

Oğuz Atay's 'Games': Transactional Analysis Theory in *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar* (Those Who Live by Games) and Its Analysis With This Theory

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Abstract

In Transactional Analysis, as developed by Eric Berne, life is analyzed as being full of games that consist of transactions between the Parent, the Adult, and the Child ego states. As a result of these transactions, games causing bad consequences arise. Once they are reached, the players are filled with negative emotions, which is the cost of the games. This theory became more famous after *Games People Play* was published in 1964. Oğuz Atay, who made it clear in his diary by summarizing the theory and its concepts that this theory influenced him, wrote his play called *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar* (Those Who Live by Games). *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar* is about the “bad games” that a history teacher named Coşkun plays with other characters such as Saffet, Servet, Emel and Cemile. We analyze *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar* with Transactional Analysis in an attempt to reveal the interactions between egos. As a result, we show that although not all elements in the play are entirely consistent with this theory, it is clear that Oğuz Atay benefited from Transactional Analysis while writing this play, and Coşkun and other characters play the games such as “Alcoholic,” “Kick Me,” “Now I’ve Got You, You Son of a Bitch,” “See What You Made Me Do” and “If It Weren’t For You”. The difference in Atay’s perception of this theory is that he gives a more sociological meaning to the concepts and “bad games” and thinks that they result from the Turkish social structure.

Keywords: Oğuz Atay, *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar* (Those Who Live by Games), Eric Berne, Transactional Analysis, *Games People Play*

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Introduction

Transactional Analysis is a method of psychotherapy that became widely known after Eric Berne published *Games People Play* in 1964. In this method, which is applied through group therapies, the focus is on social relationships and to show the mistakes people make in building such relationships in order to get rid of them. Thus, even though this method is somewhat in the field of social psychology, its main goal is about individuals. Transactional Analysis has influenced not only psychiatrists but also writers, one of whom is Oğuz Atay, who uses the term “game” extensively while creating characters who have lost their grip on society. In his diary, which contains a draft of the play *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar* (Those Who Live by Games), we can see this effect and the fact that this play is based on the concepts of Transactional Analysis. In this study, we talk about what Transactional Analysis argues and what concepts it includes. Then, we analyze *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar* in the light of this method after finding out the extent to which he benefits from it while building the content and structure of this play.

In fact, the book *Games People Play* was rejected by many publishers before Berne published this different and groundbreaking book himself. However, this book became a bestseller and gained incredible fame, and its concepts were socially recognized after this publication. In other words, this succession turns this method into a popular psychological circus. As a result, the recognition of this book did not remain only in the field of psychology but also spread to every field that is somehow related to psychology. Oğuz Atay, as a man of letters, was one of those who read this book and found a basis for fiction in his mind. He particularly emphasized this source of inspiration and directly or indirectly touched upon concepts such as stimulus hunger, recognition hunger, structure hunger, three ego states and games.

The Concepts of Transactional Analysis in the *Diary* of Oğuz Atay

Oğuz Atay states in many places in his diary that he has read *Games People Play*. He also explains in the following sentences that he will use the concepts of this book in the play *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar*: “Now I am in a situation where I feel that I have to write a play. I read the notes I wrote. I think I have to look at *Games People Play* again” (Atay, 2017, p. 104). He then gives a summary from his perspective, emphasizing the term “stroke,” which he calls a “pat on the back,” that is, a physical or symbolic touch that satisfies the hunger for stimulus and recognition. This term is so important to Atay that in the following pages he considers the “pat on the back” as the theme of *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar* in a social context:

Berne talks about patting a child on the back and says that, according to the belief, this is the only way a child can straighten its back. People can only communicate by patting each other. Idioms also fit the main reason for this behavior: “Sırtını okşamak (to pat someone on the back)” and “belini doğrultmak (to straighten someone’s back).” Know me and I will know you, that is, you scratch my back and I will scratch yours (mutual back-scratching). This is the most played game in Türkiye. (Atay, 2017, p. 118)

