turn, and the rock hurtled towards him he shut his eyes tight and the rock hit him on the forehead. (52)

The two never see each other alone again for a long time. Enoch later hears Haze preaching on the street about the need for a "new jesus", but after he steals the mummy from the museum and fails to gain any revelation from it he delivers it to Haze by way of Sabbath Lily Hawks and begins his pursuit of Gongga, the gorilla whom he envies for its popularity. This is a show acted out by an actor in an ape-suit. Finally, Enoch enters an enclosed place, the "paddy wagon-like truck" used to transport the Gongga, the Gorilla, known as the jungle monarch between the movie theaters (98-99). He then beats up the man dressed as Gongga and steals his gorilla suit. Before

stealing he has a furious animal-like battle inside the moving truck. But O'Connor shows Enoch's actions to be absurd by putting his furious battle inside the moving truck as Haze's motions within train at the beginning of the novel. O'Connor writes:

There came from the van certain thumping noises, not those of the normal gorilla, but they were drowned out by the drone of the motor and the steady sound of wheels against the road. The night was pale and quiet, with nothing to stir it but an occasional complaint from a hoot owl and the distant muted jarring of a freight train. The truck sped on until it slowed for a crossing, and as the van rattled over the tracks, a figure slipped from the door and almost fell, and then limped hurriedly off towards the woods. (100)

This rushing of Enoch to the woods symbolizes that he eventually turns into an animal. He leaps from the truck, runs into the woods, and completes his de-evolution by donning the ape-suit. As a representative of modern man, he, in a sense, is correct in believing that the way to succeed in the modern world is to act like an animal. But the irony is that Enoch as Gonga fails to win the friendship and recognition for which he has been searching desperately. After being changed into the Gonga, Enoch sneaks up on a couple looking out over the city and offers his hand, but they shrink back in terror. The human animal has come to the limit of his freedom, and he symbolically finds himself alone in his cage. In this way, Enoch Emery represents the modern secular man.

In her description of her other characters in the novel O'Connor prefers bird images to describe her minor characters. She makes use of simile, metaphor, and sometimes gives animalistic nature to the characters. Haze's grandfather had been "a waspish old man" (9), and one of his fellow passenger's name is Mrs. Wally Bee Hitchcock, "a fat woman with pink collars and cuffs and pear-shaped legs" (3), whom O'Connor implicitly links with the "hogs" (3) Haze has just glimpsed out of the train windows. The "bee" and "cock" imbedded in her name establish a pattern of animal names: Asa Hawks and Sabbath Lily Hawks. Onnie Jay Holy, and Holy's real name is Hoover Shoats. He is a dishonest person because he tries to make money out of preaching religion. When Haze rejects his idea, Onnie Jay says to him, "Friend, we just lost ten dollars. What you in such a hurry for?" (79). O'Connor further writes, "His face showed that he was in some kind of genuine pain [. . .]" (79). The reason for pain is obviously his disappointment.

At the beginning of the novel, a steward on the train moves "like a crow" and serves three women "dressed like parrots", one of whom has a "game-hen expression" (6-7). A peeler salesman's shirt is alive with "pheasant, quail, turkeys," and a used car salesman's son has a face resembling "a thin picked eagle's" (18, 35). A woman in Taulkinham city carries "a cat-faced baby" (76), the museum guard resembles "a dried-up spider" (50) Enoch and Haze once come across a stranger with "a nasty-dog look" in the street. In the city, Asa Hawks and his daughter often distribute tracts besides a large building at the front of which there are two "stone lions" (24). Haze once went with his father to the city where he forced Haze

to go into a tent where "two monkeys" danced (31); and in another tent; "a dried-up man with a horn voice was barking" (32) after Haze buys the car, he travels to different places. Once he goes past blocks of white houses, each sitting with an "ugly dog face" on a square of grass (38), and a little further Haze sees the head of "a string of pigs" appearing snout-up [. . .] " (38). He travels to different places. Once he goes past blocks a square of grass (38), and a little further Haze sees the head of "a string of pigs" appearing snout-up [. . .]" (38).

The reason why O'Connor uses images of animals and birds is that she wants to criticize the people who enjoy secular practices through her characters. In order to show how humans are no more than animals without the uplifting influence of a spiritual winged figure: the Holy Ghost, she uses grotesque characters and animal references. On one of his random drives, Haze, who despite himself is more aware than the other characters of the spiritual dimension, notices a "blinding white cloud", which "had turned into a bird with long thin wings and was disappearing in the opposite direction" (65). The Holy Ghost is symbolized by the cloud-bird image as O'Connor describes the cloud earlier in the traditional anthropomorphic image of God, as "a white one with curls and a beard" (60).

