

What is Postmodernism?

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Abstract-Postmodernism today is the most widely discussed phase of contemporary history. This phase however is still ambiguous as it is related with most of the major branches of knowledge and its presence is felt in various walks of life. Its presence in literature is felt more conspicuously than in other branches. Yester years' generation of critics and scholars ,wrongly compare , contrast and relate the meaning of postmodernism with the terms- tradition, modernism modernity post-postmodernity or post-postmodernism and unknowingly get lost in the sphere of the endless exhausting debate over chronological happening or emergence and semantic affinity among these terminologies. This directionless debate is the factor responsible for the creation of intellectual confusion and relative affinity between the terms- local and global, national and international, native and cosmopolitan and East and West.Scholars and critics should not think tradition, modernism, modernity, postmodernism postmodernity , post-postmodernism, post-postmodernity only in relation to a chronological link of them with each other but should take into account postmodernism as a 'set of ideas' , ' cultural epoch ' , 'an attitude ' , 'style' , 'life-style' and ' way of the world' . In this paper I have tried to give suitable reply to misunderstanding about the term postmodernism.

Modernism is a blanket term for an explosion of new styles and trends in the arts in the first half of 20th Century. Modernism assumes the desirability and the possibility of a stable identity that endures not only through space, but also through time. Modernity entered everyday life through the dissemination of modern art, the products of consumer society, new technologies and new modes of transportation and communication. The dynamics by which modernity produced a new industrial and colonial world can be described as 'modernization' – a term denoting those processes of individualization, secularization, industrialization, commodification, urbanization, bureaucratization, and rationalization which together have constituted the modern world. Modernity carries out rebellion in two ways: on the one hand, it rebels against the past, and on the other, it fosters a new form to enforce a different medium of expression. Jean-Francois Lyotard argues:

The very idea of modernity is closely correlated with the principle that it is both possible and necessary to break with tradition and institute absolutely new ways of living and thinking.¹

Whether postmodernism is a period, an epoch, style, attitude, genre, mood or ongoing process is the debatable issue. Ralph Cohen thinks postmodernism as a historical period concept characteristic of the late stage of capitalism like Fredric Jameson while Catherine Burgass distinguished between, ' postmodernity ' or the 'postmodern' as historical era and 'postmodernism' as the stylistic category. To Brenda Marshall the word postmodernism does

not refer to a period or a 'movement'. It isn't really an 'ism', it isn't really a thing. It's a moment, but more a moment in logic than in time. Temporarily it is a space. Steven Best and Douglas Kellner think that an explosion of media, computers and new technologies, a restructuring of capitalism, political shifts and upheavals, novel cultural forms, and new experiences of space and time produced a sense that dramatic developments have occurred throughout culture and society. The contemporary postmodern controversies can therefore be explained in part by an ongoing and intense series of crises concerned with the breaking up of the 'modern' modes of social organization and the advent of a new 'postmodern' terrain. They distinguish between 'modernity' conceptualized as the modern age and 'postmodernity' as an epochal term for describing the period which allegedly follows modernity. Modernity is a historical periodizing term which refers to the epoch that follows the 'Middle Ages' or feudalism. For some, modernity is opposed to traditional societies and is characterized by innovation, novelty, and dynamism.

Tim Woods thinks it as useful to distinguish between postmodernity and postmodernism. The first he says, is a concept which describes our socio-economic, political and cultural condition. For example, in the West people live in increasingly postindustrial, 'service- oriented' economics, while their dealings with mundane tasks like, shopping, etc. are ever more mediated through the computer interface, as they communicate with each other by e-mail, voice-mail, fax, tele-conference on video link, accessing the wider world via the net, and choosing for entertainment the high-speed image bombardment of the pop video or the tongue- in – chic thriller

antinarratives of the X files. Such conditions of living are often referred to as 'postmodernity'. Postmodernism on the other hand describes the broad aesthetic and intellectual projects in the contemporary society.

With the appearance of Jean- Francois Lyotard's **La Condition Postmoderne** in 1979, and its translation into English **The Postmodern Condition : A Report on Knowledge** in 1984, different disciplinary diagnoses received an inter disciplinary confirmation, and there no longer seemed room for disagreement that postmodernism and post-modernity had come to stay.

There are also different dates for the emergent postmodernisms in different disciplines – the late 1950s for art, the late 1960s for architecture, the early 1980s for cultural theory, the late 1980s for many social sciences. Charles Jencks, who is the most influential proponent of architectural postmodernism, can therefore declare with absolute conviction that 'Modern Architecture died in St. Louis, Missouri on July, 1972 at 3.32 p.m. This turns out to be the date on which Pruitt – Igoe housing scheme was dynamited, after the building had swallowed up millions of dollars in attempted renovation of the energetic vandalism it had suffered at the hands of its unimpressed inhabitants. For Jencks this moment crystallizes the beginnings of a plural set of resistances to the hegemony of modernism. It will help to specify some of the lines of resistance, for they form a conceptual template which other accounts of postmodernism will employ in their respective narratives.

The English painter John Watkins Chapman, had used the term 'postmodern painting' around the year 1870 to describe the painting which was very much avantgarde and modern. The term appeared in 1917 in a book by Rudolf Pannwitz, **Die krisis dereuropaischenkultur** to describe nihilism and moral collapse of Eurocentric culture. Arnold Toynbee described the age as one of anarchy and total relativism.

Best and Kellner illustrate the reality that after World War II the notion of a 'postmodern' break with the modern age appeared in a one – volume summation by D.C. Somervell of the first six volumes of British historian Arnold Toynbee's **A Study of History** (1947) and thereafter Toynbee himself adopted the term, taking up the notion of the postmodern age in Volumes VIII and IX of his **A Study of History**. Somervell and Toynbee suggested the concept of a 'post-modern' age, beginning in 1875, to delineate a fourth stage of Western History after the Dark Ages (675-1075),

the middle Ages (1075- 1475), and the modern (1475 -1875). On this account Western civilization had entered a new transitional period beginning around 1875 which Toynbee termed the 'post-modern age'.

Best and Kellner explicitly pronounce that the Modern Age is being succeeded by a postmodern period. postmodernism is all-embracing theory of salvation. According to Willie Thompson:

The term 'postmodernism' means different things. the concept is what would once have been referred to as a 'portmanteau word'. The early appearances of the word (at first written with a hyphen) go back a surprisingly long way. According to Anderson it 'first surfaced' in 1934 in the work of a Spanish writer, Frederico de Onis, who used it specifically to describe a reaction to the artistic movement of the early twentieth century known as modernism, and ...²

However it was in 1977 that the concept of postmodernism really became part of the public discoveries. Robert Barsky points out:

Derived from the etymologically battling combination of "post" (after) and "modo" (just now) and with attributes which can be traced through the history of modern thought but which take present shape after the Second World War post-modernity now loosely encompasses or relates to a series of movements sometimes incompatible, that emerged in affluent countries in Europe and of European descent in art, architecture, literature, music, the social sciences and the humanities. Postmodern approaches or descriptions of the ...Its rise has spawned whole new approaches such as cultural studies, feminist studies (such as Heckman), Women's studies, gay and lesbian studies, gender studies, queer theory, science studies, and postcolonial theory, although it has now become the dominant paradigm which is its of being questioned for its limiting practices.³

Since its inception as a literary term in the late 1950s and its wider use as a critical term in the 1980s and 1990s, postmodernism has emerged as a significant cultural, political, and intellectual force that defines contemporaneity. Definitions of postmodernism range from eclecticism and montage to neoscepticism and anti-rationalism.

Postmodernism has consistently challenged understanding of unity, subjectivity, epistemology, aesthetics, ethics, history and politics.

Before defining critical concept of postmodernism, it is necessary to understand the meaning of **Post**- in the postmodernism. For Lyotard, the **post**- is first of all a continuation of the **work** of modernist avant-garde painters, writers and thinkers (Picasso, Joyce, Freud), the work of questioning 'expressions of thought'. One can argue that, the last **post** was not the moment of avant-garde modernism, but in fact the era of romanticisms the time of which may be far from being up.