Eric Berne, in defining the term stimulus hunger, says that an infant deprived of its mother’s stimulus for a long time will eventually succumb to diseases. He also says that it is necessary to stroke someone in order to satisfy stimulus hunger, or as the colloquial saying goes, the spinal cord of a person who is not stroked will shrink. Stroking corresponds to the physical intimacy of an infant with its mother during the period when the infant is hungry for physical

stimuli. However, after this close intimacy is over, the individual is confronted with social, psychological, and biological forces that prevent him or her from continuing the infant-style physical intimacy. This condition forces him or her to compromise and learn different ways of dealing with it. This process of compromise is usually successful and results in the partial transformation of the infantile hunger for stimulus into an adult specific contact, not physical but symbolic, i.e., the hunger for recognition. Thus, while in the hunger for stimulus a stroke corresponds to a physical and literal stroke, in the hunger for recognition it corresponds to “any act implying recognition of another’s presence.” Moreover, the exchange of strokes constitutes a transaction, which is the unit of social interaction (Berne, 1966, p. 13-15).

After the hunger for stimulus and recognition has been satisfied with strokes and pats on the back, a new hunger arises. This is the hunger for structure, and what satisfies this hunger is programming. “The eternal problem of the human being is how to structure his waking hours.” Just as the hunger for stimulus and recognition, when left unfulfilled for a long time, leads to mental disintegration and physical illness, the same disintegration occurs when an individual cannot satisfy his or her hunger for structure and cannot program his or her waking hours. Therefore, human beings must structure their time in order to be able to live, and when they are alone, they have two choices: Activity and fantasy. On the other hand, when a person is not alone but a member of a social aggregation of two or more people, there are many more options (Berne, 1966, p. 16-18):

In order of complexity, these are: (1) Rituals (2) Pastimes (3) Games (4) Intimacy and (5) Activity, which may form a matrix for any of the others. The goal of each member of the aggregation is to obtain as many satisfactions as possible from his transactions with other members. The more accessible he is, the more satisfactions he can obtain. Most of the programming of his social operations is automatic. Since some of the “satisfactions” obtained under this programming, such as self-destructive ones, are difficult to recognize in the usual sense of the word “satisfactions,” it would be better to substitute some more non-committal term, such as “gains” or “advantages.” (Berne, 1966, p. 18-19)

Atay, uses the term “boredom” when talking about the hunger for structure and mentions the two terms “activity” and “fantasy,” which he often touches on in his other written works, as the two ways of structuring someone’s time:

All bad games are the result of the boredom to which unstructured time leads. One structures one’s time in two ways: activity or fantasy (Berne). The ways of structuring time: 1-Pastimes 2-Rituals 3-Games 4-Intimacy 5-Activity. (Atay, 2017, p. 118)

“Pastimes and games are substitutes for the real living of real intimacy.” Games can be abandoned only when intimacy is established, that is, “when individual (usually instinctual) programming becomes more intense, and both social patterning and ulterior restrictions and motives begin to give way” (Berne, 1966, p. 18). According to Atay, this is a manifestation of hypocrisy, an inability to grow up, and a lack of a loving nature:

We are based on the principle that “any game is better than none” (a sign that we are still children). Games can be serious, even dangerous, and while people play them, their lives can be at stake. People who play games can feel serious to the bone. On the contrary, games are substitutes for real life and relationships when people lack them.

As long as there are restrictions and hesitations, these real activities are in danger (lack of a loving nature). (Atay, 2017, p. 118)

Atay mentions ego states in the following paragraph:

The child-adult-parent triad is the three sides of the ego (Berne). Child refers specifically to the creative side. It is important to know these states and it is not necessary to get rid of them. Games are based on these character foundations. Not reacting to an action in the same direction will cause a conflict between three of these characters. A change of direction can resolve the situation. A game is the existence of “apparent” mutual relationship along with “psychological” relationship, but in a contradictory situation with it (Berne). (Atay, 2017, p. 118)

An individual’s chain of behaviors, feelings and perceptions in the preceding moment cannot fit into those in the following moment during social activities. These changes and differences are the basis of the concept of ego states (Berne, 1966, p. 23). In a social aggregation, when two or more individuals meet, one of them will definitely speak and signal that he or she is aware of the presence of others. This is called a “transactional stimulus”. As for the other individual, he or she will do or say something in response to this stimulus. This is called the “transactional response.” Essentially, Transactional Analysis diagnoses which ego state implemented the transactional stimulus and which ego state executed the transactional response (Berne, 1966, p. 29).