In this way, O'Connor exposes spiritual degeneration in human beings in the mid-twentieth century of America through the projection of animalistic nature upon the characters in the novel, *Wise Blood*. However, O'Connor also leaves some hope that one can come out of the imprisonment of evil, material comforts, excessive human self-dependency, and pride and vanity, if they pursue spiritual values. And they can only experience growth

in all areas of human life. Haze's final realization of this and his act of self-sacrifice by blinding and torturing himself lead to an expansion and spiritual freedom, for even the literal-minded Mrs. Flood can sense that her blind companion contains "the whole black world in his head bigger enough to include the sky and planets and whatever was or had been or would be" (113). Not Enoch, last seen in gorilla suit, staring over the valley at the uneven skyline of the city" (102), not the false prophet knocked down by implacable Haze, not Hawks or Onnie Jay , not Sabbath who ends up in a detention house, but Hazel Motes retains some possibility salvation as he realizes his mistake. In this way, O'Connor highlights the importance of religion first by satirizing secular practices and finally placing her major character on the path to religion.

IV: CONCLUSION

Exposition of Satire

O'Connor's *Wise Blood* is a biting satire on the secular American culture. The novel humorously exposes the spiritual decline in the human beings in the modern period in America through the use of animal imagery. All the characters in the novel appear grotesque and do eccentric activities like preaching against Christianity and Jesus Christ, making money out of preaching and torturing others and themselves. They all act on impulse. They have no idea what they are going to do and where they are going. This projection is the greatest satire on human beings.

The writer in the novel links all of her characters to animals and birds by their names and animalistic nature they possess. By linking the human beings to animals and birds, O'Connor attacks human beings as she shows the animalistic nature of human beings. The characters either deliberately or unknowingly avoid the spiritual and meditative aspect of human life. They indulge themselves in material comforts to such an extent that they talk irreverently of religion and Jesus. One of the major characters, Haze rejects God, and starts a crusade against Jesus. He preaches his self-professed new "church without Christ" though he eventually realizes his grave mistake that brings him a lot of suffering and alienation in his life. His parallel, Enoch Emery searches for a new Jesus. He even steals a dried-up, shrunken mummy of an Arab to worship as a new Jesus. This is the greatest satire on Christianity and Jesus. Later, he totally regresses into animalism by beating up a man in an ape-suit and wearing the suit. Another eccentric character Asa Hawks, who bears name of a predatory bird, waits on the street to beg

money by distributing religious tracts. He even pretends that he has blinded himself for religious reason.

O'Connor's point is that modern man is becoming like animal. O'Connor makes a perfect fusion of animal imagery and images of confinement and isolation in the novel, which substantiates the idea that human beings lack spiritual aspect. Every character in the novel is thrown into enclosed places. Haze cannot resist his love for such places, though he moved half way round the world while in the army. He always dreams of being shut into the coffin-box. His old, rusty car is like his cage as he uses it as his permanent home. No spiritual thought can come to him as long as he sticks to it. Moreover, he is always in search of private and lonely places throughout the novel. The other references of toilet stall, zoo cages, museum cases, casket coffin box etc are the other examples of enclosed places with animal associations.

The other thing that links the characters to animals in the novel is their love for material gains and comforts. Haze always takes pride in his car and the prostitute, Leora Watts. As long as Haze sticks to them, he cannot think of anything else. Enoch too loves going to movie theaters, whore-houses and restaurants for enjoyment. The other characters also sit idly at home eating and drinking all the time. Haze's girlfriend, Enoch and the landlady's greed for money is an example of this. Haze and Enoch always get jealous of the animal comforts during their visit to the zoo.

The characters move from place to place in a strange way. Their motion in the novel is animal-like. What they do throughout the novel is move round where they live like the animals in zoo cages. Haze's movement

inside the train, car, prostitute's room etc is similar to that of animal. Enoch always roams about the zoo in the same manner. The other characters move about the narrow rooms, alleys, and city corners.

The two major characters' transformation at the end of the novel reflects human being's regression into animalism; with Haze O'Connor, the novelist leaves the hope for human salvation. Enoch totally plunges downwards into bestiality whereas Haze, though physically isolates himself from the physical world possesses the possibility of spiritual dimension. Although he blinds himself, he becomes better able to see than before, because earlier he was more preoccupied with physical things. Now, he is left with only inner eyes to see and meditate. So, he can really focus on meditation for human salvation. And his ultimate death unites him to the God. Thus, O'Connor makes the point that if one is ready to sacrifice oneself, they can rise above the animality and live maintaining humanity.

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