The '**post**' of 'postmodernism, has the sense of a simple succession, a diachronic sequence of periods in which each one is clearly identifiable. The '**post**' indicates something like a conversion: a new direction from the previous one. According to Lyotard, the '**post**' of 'postmodern' does not signify a movement of **comeback, flashback, or feedback**, that is, not a movement of repetition but a procedure in 'ana-': a procedure of analysis, anamnesis, anagogy and anamorphosis which elaborates an 'initial forgetting'. The prefix '**post**' suggests that any postmodernism is inextricably bound up with modernism, either as a replacement of modernism or as chronologically after modernism.

In the words, **postmodernism, postfeminism, postColonialism and postindustrialism**, the word '**post**' can be seen to suggest a critical engagement with modernism, rather than claiming the end of modernism, or it can seem that modernism has been overturned, superseded or replaced. The relationship is something more akin to a continuous engagement, which implies, that postmodernism needs modernism to survive, so that they exist in something more like a host parasite relationship. Therefore, it is quite crucial to realize that any definition of **postmodernism** will depend upon one's prior definition of **modernism**. Steven Connor observes that:

If we live in 'post- culture', a culture wedded to all kinds of supersession post- Holocaust, post-industrial, post-humanist, post-cultural, indeed – then there remain, residually, two sides or aspects to the 'post' prefix and debates about the postmodern in the humanities and social sciences have tended to reproduce this duality. On the one hand, to designate oneself as 'post' anything, is to admit to a certain exhaustion, diminution or decay.⁴

The 'post' of the postmodernism which develops out of broadly hermeneutic tradition, implies that there can be no position from outside culture from which to offer a critique of it. The 'post' in postmodern also signifies a dependence on a continuity with, that which it follows. It also implies intensification of the modern, as a hypermodernity, a new face of modernity, or a 'postmodern' development within modernity. Yet many postmodern theorists deploy the term – as it was introduced by Toynbee-- to characterize a dramatic rupture or break in Western history. The discourses of the postmodern therefore presuppose a sense of an ending, the advent of something new, and the demand to develop new categories, theories, and methods to explore and conceptualize this novel cultural situation. "Postmodern" simply indicates a mood, or better a state of mind.

Periodisation is often a culturally imposed activity channeled by the dominant ideology. The '**post**' in discussion of postmodernist fiction often relates to a succession or supersession of modernism. The confusion is advertised by the "**Post**" in postmodernism identifies itself by something it is not. It is not modern anymore. But in what sense exactly is it **post** -?- as a **result** of modernism? --- the **aftermath** of modernism? --- the **afterbirth** of modernism? the **denial** of modernism? Or there **rejection** of modernism? Postmodernism has been used in a **mix- and match** of some or all of these meanings.

Postmodernism is an umbrella term. It is, to some extent, like a party manifesto which has at its base a set of beliefs which are not in fact held by all, and are unlikely to reflect the universal condition of men and women in contemporary society. To J.G. Ballard, postmodernism is a conceptualization of the present that seeks to historicize the effacement of the historical – thus, in some ways eternalizing itself, freezing the movement of time. Balsamo thinks that, the dominant interpretative theory of postmodernism concerns the penchant to celebrate the perpetual present. Postmodernism stands for collapse of cultural distinction and the process of cultural mongrelization. It is the most "democratic" of literary codes which has very much to do with the practicalities, not only of history but of life, individual, society, and his choice of political agenda. SturatSim defines postmodernism as an updated version of scepticism. Brian McHale describes postmodernism as: "The shift of dominant from problems of knowing to problems of modes of being – from an epistemological dominant to an ontological one". Postmodernity may be defined as those plural conditions in which

the social and the cultural become indistinguishable. Arnold Toynbee defines postmodernism as: The decline of Western civilization – into irrationality and relativism since the 1870s.

Postmodernism is the space between the old and the new. It is a movement of merging, a deliberate complication of the idea of generic integrity. The postmodern spirit lies coiled within the great corpus of modernism. Brian McHale defines literary postmodernism as : “a riotous cacophony of conflicting discourses or ‘heterotopia’ of incompatible geographies”. According to Radhakrishnan, the very term “Postmodernism” is a necessary misnomer; a misnomer, since it attempts to “periodise” a break, and necessary, since the language of the break has initially to mention and problematize its immediate antecedent before it commences its own projects.

Postmodernism resists closure. It also recognizes, however, that human beings cannot live without trying to **make** sense. Neither innately positive nor negative, postmodernism is an opening a space created for a particular awareness, interrogation. According to Fredric Jameson, postmodernism is not merely a new aesthetic style, but rather a new stage of ‘cultural development of the logic of late capitalism. It is the cultural dominant of late capitalist society, eclipsing modernist styles in various art forms and creating new forms of consciousness and experience that predominate over older modern forms. Postmodernism is a regression behind the progressive advances of the Enlightenment. It has become such a pervasive phenomenon in modern literary history and the term is used to denote so many trends that it may soon meet the fate of similar ‘inclusive’ terms such as Romanticism and one might be tempted to say like Lovejoy on Romanticism that it means ‘everything’ and therefore ‘nothing’.

Postmodernism is a phenomenon, literary and cultural, that points to the collapse of Western humanism and of the literature and culture sustained by it. It is fundamentally the eclectic mixture of any tradition with that of the immediate past which is both a continuation of modernism and its transcendence. Its best works are characteristically double coded and ironic, making a feature of the wide choice, conflict and discontinuity of traditions, because this heterogeneity most clearly captures pluralism. Postmodernism is the privilege of a particular group within Western Society. It is the ultimate justification, the master alibi, for the continued exploitation and oppression of non-western

cultures. Charles Jencks sees postmodernism in terms of ‘paradoxical dualism’ or ‘double coding’.

According to Beatrice Skordili, postmodernism can be defined as the eruption of differends in the sociopolitical horizon in the wake of the breakdown of grandnarratives. Postmodernity, to Zygmunt Bauman, is fully developed modernity. Modernity for itself; modernity emancipated from false consciousness. The postmodern moment is not something that is to be defined chronologically, rather it is a rupture in consciousness. Its definition lies in change and chance, but it has everything to do with how people read the present, as well the past. Postmodernism is a name given to the deconstructive intensification of logic of modernism to the point where the two binary extremes are seen to include and imply each other. Lyotard defines postmodernism as : “Simplifying to the extreme, I define postmodern as incredulity towards metanarratives”.

Lyotard further defines postmodern as that which, in the modern, puts forward the unrepresentable in presentation itself; that which denies itself the solace of good forms the consensus of a taste which would make it possible to share collectively the nostalgia for the attainable; that which searches for new presentations, not in order to enjoy them but in order to impart a stronger sense of the unrepresentable. Postmodernism is the explicit rejection of metanarratives, i.e. the presupposition that human history is following any particular course of development, whether in religious, liberal or Marxist guises. Fredric Jameson points to a defining sense of the postmodern as : “ The disappearance of a sense of history’ in the culture, a pervasive depthlessness, a ‘perpetual present’ in which the memory of tradition is gone.

Postmodernism is the very vast term used to describe the new aesthetics, cultural and intellectual forms and practices, which emerged in the 1980s and 1990s. It represents a flow of ultra-technological images in a consumerist hyperreality. It also implies dominance of multinational corporations on the world and the data they control as a power game of big nation .In a general sense, it is to be regarded as rejection of many cultural certainties on which life in the West has been structured over the last couple of centuries. Postmodernists celebrate difference, plurality and are always conscious of the global change and exchange of ideas and information traffic which has, almost, created a process of hybridization at all levels with the help of globalization of cultural ethos.