The Child ego state represents “archaic relics, still-active ego states which were fixated in early childhood” (Berne, 1966, p. 23). However, it cannot be considered an unnecessary element that deserves to be destroyed, because creativity, joy and spontaneity are the built-in characteristics of this ego state. We further divide this ego state into two categories: Free and Adapted Child ego states. Creativity and spontaneity are more associated with the Free Child ego state than the other. In the Free Child ego state, a person is spontaneous, dynamic and creative, follows his or her physical needs, and behaves as he or she wishes (Keçeci, 2007, p. 6).

The Parent ego state has two primary functions. “First, it enables the individual to act effectively as the parent of actual children, thus promoting the survival of the human race.” Second, through this ego state, many responses become automatic and parents can save themselves from wasting time and energy (Berne, 1966, p. 27). The thoughts, feelings, and behaviors contained in this ego state are all learned or “borrowed” from the parents. On the other hand, this ego state is also divided into two categories, the first being the compassionate and loving Nurturing Parent ego state, and the second being the Critical Parent ego state. The Critical Parent ego state includes the prejudicial thoughts, feelings, and beliefs that someone has learned from his or her own parents (Solomon 2003: 15).

The Adult ego state contains patterns of behavior that help in logical analysis and problem solving. Each individual has the ability to process data objectively when the appropriate ego state is able to be active (Berne, 1966, p. 24). “Another task of the Adult is to regulate the activities of the Parent and the Child, and to mediate objectively between them” (Berne, 1966, p. 27).

Transactional Analysis of *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar*

In the play *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar*, the author tells the story of Coşkun Ermiş, the retired history teacher who begins to write plays, is influenced by the plays he has written, and, after meeting the stage actor Saffet Söylemezoğlu, plays in real life the games described by Berne. Atay enriches the narrative by often using Berne's terms to describe the process by which Coşkun wrote these plays and almost lived them. In this way, the psychological games of real life are manifested as concrete examples in this play.

The play begins with Ümit, Coşkun's son, asking his father about the history of the French Revolution. From this moment on, through many pages, we see the series of transactions in which the Child ego state is active. Ümit is a childish boy: "Coşkun's son. A little underdeveloped" (Atay, 2016, p. 112). For this reason, although Ümit can sometimes communicate in different ego states, he eventually returns to the Child ego state and plays an important role in Saffet and Coşkun's games. Saffet has the leading role in the strange situation Coşkun finds himself in. Saffet's active ego state is also Child, and when two of Coşkun and Saffet come together, there are simple and complementary transactions involving the Child ego state. In complementary transactions, "the response is appropriate and expected." A communication can go on forever as long as the transactions are complementary (Berne, 1966, p. 29).

In this relationship, Saffet appreciates Coşkun's importance as a playwright and Coşkun appreciates Saffet as a stage actor and mentor. As a result, the two are constantly stroking each other. "Coşkun and Saffet mostly play the game of 'patting each other on the back' in personal and social ways" (Atay, 2017, p. 122). These complementary transactions and communications are sometimes interrupted by the crossed transactions that occur when Cemile communicates with the parent ego state. The crossed transactions can interrupt the communication and easily disrupt the simple and complementary transactions (Berne, 1966, p. 33).

Saffet makes Coşkun meet Emel and Servet, and as a result of their encouragement, Coşkun surrenders completely to the playwright. The Child ego state is also active in the relationships between the members of this group. Servet provides Coşkun with money and the use of his theater. He often lets the reader feel his childish sentimentality and serves as the main driving force behind Coşkun's games with his money. As for Emel, Coşkun sees her as a savior when he loses his affection for his wife Cemile. There is no relationship between Coşkun and Cemile in which the Adult ego state is active. Cemile's active ego state is always Parent and Coşkun's active ego state is always Child. During this series of interrupted communication between Coşkun and Cemile, to make matters worse, Coşkun meets a stage actress named Emel, whose active ego state is Child, and starts having an affair with her.