The postmodernist attitude is therefore one of a suspicion which can border on paranoia. The central point of postmodern attack is on modernist rationality, unity; universality, meaning and closure. Irrationality, difference, micro-politics, openness make postmodernism a manifesto of ultimate spirit of freedom from all traditional, cultural, social vicious bondages. Skepticism is at the heart of postmodern irrational psyche. Seyla Benhabib points out that:

Transcendental guarantees of truth are dead; in the agonal struggle of language games there is no commensurability; there are no criteria of truth transcending local discourses, but only the endless struggle of local narratives vying with one another for legitimation.⁵

If survival of the fittest is the popular motto then the weaker sections are meant for being exploited with various kinds of pretexts. Postmodernists adopt Foucauldian arguments to show the ways in which discourses of power are used in all societies to marginalize subordinate groups. Such discoveries of power do not just contribute to the decentring and deconstruction of the self; they also serve to marginalize those people who do not partake in them. Postmodernists attack notional centre or dominant ideologies which are also called as metanarratives and due to this attack consequently they celebrate difference. Christophor Butler points out:

Post-modernists therefore seem to call for an irreducible pluralism,...aimed at universalizable ideals of equality and justice. Indeed, post-modernists tend to argue that Enlightenment reason, which claimed to extend its moral ideals to all in liberty, equality and fraternity, was 'really' a system of repressive, Foucauldian control, and that Reason itself, particularly in its alliance with science and technology, is incipiently totalitarian.⁶

Postmodern society experiences an extraordinary compression of time and space due to new digital media. It creates an impression of post-postmodernism or 'beyond postmodern' condition. The Internet is at present a typically postmodernist phenomenon – it is a non-hierarchical, indeed disorganized, collage. The world, in the Post- McLuhanite global village, is held together by electronic contact rather than by genuine social relationships between persons, of

course signs may come to count for more than commodities. Post-modernist beliefs contains multiculturalists pluralism and relativism. In contemporary postmodern society traditional perspectives are fractured. Postmodernism is often criticized for lacking transcendental or rational foundation. Yet it has effected and affected global communities immensely. Language games play important role in the global power structure. The language of marginalized subject is always at the centre of postmodern little narratives. In Postmodernism the traditional metanarrative gets deconstructed by little narratives of marginalized groups.

Postmodernism blurs distinction between the 'high' and the 'low' and popular and dominant cultural difference. Brian McHale points out:

Postmodernism is characterized by the collapse of hierarchical distinctions between high and low art, between 'official' high culture and popular or mass culture.⁷

Postmodernism is also believed to be the unfinished project of modernity. Romanticism, like postmodernism, was not trapped in any specific genre. It might be argued that postmodernism is an unfinished project of Romanticism. Both are rather similar in nature and features, that is, both contain nameless genre and try to present in art and literature, the unrepresentable. Both assume that absolute truth cannot be presented or attained. Postmodernism has no unified theory, because in fact, it is umbrella genre without unified genre which tries to present the unrepresentable.

Raymond Chandler calls contemporary postmodern age as Coca – Cola age. Warhol in the 1980s represents 'the supreme feature of postmodernism: 'the emergence of a new kind of flatness or depthlessness, a new kind of superficiality in the most literal sense.

According to Anne Balsamo postmodernism indulges in the dominance of global multinational capitalism and information explosion, capitalist production of electronic addictions, the recording practices of video vigilantes, or the multiplication of television channels devoted to new forms of pornography. In postmodern time margin is in always conflict with centre to obtain freedom from exploitation. Micro politics of local or global minority groups try to protect their ethnic identity with great force and spirit. Micro politics of marginalized groups and gender- politics of feminism play role of great importance in the

Foucauldian postmodern condition of power structure.

Postmodernism opposes traditional metaphysics of 'purity' and believes in hybridization of global communities. Postmodernists create intellectual threat to orthodox religious, social and political leaders. The problem of postmodernity is a problem of expression or representation of thought, in art, literature, philosophy and politics. Southgate asks to contextualize postmodernism as a part of intellectual history. Southgate explains that postmodernism has brought along with it pomophobia to the contemporary society which is a major concern or a fear. This fear or danger of pomophobia is there due to mood of uncertainty induced by postmodernism. About pomophobia, Berverly Southgate argues:

Postmodernism, then, is well and truly impinging on us at levels both practical and theoretical; and pomophobia is what we get is what we suffer from when we just can't stand the disruption that it seems to threaten. Pomophobia indicates that our emotional balance has finally been lost, and that we can't cope any longer. It's what is manifested when we're no longer able to tolerate the uncertainties, ambiguities and doubts that postmodernism reveals and provokes.⁸

Postmodern time is a perpetual present. 'Highbrow' and 'lowbrow' have been superseded by 'no brow' in a postmodern world. This is the effect of globalization and hybridization at the global scale in all fields of life. In fact globalization is the only difference between modernism and postmodernism, which has created pomophobia in the contemporary society. Postmodernists claim that there can not be absolute privileged position of seeing the world and no meaningful conclusions can be drawn about the same. They see the world fragmented, decentered, and deconstructed. For them time and space become compressed, meaning dead and margin and centre exchange their positions. Postmodernism devises closure to everything. That openness is precisely what is so exciting about postmodernism. In John Forrester's words:

The reorganization of the past and the future go hand in hand, the past dissolves in the present, so that the future becomes an open question, instead of being specified by the fixity of the past.⁹

Responses to the postmodern challenge can be grouped under three main categories –**rejection, ambivalence and embrace.**

1. Postmodernism doubts everything.

2. Skepticism is the philosophy of postmodernism.

3. Language is central to the concern of postmodernists.

Postmodernism is a liberating force and its openness causes pomophobia. No centre can hold as a uniquely privileged vantage place, once it has been challenged by another. Postmodernity dismantles unitary principles of universality and unity and focuses on its relative nature. It stands for consumer society. Sabina Lovibond focuses on postmodernism's rejection of the doctrine of the unity of reason. It refuses to conceive of humanity as a unitary subject striving towards the goal of perfect coherence or of perfect cohesion and stability.

The conflict between rationality and irrationality is a distinguishing feature of postmodernity. Postmodernism's irrationality should not be understood as foolishness, on the contrary it must be taken as a powerful onslaught on elite mentality of modernity. Postmodernism safeguards the interest of micro-politics, local identity and deconstructs the hegemony of established ideologies which exploit marginal groups. In this context, Tim Woods points out:

Postmodernism represents a decline of faith in the keystones of the Enlightenment- belief in the infinite progress of knowledge, belief in infinite moral and social advancement, belief in teleology – and its rigorous definition of the standards of intelligibility, coherence and legitimacy. Consequently, postmodernism seeks local or provisional, rather than universal and absolute forms of legitimation.¹⁰

It should be noted that postmodern knowledge is provisional and dependent upon the context of inquiry. Power to marginalized is the motto of post-modernity; and so it propagates openness, multiplicity and indeterminacy. It is an ongoing process of threat to the dominant established metanarratives of dominant culture and ideologies.

Closure is death which restricts and chokes, cuts off and shuts down and declares that, to believe in absolute truths is to position something on someone as **permanently** 'Other'. Postmodernism favours micro-politics. Steven Best and

Postmodernism declared death of man, death of history, death of God, death of grandnarratives and death of Enlightenment rationalist discourses. All these deaths have made postmodernism a rebellious hyper style of the contemporary time. For postmodernists truth is relative and contingency is everything. Everything valid in modernity becomes absolutely invalid and outdated in postmodernity.

Stuart Sim, is of the opinion that there had been many modernisms and postmodernisms in the past, and there would be many modernisms and postmodernisms in the time to come. Actually, he argues that, the contemporary whole is in post-postmodern period. Modernism and postmodernism have some common features and differences. Some critics believe that postmodernism isn't separate age, attitude, style or period but continuation of modernism itself as late modernism, high modernism or hyper modernism, while others think there is a break or rupture between the two. Globalization, media, technological development high-speed cultural hybridization, consumerism, micro-politics and cry for saving traditions and minority identity have made difference between the two.

Modernism was a period, while, postmodernism has become permanent present. According to Matei Calinescu, in the comparison and contrast between postmodernity with modernity, modernity survives. Linda Hutcheon points out that postmodernism's relation to modernism is typically contradictory. It makes neither a simple and radical break with it nor a straightforward continuity with it, it is both and neither. Modernism believes in 'single vision' whereas, postmodernism prefers plurality and fragmentation.

In relation to the time and space compression in the postmodernism, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti's statement speaks much about the basic difference between modernism and postmodernism. Marinetti declares : " Time and space died yesterday". In modernism time travels in linear direction, which is not so in postmodernism . Postmodernism creates confusion, chaos and pomophobia due to the attack on modernist constraints. But this chaos, should not be taken as meaningless anarchy because it stands for optimistic change and subversion of the static modernist intellectual prisonhouse of rules and regulations.

According to David Antin, from the modernism you can choose but you get the postmodernism which you deserve. The 'post' suggests a cultural era 'after' modernism,

indicating some forms of linear periodisation, though this quickly becomes highly problematic since the conceptual appears conflated with the historical. Postmodernity is a social and intellectual, self-reflexive mood within modernity. Postmodernism is a knowing modernism that does not agonise about itself. Postmodernism does what modernism does, only in a celebratory rather than repentant way.

Connor focuses, while comparing between modernism and postmodernism , the distinguishing features between two as, multivalence against univalence, impurity against purity, and intertextuality against the singleness of the 'work . According to Helmut Lethen, the postmodern situation created the possibility to see Modernism as a closed and rather rigid entity. If one wants to deconstruct, one has to homogenize one's subject first so that it becomes deconstructible. According to Anderson, modernism suffers from elitism and postmodernism tries to get over that elitism towards the vernacular, towards tradition and the commercial slang of the street. Anderson's opinion makes it clear that postmodernism attacks on modernist elitist ideas.

Postmodernism, whether a period, mood, attitude, style, epoch, movement, is a debatable issue but one thing is very much clear that it is the umbrella term which champions the cause of specific 'set of ideas' and basically travels intellectually, from West to the direction of remaining 'Other' world. The point to be noted is, these ideas and ideologists give sizable shape to the shapeless term of postmodernism which is nothing but a 'hall of mirrors'. The prominent postmodern ideologists who contributed to the concept as a theory and ideology are --- Jean-Francois Lyotard, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Jean Baudrillard, Fredric Jameson, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari.

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Postmodernism: A State of Mind

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Abstract: Postmodernism is a broad term used to describe movement in a wide range of disciplines, including art, philosophy, critical theory and music. Indeed, some see postmodernism not as a separate movement, but simply as a continuation of the modernist struggle. The term Postmodernism is applied to the literature and art after Second World War (1939-45). There were the effects on Western morale of the First World War. These effects were greatly exacerbated by the experience of Nazi totalitarianism and mass extermination, the threat of total destruction by the atomic bomb, the progressive deviation of the natural involvement and the ominous fact of overpopulation. Many of the works of post modern literature by Jorge Luis Borges, Thomas Pynchon, Roland Barthes and many others blend literary genres, cultural and stylistic levels, the serious and the playful.

Postmodernism is hard to define, because it is a concept that appears in a wide variety of disciplines or areas of study, including art, architecture, music, film, literature, sociology, communications, fashion, and technology. It's hard to locate it temporally or historically, because it's not clear exactly when postmodernism begins. There are main features of postmodernism- fragmentation ,decentered, indeterminacy, the break with tradition, new in subject matter, free verse, self-consciousness, discontinuous composition, ambiguity, deconstructed, dehumanized subject, incoherence, relativism, no grand narrative, antiformal, anti-narrative and irony. Lastly, on the positive side post-modernism has released us from the 'restrictive assumption and elitist hierarchies' and encouraged us to take notice of several 'marginalized' points of view and realities. This has promoted such branches in cultures studies and literature as "sub alter studied", multiculturalism, feminism, Diaspora etc.

Keywords: Modernism, Postmodernism, Uncertainty, Decentered, Indeterminacy and Deconstructed.

The two major phases of literary development in the twentieth century are Modernism and Postmodernism. If we are living a postmodern life, we can easily visualize a description of modernism through flashback technique.

It is very difficult to fix an exact date for the beginning of modernism. But the period of highest intensity is seen in the first quarter of 20th century.

Whatever may be the exact date of modernism but the roots of it (modernism) is mainly found in industrialization. It is a by-product of industrialization and capitalism. Because of industrialization a number of changes in society took place. Middle class came into existence people migrated in cities in search of jobs. They lived in rented house. They worked in industries. They had a good salary but they were separated from their people, their houses and the result was the disintegration of society. The traditional joint family structures converted into nuclear family. Old system and old value started to collapse. All these changing patterns of human life in society created a feeling of alienation in the modern people.

The growth of industrialization, science and technology, and urbanization advocated a break with tradition, blind belief, and slavish obedience to any kind of authority, and the application of reason and logic to our thinking and solution-seeking process. That is why this period is also referred to as 'The age of Reason'.

There are different shades of modernism. Early modernism was more orthodox, close to the traditional views, full of faith and a tone of lament, but then authority of science and reason replaced the authority of faith and religion.

In modernism, though things fall apart, there is a centre to hold the pieces together and deep down the artist as well as human beings as a whole. Modernity gave birth to 'hallow men and women' and the 'waste land', but the wider structural contexts and networks balanced and controlled the relations among things that brought about affirmation and hope.

There are more features of modernism-

- The break with tradition
- The new in subject matter
- Formal experimentation

- Discontinuous composition
- Free verse
- The renewal of tradition

During the early years of the 20th century (1900 - 1930) modernism developed in some circles into 'high modernism'. In literature, the high priests of 'high modernism' (T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, Ezra Pound and others writing in English, Marcel Proust and Andree Gide writing in French and Franz Kafka writing a German along with others) moved away from apparent structures and objectivity resulting in abstract poetry, fragmented form, blurring of distinctions between poetry and prose, between genres, stream of consciousness techniques, discontinuous narratives etc. This tendency in a way paves the way for post Modern entry.

The word 'Postmodernism' is composed by two parts 'post' and 'modern'. Post is Latin for 'after' and modernism refers to the modern period. Literary postmodernism means 'after the modernist movement'.

Postmodernism is a broad term used to describe movement in a wide range of disciplines, including art, philosophy, critical theory and music. Indeed, some see postmodernism not as a separate movement, but simply as a continuation of the modernist struggle. It is aptly said that-

A postmodernist theory of art has no
Clear meaning among scholars and
Artists.

In other words, there is no

'Berlin Wall' existing between

Modernism and postmodernism.

The term 'Post Modernism' was probably first used by Arnold Toynbee, the well known historian of the 20th century, in 1939 in his 'A study of History'. According to him the modern quarter of the 19th century, may be between 1850 and 1875. This means the origin of post modernity is located not in the 20th century but in the 19th. That was just the beginning but one can say that modernity comes to an end during the first world war (1914-18) and Post Modernism begins to take shape between the two world wars (1918-39).

The term postmodernism, like the other terms modern/classical/traditional refers two things at the same time:

1. A historical period
2. A name for a state of mind, series of social and cultural tendencies.

The Post Modern state of mind is receptive not to the old style 'photo-fiction' but video/T.V./internet fiction with fragmented images that can be erased, moved forward and backward with fast-forward and rewind mechanism and operated at great speed, and 'recreate' them, short episodes and not lengthy continuity marks the post modern style.

The world that has been converted into a global village has become a federation of cultures, the world is more like a marketplace, a jamboree or a carnival with no fixed 'rules' or privileges for anyone as Lyotard the French theorist says of the post modern condition. One listens to reggae, watches a western, and eats Macdonald's food for lunch and local cuisine for dinner, wears Parisian designer perfume of Tokyo and 'zero' clothe in Hong Kong. In simple word, Post Modernism is a way of life, a way of feeling and a state of mind.

In Post Modernism, there are no epics, noble heroes, grand narratives no moral value that elevates our thoughts and passions, because 'all our heroes dying like flies'.

Post-Modernism lives on a 'demand and supply side' that reflects a yuppie outlook each brand like in the ads about toothpaste and toothbrushes, beauty bars and deodorants must displace the other, offering incentives and 'scientific facts' to wean away the consumer. In short, it is the age of displacement.

The term Postmodernism is applied to the literature and art after Second World War (1939-45). There were the effects on Western morale of the First World War. These effects were greatly exacerbated by the experience of Nazi totalitarianism and mass extermination, the threat of total destruction by the atomic bomb, the progressive deviation of the natural involvement and the ominous fact of overpopulation. Many of the works of post modern literature by Jorge Luis Borges,

Thomas Pynchon, Roland Barthes and many others blend literary genres, cultural and stylistic levels, the serious and the playful.