When everything that happens in Coşkun's house becomes theatrical, Cemile blames Coşkun's new friends and tries to make him give up his new passion. She also notices her husband's love affair with Emel. However, the fact that Coşkun is only playing games becomes so obvious that Cemile does nothing but interrupt his games with antitheses. An antithesis is a refusal to play or an undercutting of the payoff despite the player's best efforts to continue the game. The player who is confronted with this refusal to play or undercutting of the payoff falls into a state of despair that in some respects resembles depression (Berne, 1966, p. 53). Hence, Coşkun really deteriorates and becomes isolated after Cemile's mother Saadet Nine dies and his bad games get out of hand. Emel, who feels that Coşkun is only

playing games in which she is also a player and that he has no power to do anything, leaves him. Eventually, Coşkun gets depressed when all his games are spoiled and runs away for the last time from his wife Cemile, whose active ego state has never been the Child and who tries to take care of him. Unlike his wife, there is no one to take care of him now, as his playmates turn away from him after his games are spoiled. At the end of the play, in parallel with Coşkun's psychological state, the boundaries between fantasy and games with reality and intimacy become so blurred that the narrative of Coşkun's death takes the form of a theatrical fiction and the reader doubts that he has died:

SERVET: Oh my God! What happened? (looks at Coşkun) I wonder if... I wonder if he died?

SAFFET (Continues to play): No, he did not die.

SERVET (Does not understand): Well, what happened?

SAFFET: He was rehearsing an old play. As everyone knows, he, the master, puts more emphasis on plays than is necessary and takes them very seriously.

SERVET (walks over to Coşkun, looks at him carefully and walks back): So what is wrong with him? [...] (Looks at Saffet doubtfully) Did he really die? (Saffet, nods his head as if to say "yes." Servet looks at Saffet frightened) So what do we do now?

SAFFET: The play is over, we salute the audience. (He steps forward and greets the audience. Servet, surprised, also nods in greeting. Coşkun's head also falls forward as if to greet them). (Atay, 2016: 109)

The characters in *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar* play many games throughout the play. A psychological game, or simply a game "is an ongoing series of complementary ulterior transactions progressing to a well-defined, predictable outcome" (Berne, 1966, p. 48). Here we should mention what ulterior transactions are. Ulterior transactions involve "the activity of more than two ego states simultaneously and this category is the basis for games" (Berne, 1966, p. 33). To make it more complex, every game is superficially plausible but has a hidden motivation (Berne, 1966, p. 48). In addition, the main characteristic of each game is its payoff, for which every move of the games serves to set up the situation (Berne, 1966, p.61). If an operation, which is a simple transaction or a set of them, carried out for a specific and stated purpose, becomes disadvantageous for the giver, it is a game. Every game looks like a set of operations, but it becomes obvious that these operations are only maneuvers of the game after the payoff (Berne, 1966, p. 48-49). Some games we see played in the play are "Alcoholic," "If It Were Not For You," "Now I Have Got You, You Son of a Bitch," "Kick Me," and "See What You Made Me Do."

The "Alcoholic" game is a five-handed game, but the roles in this game can sometimes be reduced to the point where this game can be played two-handed. The roles in this game are Alcoholic, Persecutor, Rescuer, Patsy or Dummy, and Connection. The central role is that of the Alcoholic and the chief role is that of the Persecutor. The Persecutor is typically the spouse of the Alcoholic who disapproves of the Alcoholic's drinking and scolds the spouse for it (Berne, 1966, p. 73-74). In *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar*, Cemile is obviously the Persecutor while Coşkun is in the role of the Alcoholic: "Play and play. It is better for you to deal with real games. [...] Or to put in order the game of spending money to drink alcohol" (Atay,

2016, p. 35). Patsy, or Dummy, provides the oney for the Alcoholic to drink alcohol. The person in this role may even sometimes say “Come have a drink with me” as in the role of Agitator. As for the Connection, it is the role of the person who is the direct source of supply, who understands bar talk, and who is in some ways the most important person in the Alcoholic’s life (Berne, 1966, p. 74). In the play, Servet plays the role of the Patsy, or Dummy, while Saffet plays each of the roles of Agitator and Connection:

SAFFET: I was exhausted during the rehearsals, boss. Could you not offer each of us a glass of alcohol as an advance?

SERVET (Happily): Of course! (Looks at Coşkun) We will not lose the excitement of having recently met in this way. (Atay, 2016, p. 44)

The third is that of the Rescuer, who tries to save the Alcoholic from this bad habit (Berne, 1966, p. 74). There is no one who directly plays this role in the play, but Emel, who, unlike Cemile, approaches Coşkun without judging him, encourages him to write plays, and tries to relieve him during the conversation in the bar, somehow plays this role:

COŞKUN: Look, I am being punished again.