Postmodernism is hard to define, because it is a concept that appears in a wide variety of disciplines or areas of study, including art, architecture, music, film, literature, sociology, communications, fashion, and technology. It's hard to locate it temporally or historically, because it's not clear exactly when postmodernism begins.

There are main features of postmodernism- Fragmentation ,decentered, indeterminacy, the break with tradition, new in subject matter, free verse, self-consciousness, discontinuous composition, ambiguity, deconstructed, dehumanized subject, incoherence, relativism, no grand narrative, antiform, anti-narrative and irony.

Postmodernism in literature and art has parallels with the movement known as post structuralism in linguistic and literary theory. If modernism and postmodernism are ways of looking at things, a condition of the mind and a way of life, structuralism and post structuralism are generally used with reference to language study. The term post modernism and post structuralism are partners in the same paradigm. Both post modernism and post structuralism share the view of anthological uncertainty, decentered, indeterminacy, and deconstructed. In short, postmodernism is more language based whereas postmodernism presents a vision and a way of life.

To conclude, on the positive side post-modernism has released us from the 'restrictive assumption and elitist hierarchies' and encouraged us to take notice of several 'marginalized' points of view and realities. This has promoted such branches in cultures studies and literature as "sub alter studied", multiculturalism, feminism, Diaspora etc.

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WESTERN THEORIES: AN OBSESSION?

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Abstract: Criticism and theory in academic syllabi of graduate and post graduate courses in English and class room literary discussions has become an integral part over the recent years. If criticism is a practice to interpret a text, theory is a vision that is applied to both literary and non-literary texts. Essentially it is a move from a single discipline of literature to a multidisciplinary approach towards art. The writer views the inclusion and discussion of the Western theories as an obsession by the academia over the recent times. Moreover, also realises that the young students and researchers find it quite difficult to comprehend the Western theories that are many a times fast changing like structuralism to Poststructuralism (Roland Barthes as a Structuralist to Poststructuralist) and not-so-easy to comprehend notions like Deconstruction.

The present paper explains different Western and Eastern theories and presents the importance of the Eastern theories not only as predecessors of the Western theories but also as influential to the development of the Western thought. The paper also comments on poems from British, American, Indian, African and Indian literature as examples and raises the question whether the study of the Western theories has become an obsession in the academia and also stresses the importance to study the Eastern theories also in the academic circles to understand the meaning of poetry.

Key words: Criticism, theory, Structuralism, Poststructuralism, Modernism, Postmodernism, Indian literary theories, Chinese literary theories, Japanese literary theories, Arab literary theories, interpretation of poetry.

INTRODUCTION

If literature is the reflection of society, it is characterised by being artistic with imbibed quality of beauty and truth, imagination and suggestivity, and has an element of universality and permanent effect on the readers, with a dominant personal style of the artist. Criticism is the blueprint for a reader that teaches how to read or study literature in a systematic way and there by become called as a critic, for a critic is the ideal reader. M.H. Abrams in his *Mirror and the Lamp* (1953) puts forward four Schools of criticism. The **Mimetic School of Criticism** represented by Plato and Aristotle that believes in answering the notions of 'What is art?' and 'What is the function of Art?' Art is the imitation of things as they are, as they were and as they ought to be for the purpose of instructing the readers or the audience according this School of Criticism. The **Pragmatic School of Criticism** represented by Horace and Sidney argues about the usefulness of art for the readers. That art should give pleasure to the readers is the main argument of this School. The **Expressive School of Criticism** looks at art from the point of the writer and argues that art is the 'spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings' of the artist. Wordsworth and

Coleridge being the exponents of this School make the artist completely subjective towards his/her creation of art. The **Objective school of Criticism** of the 20th century critics like I.A.Richards, William Empson, T.S.Eliot to name a few, believe in objectifying art as independent from the artist. They argue that art is autonomous and the printed text on the page is important. The artist has no role to play once the work of art is created; it becomes objective and independent.

These critics try to analyse, interpret and evaluate a text according to the paradigms of their respective schools and try to bring out the universal meaning of the text and there by understand the singularity of truth within the text. All these critics are influenced by the Western Enlightenment philosophy or the Liberal Humanism of Francis Bacon, Hobbes, John Locke, Descartes, Kant of many others. Enlightenment Philosophy basically believes in single humanity, single history, single culture and single truth. Basically their propositions are limited to the understanding of poetry and its genres and it essentially is a literary practice to understand and appreciate a work of art.

In the later part of 20th century, the development of literary theory has brought in the understanding of a literary text with a political or ideological meaning, where minority voices gained expression and there by given rise to plurality of meaning with in a text. Humanity, culture, history and truth are fragmented and fractured. There is a search for specific potential meaning of a text from all sources and branches of knowledge. Theory is multidisciplinary study of a text; it is a vision. A theory being an expression of a community's understanding (and expectation) of an object, it is inevitably determined by the intellectual culture of that community and shares in its wider assumptions about life and matters. **Literary theory** in a strict sense is the study of the nature of literature and of the methods for analyzing literature. In fact, the word "theory" has become an umbrella term for a variety of scholarly approaches to reading texts.

THE WESTERN THEORIES

New Criticism by W.K. Wimsatt, F.R. Leavis, John Crowe Ransom, Cleanth Brooks, Robert Penn Warren looks at literary works on the basis of what is written, and not at the goals of the author or biographical issues.

Structuralism and **semiotics** examines the universal underlying structures in a text, the linguistic units in a text and how the author conveys meaning through any structures. Ferdinand de Saussure, Roman Jakobson, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Roland Barthes, Mikhail Bakhtin are the exponents of Structuralism.

While **Post-structuralism**, a catch-all term for various theoretical approaches (such as deconstruction) that criticize or go beyond Structuralism's aspirations to create a rational science of culture by extrapolating the model of linguistics to other discursive and aesthetic formations. Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Julia Kristeva are the advocators of Post-structuralism.

Deconstruction by Jacques Derrida, and later by Paul de Man, J. Hillis Miller, Gayatri Spivak is a strategy of close reading that elicits the ways that key terms and concepts may be paradoxical or self-undermining, rendering their meaning undecidable.

Postmodernism is a criticism of the conditions present in the twentieth century, often with concern for those viewed as social deviants or the Other and is put forwarded by Michel Foucault, Roland Barthes, Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari and Maurice Blanchot.

Cultural studies by Raymond Williams (American), Stuart Hall (British Cultural Studies) emphasizes the role of literature in everyday life.

Hélène Cixous, Elaine Showalter and others emphasize gender based **feminist literary criticism**, which emphasizes themes of gender relations.

Georg Lukács, Raymond Williams, Terry Eagleton, Fredric Jameson, Walter Benjamin propose **Marxist literary criticism** which emphasizes themes of class conflict.

Stephen Greenblatt, Louis Montrose, Jonathan Goldberg practice **New Historicism**, which examines the work through its historical context and seeks to understand cultural and intellectual history through literature.

Post colonialism by Edward Said, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Homi Bhabha and Declan Kiberd focuses on the influences of colonialism in literature, especially regarding the historical conflict resulting from the exploitation of less developed countries and indigenous peoples by Western nations.

Psychoanalytic literary criticism explores the role of consciousnesses and the unconscious in literature including that of the author, reader, and characters in the text. Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, Harold Bloom, have contributed much in this field.

Comparative literature compares literatures from different languages, nations, cultures and disciplines to each other while **Darwinian literary studies** situate literature in the context of evolution and natural selection.

Louise Rosenblatt, Wolfgang Iser, Norman Holland, Hans-Robert Jauss, Stuart Hall proposed **Reader-response criticism** that focuses upon the active response of the reader to a text.

The Western theories have a turned their circle from Pragmatic School of Criticism where the readers / audience and the pleasure that they derive from good literature to the complete objectivity of the writer, reader and/or critic towards literature to the reader response towards a work of art.

THE EASTERN THEORIES: But even before these western theories come into being, India, China, Japan, and the Arab world developed rigorous, extensive, systematic theories of literature that produced long traditions of abstract and illuminating thought about the structure, function, effect, and origin of literature.