EMEL: Stop saying such ridiculous things, you have done nothing wrong. [...] We really love you. (Squeezes Coşkun's hands in her palms) I love you. (Atay, 2016, p. 54)

The main goal of this game, i.e. the payoff, is to get a hangover. In other words, the drinking itself is only an incidental pleasure in the process leading to the real payoff, the hangover. The Alcoholic, who is in the Child ego state, as a drunk, unconsciously seeks to be punished by being scolded not only by the internal Parent ego state, but also by any parental figures, i.e. Persecutors in the environment. This attention-grabbing “self-castigation” leads the Alcoholic to the crux of the matter, which is to obtain forgiveness from the Persecutor. This game, although it is a five-handed game, is mainly played between spouses, and the Alcoholic is satisfied by being persecuted and then forgiven by his or her spouse (Berne, 1966, p. 75-76). Such a relationship exists between Coşkun and Cemile. Coşkun first tries to relieve his rebelliousness and anger by drinking alcohol, then he punishes himself while Cemile persecutes him and then he asks for her forgiveness.

The “If It Were Not For You” game is played between the restricted and domineering spouses. The restricted spouse playing this game is in the position of having chosen a domineering spouse to prevent him or her from doing the thing he or she is afraid of doing. Then, the restricted spouse can complain in that he or she could do anything “if it were not for you.” As we see in the relationship between Coşkun and Cemile, Coşkun, who is dominated by his wife, has unconsciously chosen a spouse who will dominate him because he is afraid of life. Thanks to Cemile who dominates Coşkun, he can say “I cannot do anything because of my wife” instead of “I cannot do the things I want to do but cannot do in my life because I am afraid to do them.” In this way, he can protect his self-esteem (Berne, 1966, p. 50). Furthermore, Cemile has some fears that Coşkun might leave her and reveals them by scolding and putting pressure on him. Thus, on the social level, this is a Parent-Child game whose transactions are “You stay home and take care of the house” and “If it were not for you, I could be out having fun.” On the psychological level, it is a Child-Child game whose transactions are “You must always be here when I get home. I am terrified of desertion” and

“I will be if you help me avoid phobic situations” (Berne, 1966, p. 54-55). The antithesis of this game appears when Cemile unwillingly reduces her pressure on him and he can no longer stand up to his wife. Because of this antithesis, he is so broken that he turns back to his wife, even though Emel says, “Let’s run away from here.” When his games are interrupted in this way and he understands that the reason for his failures is his fear for his life, he has a mental breakdown in the Child ego state (Berne, 1966, p. 53).

The factor that is the end of Coşkun is the interruption of the game “If It Were Not For You,” the consequence of which is a mental breakdown for him. It is likely that Cemile was aware of this situation from the beginning:

Coşkun! (Surprised) Why do you always leave, Coşkun? (Collapses on the couch) Do not you know that you will come back to this house? (Looking at the door) Do not you know that you cannot do anything alone, Coşkun? (Atay, 2016, p. 44)

Coşkun is also quite angry when Cemile interrupts the game towards the end of the play:

Oh my God! You could at least scream, “You cannot do this, Coşkun!” or you could cry and say something like, “How can you leave me?” and so on. How can you be as calm as a guardian?” (Atay, 2016, p. 99)

“Now I Have Got You, You Son of a Bitch” is a two-handed game in which the Agressor demonstrates his long-accumulated feelings of hatred and rage by taking advantage of the Victim’s small provocations. The objects of these provocations may be mostly worthless (Berne, 1966, p. 85-86). In *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar*, Cemile reacts to such provocations by Coşkun with a massive wave of anger. The psychological background of this behavior is that Cemile has accumulated a lot of anger towards her mother since her childhood. Saadet Nine put pressure on Cemile as a child because she did not love her husband and forced her to marry Coşkun although she refused. Because of this, Cemile, who takes a hidden pleasure in Coşkun’s provocations, starts to criticize him at the slightest mistake in a way that encompasses his whole life. Actually, she is not upset because she is suffering, but she is delighted to be provoked and to have the opportunity to reveal her anger. This game is played in one of the opening sequences of the play when Cemile asks Coşkun to help Ümit with his homework. Coşkun responds to this request with the provocative sentence, “Why is this homework being done? Why is it necessary?” Cemile then vents her anger at Coşkun by harshly criticizing him:

I told you it would have been better if you had helped Ümit. [...] I wish you would take things seriously. [...] You have no other function than to confuse the boy. [...] Enough is enough, Coşkun! You have made everything look like your games. (Atay, 2016, p. 13)