Indian literary theory stretches back several centuries before the Christian era. Indian theorists engaged in a highly elaborated study of verbal ornamentation, cataloging and analyzing a wide range of figures of speech. More importantly, they developed a sophisticated theory of literary semantics, based on the notion of dhvani or suggestion, and a powerful, explanatory theory of aesthetic response, based on the notion of rasa, usually translated as "sentiment." The theories of dhvani and rasa reached their culmination when they were synthesized into a unified theory by the Kashmiri philosophers Anandavardhana and Abhinavagupta in the 9th and 10th centuries.

Chinese literary theory too has early origins, its roots reaching to the early works of Confucianism. Indeed, Confucius himself stressed the ethical function of literature. In consequence, literary theory in China has virtually always involved a vigorous assertion of the moral responsibility of the

poet. Despite this, Chinese literary theory is largely focussed on formal and aesthetic issues. For example, in his highly influential *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, Liu Hsieh (465-522 C.E.) acknowledges, and even emphasizes, the ethical function of poetry. But he devotes himself primarily to isolating and describing literary genres, discriminating varieties of literary style, and analyzing the nature of metaphor, simile, verbal parallelism, and other aspects of literary language and structure.

The study of literature in China has also been influenced by Taoism and Buddhism. This influence leads to a certain degree of mysticism in some Chinese theory; for example, some writers invoke the transcendental experience of the unutterable Tao as the source of good writing and some link aesthetic experience with spiritual enlightenment. And yet Chinese literary theory is perhaps the most concrete and practical of any tradition. For example, the influential third century theorist Lu Chi discusses writing in a mystical idiom and makes reference to the ineffability of inspiration (actually a cross-cultural commonplace of literary theory), but his actual prescriptions for good writing are very concrete: jot down ideas as they come to you (what we now call "freewriting"); then select the relevant ideas and leave aside the others; then give them order and structure; then do a first draft; then revise, deleting any passage that is excessively ornate, adding summary sentences at regular intervals, etc. His advice is very much like that contained in contemporary American textbooks-only it predates such textbooks by 1,700 years; it is more concise; and it is far more beautifully composed.

Japanese theories developed more recently than other Asian traditions. The earliest Japanese writings on literary theory date from the 10th century, and there is an important discussion of theoretical issues by the great 11th century novelist, Lady Murasaki. However, the most influential discussions of literary theory do not take place until somewhat later still, first with the important writings of the great No dramatist

Zeami Motokiyo (1363-1443), then, after a gap, with the reflections of the great haiku poet Basho (1644-1699) and the great Kabuki playwright Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1725). The Japanese authors are, perhaps, the most highly metaphorical, and the most esoteric. (Zeami's writings, for example, were addressed only to members of his own acting troupe and to their descendants; they were not published for almost 500 years after his death.) Nonetheless, they articulate notions which are highly suggestive even to the non-initiate.

Basho, for example, centres his poetic theory around the notion of *sabi*, loneliness—not only the loneliness of people, but the loneliness of all things portrayed in a poem. A quirky notion, perhaps, but one which leads us to look at poetry in a new way, differently from the way we look when thinking of, for example, praise or blame as the primary modes of representing an object. More suggestively still, Zeami focusses on *bana* or "flower," a combination of understatement and balance. For Zeami, all ugly things in art must present an aspect of beauty; all violent things, an aspect of gentleness, and so on. Indeed, this is very strict in Zeami's formulation—if one action of a character is furious, another must be calm; if a character is decrepit with age, he/she must have some aspect which is youthful (like "an old tree that puts forth flowers").

Arabic theory begins with the harsh condemnation of poets found in the Qu'ran, but flowers in the analyses of Aristotle's *Poetics* written by al-farabi (870-950 C.E.), ibn Sina (Avicenna) (980-1037 C.E.), ibn Rushd (Averroes) (1126-1198 C.E.), and other writers of the Islamic "Golden Age" of the 9th to 13th centuries. As is well known, the Arab theorists simply misunderstood Aristotle on a number of points, due primarily to inadequate translations and to the different literary traditions of Greece and the Arab world. However, what is not well known is that they developed a subtle and illuminating analysis of the ethical import of literature, in many ways anticipating Romantic developments in Europe eight centuries later.

Specifically, Arabic theorists emphasized *takbiyl* or "imaginative creation" as the defining feature of literature and saw that imaginative creation as serving, as we might say, to "train sensibility," to develop moral feelings—specifically those of mercy and piety. The sophistication of this view becomes particularly clear when one contrasts it with the didactic moralism of much pre-Romantic European literary theory. In the standard European view (represented, for example, by Philip Sidney), literature inculcates morality not by training sensibility, not by cultivating moral feeling, but by appealing to self-interest. Specifically, in the European conception, literature leads us to act morally by leading us to expect punishment for bad deeds and reward for good deeds; it leads us to choose the path of righteousness out of self-interest—at its best, a sort of spiritualized greed.

SUMMING-UP: In sum, literary theory is not at all confined to the West. Indeed, familiarity with the various histories of literary theory around the world should lead the readers to ask not why the European tradition is unique in being so rich, but why it is unique in being so impoverished. Indeed, when one looks at the mainstream of European theory before Romanticism, one might even wonder whether Europeans could have thought abstractly about literature on their own; given the facts, one might reasonably argue that they had to be taught abstraction by their contact with non-Western peoples. Of course, Plato and Aristotle would seem to be adequate evidence that abstractive capacity is not alien to the European mind and to European culture. But Plato and Aristotle were not really European—at least, they were no more European than early Indian or Persian writers, who had the same ("Indo-European") ethno-cultural origins. Moreover, intellectually, they were, in effect, part of what one now calls the Arab world. They drew their inspiration from North Africa and the Near East as believed by Sedlar and others, and their most astute and creative commentators were Muslims—al-farabi, Ibn Rushd, Ibn Sina, and so on—writing in Arabic, referring to an Arabic canon. One terms Plato and Aristotle "European" due merely to historical chance:

Islam spread through Turkey, but not across the Aegean Sea to Hellas. Medieval European exegetes and Renaissance European moralists are pale derivatives of what is more appropriately considered a Helleno-Arabic tradition.

As to the rest, prior to colonialism-when non-Western philosophy and art transformed European thinking, providing one major impetus for Romanticism-there was nothing in Western literary theory that seriously approached the depth and complexity of several non-Western literary theories. For example, when one leaves aside Aristotle's notion of katharsis, there is virtually no significant treatment of reader-response, certainly nothing like the elaborate psychological analysis put forth by Abhinavagupta. And there is nothing similar to the careful Indian analyses of meaning, related as they were to Indian linguistic theory, which was unrivalled in the West until the writings of Chomsky and his followers in the 1960s.

Nor have Europeans been any more successful in practical advice than in rational explanation. The almost step-by-step approach to writing, worked out by such theorists as Lu Chi and Liu Hsieh, has no real parallel in European theories until the systematic development of composition pedagogy in the last few decades. And, until the present century, there has been little in the Western tradition that even approaches the careful attention to acting technique and preparation that characterize the (15th century) analyses of Zeami. In his treatises, Zeami gives advice on every aspect of technique and preparation from the actor's personal habits, to the relation between hand gesture and body motion, to research on character profile-e.g., the observation of the manners of nobles before playing the role of a nobleman.

And yet, despite all this, the traditions of India, China, Japan, and the Arab world, are virtually absent from discussions of literary theory. It is only the European tradition which is widely known and studied, even outside of Europe. Despite the barbarity of current nationalist politics,

and the unabashed racism of much current writing about (i.e., against) multiculturalism, one can expect curricula to be increasingly multicultural over the next decade, primarily because the student body is likely to be increasingly culturally diverse and to demand more diverse offerings.

CONCLUSION: Robert Browning's *Pippa's Song* is a nature poem depicting spring season and Robert Burn's *A Red Red Rose* is a love poem. Toru Dutt's *Sita* is an autobiographical poem and *Africa* by Abisoye Sejoro is a patriotic poem. Japanese Haiku expresses a particular emotion in each poem.