The “Kick Me” game “is played by men whose social manner is equivalent to wearing a sign that reads ‘Please Don’t Kick Me’” (Berne, 1966, p. 84):

The temptation is almost irresistible, and when the natural result follows, White cries piteously, ‘But the sign says don’t kick me.’ Then he adds incredulously, ‘Why does this always happen to me?’ (Berne, 1966, p. 84)

However, he is actually proud of the misfortunes that have befallen him and compares his misfortunes to those of others: “My misfortune is better than yours.” Because just to be able to make this comparison, he makes all the provocations that he can and he ends up being excluded from all the environments that he is in. Actually, this situation is what he unconsciously wants (Berne, 1966, p. 84). Coşkun’s reactions to Emel’s “I love you” in the bar conversation obviously show that he wants to be kicked: “No, no! Do not love me. I want to live with worries all the time. (Leans back) I think this is better for me” (Atay, 2016, p. 54).

“See What You Made Me Do” is a marital game. The player marries someone who can take on all the responsibilities of marriage and thus avoid the bad consequences that could arise if he or she made the decisions during the marriage. If their children are brought up badly or the household economy is bankrupt, the blame will fall on the spouse who is the decision-maker and the player will be able to say, “Look, I am blameless” (Berne, 1966, p. 88-89). Coşkun also gives Cemile all the responsibilities that keep the marriage going, including the daily chores, and does not take care of their son Ümit. In this way, he is ready to blame his wife for everything and make her responsible for the bad consequences. This situation is revealed throughout the play in the form of confessions:

I got married in such a confused mood and surrendered to my wife. I let her do everything, have a child, and even grow a flower in a pot. (Atay, 2016: 42) I pretend not to know that my wife sews to earn a living for our family. In other words, I live as if I know nothing. I openly and seemingly pretend not to know that I got married to live a more comfortable life, that I took shelter with a woman I do not love, that my mother-in-law has become senile, and that my son is rebellious. (Atay, 2016, p. 52)

Conclusion

The play *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar* is based on the concepts of Transactional Analysis, which Oğuz Atay talks about in his *Diary*. The structure of the characters’ false relationships and the games they play are in line with the concepts that Transactional Analysis defines and categorizes. All of the characters play “bad games,” in Atay’s words, establishing distorted relationships in false ego states. Therefore, the characters in *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar* make many mistakes in their social relationships, play bad games instead of establishing intimacy, and get negative feelings as a payoff. As a result, this situation causes a mental breakdown for Coşkun. Finally, some of the games that we see played in the play are “Alcoholic”, “If It Were Not For You,” “Now I Have Got You, You Son of a Bitch,” “Kick Me,” and “See What You Made Me Do.”

On the other hand, the definitions and interpretations of these terms in *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar* and in his *Diary* are different from what Eric Berne means in his book because Atay gives a new interpretation to these terms. He does this in order to express a more sociological reality through the concepts of Transactional Analysis. While Eric Berne defines the hunger for stimulus as a basic and unconscious need of the human physiology, this term turns into a more conscious, pragmatic and hypocritical behavior as in the words “Know me and I will know you” in Oğuz Atay. However, according to Berne, this feeling is only harmful if it is misdirected and tried to be satisfied with bad games. Furthermore, Atay touches on “staying childish,” which is a result of someone’s Child ego state remaining wounded, as the general structure of the Turkish society: “a homeland of children.” On the one hand, Atay sees games as fake social interactions that substitute for intimacy, which he describes as “the real

relationship,” and on the other hand, he points out that this situation stems from the lack of loving nature as a sociological generalization.

Consequently, the interpretations of the terms on which the play is based do not fully correspond to the way in which Berne explains them and are adapted according to Atay’s point of view, which is critical of Turkish society and intellectuals. Nevertheless, we can see that many of the games that Berne schematically mentions in his book are played throughout *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar*. In *Oyunlarla Yaşayanlar*, the concepts of Transactional Analysis are not part of a psychotherapeutic theory but, a means of expressing a criticism of Turkish society, some of whose members, especially intellectuals, are childish and have no intimacy, but only false social relationships. In other words, this play depicts the broken, disappointed and childish intellectuals of a political atmosphere of the 70s and 80s in Türkiye, which led to a coup d’etat and of which Atay was also an idealist but disappointed intellectual. These intellectuals run away from activity and intimacy, which are painful, to fantasy and games, which seem safer and more joyful.

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