Should the study and application of all the Western theories be required to understand and appreciate a work of art? Are the academies becoming too over possessed by the notion of theories? What has Deconstruction or Marxism or Post colonialism got any thing to do in order to enjoy simple lyrics like Browning's *Pippa's Song* or Burn's poetry or Toru Dutt's *Sita*? Can't the more recent poems like the African poem or the Haiku be read without the theories in mind? If the Eastern theories are the precursors of the Western counterparts, shouldn't the academic discussions give equal emphasis to the discussion of them (unlike one or two translated essays which 'may' be prescribed). Infact search must also proceed as to what other nations have produced literary theories before the West or simultaneously and all those should be incorporated in the class room discussions and conferences so that the gap between the Western theories and understanding or application to the literary texts could be minimized. The theories should be helpful to the readers to understand poetry and enjoy the literary expressions and not scare them with rules and propositions by the theorists.

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The Theatre of the Absurd with Special Reference to Ionesco: As a Post-Modern Dramatist

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Drama is a living art. Every artistic notion is imitated from the real world, and the thought of the artist represents an image of a real like. This thought is mixed with certain artistic elements based on the imagined creation. Another element of drama is based of action, and without action, drama cannot survive. But, in the post-modern era, drama is without action, and the playwrights' exhibit the human psyche by showing about his psychological and physiological problems in a realistic way. It was Bertolt Brecht, who said that drama has to be show with serious presentation with the mixture of comic element. And further he refutes the traditional norms of Aristotle that the tragedy has to arouse pity and fear .Instead he wants to create 'Alienation effect' and want the audience to analysis the drama rather than mere watching it. And even in the plot was no continuation of plot. The plays of Bertolt Brecht were epic in form and there was more of narration than action. This led to influence the later plays in European continent. Realism was started in 19th century writing in presenting, over the condition which was persisting at that time of Victorian Era. The popularity of this kind in drama began with Henrik Ibsen. Later, Pinero, G.B.Shaw and Galsworthy used this element in the drama in presenting the social evils problems of society. And thus, these plays written by them were called as 'problem plays' or 'Social plays'.

Society was not the same as the social norms were diminishing with World War and most of them have lost hope in rational thinking. They wanted something which would create a different world. This cultural ethos changed the life and there was a sea change of thought in the post-modern era. In which everything was based on irrationality and they began to refuse the rationalistic ideas. And thus, they took realism in a very different way. It happened because of cosmic unrest in religion and rapid growth in industrialization which made them to lose their happiness, and also led peacelessness and restlessness life. Many different kinds of artistic forms were started in representing the situation over there with the use realism in a different way. Earlier there were impressionism expressionism and naturalisms. These were used to show and create reality of life on the stage. Hence these artistic forms were used in post-modernistic thought. And style of drama was either in Dadaism or Surrealism. But, to all these thought, there was a dramatic core i.e., Avant-Garde "they see the world as essentially mysterious and intelligible, certainly devoid of rational purpose and hence of clearly deducible rules of conduct".(Esslin:16.)

The thought of Avant-Garde was led by Artaud is of view in the words of Killinger "The theatre is, or should be, he said, the double of an another world opposed

to this dull and deadening existence we are so used to, a world dangerous and exciting and real, a world whose reality "is not human but inhuman," where "man with his customs and his character counts for very little." The primary object of dramatists in our time, insisted Artaud, should be to get this real and dangerous double back into the theatre. We must be the rid of the kind of psychological drama to which even the genius of Shakespeare has betrayed us, which leaves the audience intact without providing it a single image capable of shaking the organism to its foundations and leaving an ineffaceable scar".(Killinger:8)

And further, Killinger quotes of Artaud "a Theatre of Cruelty which is stated in terms of the plastic and the physical instead of the psychological. *Things* would resume the tyranny they exercise over us in real life. Words themselves would become things instead of symbols. Sounds, objects, movements would all hurry us and remind us of the nonhuman reality. In fact surrounds us every moment of our lives. Cruelty would mean what is meant in the dramas of Seneca and Thomas Kyd, hacking at each other's bodies, sending parcels of human anatomy through the posts or devouring one another cannibalistically. In the Theatre of the Absurd same thought of existential philosophy is taken and it tries to exhibit similarly plethora of the problem of human existence.

The Theatre of the Absurd is a phrase coined by Martin Esslin, for the plays written in the last decade during his time. He is of view that the plays written by the playwrights like Beckett, Ionesco, Adamov, Genet, Pinter, Albee, Stoppard, Grass and others were different in thought and form, from

that of traditional one. The thought which these playwrights took up was absurdity based on philosophy of existentialism these playwrights showed about the thought of absurdity with concrete images and showed of the view in living with the absurdity of existence, but they differed from Sartre and Camus preached on rationalistic ground by displaying existence of the being in absurd situation with thesis form whereas In the Theatre of Absurd followed the path of antithesis, as the images presented by the dramatists were like surreal and grotesque in nature further more plays were plotless; nothing was based in rationalistic ways. It is so the play starts somewhere and ends up without conclusion. But they are symbolic to the incidents and characters. It is because these plays have historical essence in them .When these are compared to that of American absurd plays they differ in form as well as in social set up. Americans plays are based on sociological background whereas Europeans plays are based on existentialism. The dialogues of European plays give the image biblical or stasis. The element stasis is more in the plays of absurd. It can be incurred over there that the plays written in post-modernistic culture have been influenced by Avant-Garde tradition. The Avant-Garde tradition has a rebelling notion against traditional ones for example the plays written by these playwrights Beckett, Ionesco, Genet, Adamov, Pinter and others. These plays show illogicalness in meaning, structure and form. And they nowhere have any relation to the plot/characters. For example in *Waiting for Godot* there is not understanding or explanation what happened to Pozzo and Lucky in the Act II as they were different from

the Act I. Similarly, *All That Falls* in Beckett play, Mrs. Rooney meets many people with different means of transportation and later at the end, the incident of death of child. In Ionesco's play *Rhinoceros* similar kind of situation occurs, people turns out be Rhinoceros in strength. There is no explanation why these things happen in that situation. They turn out over there with no logical conclusion for that there is no explanation and the reason is not given to justify the happening on the stage. "These authors have also digested the findings of modern psychology, which is human character not as an eternal essence but as the sum of physiological and psychological factors that are in constant flux." (Ibid:8-9)

The playwrights of absurd were highly expressible in presenting thought on surrealistic kind of situation. They showed on the grounds of realistic. "Theatre of the Absurd is a total abandonment of superficial realism in order to convey the anxieties and working of the mind, aiming at expressing an intuition in-depth which should be apprehended in a single moment. But, in forced to unfold." (Esslin. *BC*:16-17). The Theatre of the Absurd has new kind elements in it. And it foregrounds of "having renounced the function of telling a story, of exploring character, of discussing ideas, of solving problems, it has been able to concentrate on the presentation of what is essentially a sense of being, an intuition of the tragic comic absurdity and mystery of human existence." (Simard:8-9)

The images presented were intuitional or dreamlike but not on a real one. They try to exhibit this to catch inner psyche of human beings and presented the themes on the existential philosophy. Esslin says

"In the Absurd drama the merely negative qualities of lack of logic or verisimilitude is transmitted into positive quality of new world that make imaginative sense in its right. (Esslin *TA*:441). If there is coherence in the expression of the play it will suggest the importance of the dramatic idea. If it is incongruity then it is discarded. But incoherence is there as thought which a dramatist takes with the aspect of disharmony in man's life.

II

Eugene Ionesco

Eugene Ionesco is the one of prominent dramatists of the Theater of the Absurd. His plays are understandable as they try to exhibit the rejection of the established order and the reason. He wrote plays on current issues especially of Nazism, day to day activities and on communication; in presenting these things, he shows theme of loneliness and isolation of an individual in form of nightmares. He has taken as comedy as a form of expressing his thought with sense of seriousness. Ionesco opines that logicity of one event leads to illogical to another, as it tries to eliminate uncertainty of human factor and the mystery of the universe. Religion and other institutions of human society have once held meaning to life; also have lost the value with influence science providing reasoning; as the human problems were remained unanswered to the misery of human beings as it continued exist. This has led to forget the God, as this aspect guided human beings, during the times of medieval age and even to the Greeks the man is considered as rational animal, has now turned to be irrational with meaninglessness in life. Therefore, science and technology has given knowledge of

reasoning and has brought meaninglessness in the life of human beings. It is because of time and space in which he is living is chaotic and without purposeful.

In the words of Allan Lewis “the theatre of realism presupposes logical coherent universe which experiences denies. The conflict between the assurance of order and chaos and existence generates frustration, anxiety and despair. Man’s need for rational explanations is met by passive indifference of the universe. The first step to freedom is to eliminate the hold that scientific logic has exerted on mind and perception of man to live without reliance on benign God or godlike reason.”(Lewis :19) “Ionesco completely rejects the European theater of the past. He advances in its place a dramatic style that discards external action as much as possible and flouts the realistic theater.”(Dickinson:339) “He uses as series of states of consciousness instead of specific plots. His theater is much with recognizable objects.”(Pronco:3)

In contrast to Sartre and Brecht, Ionesco is opposed to ideological plays .He is committed to non –commitment. The entire terrain of life and dreams, including wonder, fantasy and violence are explored. There is the utilization of exaggeration, caricature, farce, parody, the brutal, the outrageous, and the unendurable in order to detach men from their routine.”(Ibid:5) A significant contribution lies in the fact that he has sought to give to his plays the very theatrical structure of his ideas .If the world is inhuman, and then use robots. If the physical denies the spiritual, then let the properties slowly dominate the characters. If language is worn out, then use clichés or slogans or pure

agglomerates of sound.(Ibid:13) Variations from the serious to the ridiculous are the trademarks of Ionesco. The comic is the most powerful medium to convey his vision of the desperate and a tragic absurdity of man’s existence. In fact, the comic alone gives man the strength to bear the tragedy of existence(Vos:36).Hence, it is clear that the postmodern elements are seen in the plays of Eugene Ionesco.

In the *Bald Soprano* Eugene Ionesco shows the meaningless in the life, hollowness in relationship and image of man in society. Meaningless in the life is presented in lives of characters Mr. and Mrs. Smith and also in the lies of Mr. and Mrs. Martin .Ionesco shows that they are all engaged in passing off the time by talking something or the other. Always waiting for the visitors to come and share their views. Hollowness in relationship is seen in the lives of Mr. and .Mrs. martin as they discover themselves that they live in same street, house, bed and child. All these point that there is lack of love between husband and wife .And the husband and wife relationship is without love and emotion, have no value in the world of reason.

In *the Lesson* Ionesco shows knowledge has to free and there should not be any burden on the part of the learner. Hence the professor has killed 41 students with real and imaginary way. He is like totalitarian oppressor and brutal criminal who wants to take the individuality by changing the mind of the learner by providing information to them, when the professor takes about linguistics. He shows there is no meaning in the words, and communication has no in meaning because of this. And even it points to deconstruction of thoughts.

In *The Chair* in Ionesco presents the life of nothingness. It is presented with two aged old couple with six invisible persons and an orator. They remind themselves about the happenings in their life. They have come to a conclusion that there is nothing in the life. As they were married just to show that they were not children. Even they too have a child as they have to continue progeny without nothingness in the life and also lead a social life with others.

In *the Jack or the Submission*, Ionesco presents the picture of the society how a man is forced to marry a girl then accepting her with all the faults. Marriage is a sacred ritual but a kind of animalistic emotion leads to have children in a social way. This shows that there is nothing in the institution of the human being of the society. In *The Future of the Eggs* Ionesco highlights marriage as nothing but a kind of a legal way of having physical relationship. In this two individual of opposite sex continue to have the progeny without this, there is no meaning in the life. Jack is complaint by his parents for not having one progeny and all this depends upon to continue their family.

In *The New Tenant* is the comment on wealth person's life and wealth makes him to talk less with others as it is not possible for him to mix up with others as this leads to lack of communication. Human being is an expressive agent who expresses his emotion and feelings in form of words or expresses it with non verbal. In the Ionesco *the Victim of Duty*, is a complex play. He points that author personality never exists. But, critic tries to find out by taking clue from the writer. Text stands as an individual entity in the whole as full and final, as it

has to be considered and not on the writer. This is presented with characters of Chourate and Nicolas in ends Chourate stabs Nicolas.

In *The Amedde* is comment on a married life as the wife Madeleine never likes her husband, Amedde. And the dislike grows like a mushroom in form of corpse growing, as it highlights the estimation of Madeleine hatredness. This is know when Amedde reminds of the past as Madeleine refuses to have any relationship with him in Ionesco plays sex is turn out to be a communication of love. And Madeleine has only hatredness as communication. In Ionesco's *the Killer* Berenger is a main character he comes to know science and technology has brought many miracles. But, in the end he faces the killer and comes to know that there is nothing that human being can do to come out of misery.

In Berenger trio *Rhinoceros*, Berenger turns out to be rhinoceros at the end of the play as he faces more difficulty in adjusting with the people, who have already turned out to be rhinoceros as they Nazis fascism. It gives rudeness to the thought. In the *Pedestrian of Air* Berenger as Ionesco speaks about how the modern thought has led the human being into an irrational world. It is thought of imagination which gives him strength to sustain. And the death is ultimate way to escape from the pains of the world. In the *Exit the King*, Berenger is about to die. Although he thinks that he is the king and he can have the control over this. He comes to know that death is a kind of experience which the human being has to face unquestionable but his second wife advises him to follow the path of love which is eternal and makes man to forget every thing so that he can survive. Hence he

refuses to think on this, follows the scientific way of reasoning. Those human beings have died earlier hence he too has to die as there is no way escape from the death.

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Death of the Theorist: The Plight of Bertolt Brecht in Postmodern Times

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This paper tries to rethink about the German Dramatist Bertolt Brecht – a Herculean figure in the avant-garde Theatre. Brecht, with his ideas about Epic Theatre and the *Verfremdungseffekt*, has remained very much in vogue ever since his times. Yet, through the example of the conventional reception of *Mother Courage and Her Children*, it is amply clear that Bertolt Brecht's Theory went somewhere wrong in eliciting the expected audience response in theatre praxis. This paper delves into the reasons of such a failure. One of the key reasons is found to be the mismatch between the modern dramatic concepts of Brecht and the postmodernity that was fast engulfing the world around him. The result is a gradual 'kitschification' of the radical Epic idiom that took place in postmodernism in World Theatre, wherein Bertolt Brecht, the Dramatist lives on and Bertolt Brecht, the Theorist is choked to death.

Keywords: Bertolt Brecht, Epic Theatre Conventions, Verfremdungseffekt, empathy, shock effects, reification, Capitalism, Postmodernism, Kitschification, Camp

Though the line of demarcation between 'Modernism' and 'Postmodernism' is very thin, and generally the tendencies seem to cross over from the one to the other very smoothly chronologically, to think it to be a simple logical progression of the earlier term would be a fallacy. The dialectical relation between the two is the crux of the issue.

In World Literature, the period called 'Modernism' could be equated with the sudden and plural up rise in the revolutionary tendencies in the principals of Aesthetics roughly between 1920s and 1930s. Generally referred to by the umbrella term 'Avant-Garde', the more radical revolutionary movements expressed strong reactions upon the relation of art to the prevailing power structures. On the other hand, the plain 'modernism' was content with multi-sided attacks on traditional reception of art.

Among the many such avant-garde movements in arts like Dadaism, Surrealism, Cubism, Futurism, Vorticism etc., I wish to concentrate on the avant-garde Theatre and the contribution of the German Dramatist Bertolt Brecht and his concept of 'Epic Theatre'. The argument is to bring out how Brecht's aesthetics for the Modern Theatre was caught up between the conditions of 'Modernity' and 'Postmodernity' in the particular socio-historical moment he tried to put it forward and practice.

Bertolt Brecht's influence on the Modern as well as the Postmodern Theatre need not be reasserted ... he is, beyond doubt, the most influential figure in 20th century drama, the most talked about and academically

discussed dramatist, perhaps second only to Shakespeare, and has a 'cult following' till date unparalleled by any other theatre theorist!

Yet, there's a gap between his theory and praxis. A thorough Marxist, committed to the task of 'policizing aesthetics' as an answer to the Fascistic tendencies of 'aestheticizing politics', Brecht's agenda has been 'to humanize that which has become reified' under the yolk of capitalism.

Although both Modernism and the Avant-Garde were intent on challenging traditional form of art, they did not pursue the same revolutionary aims. The challenge to representation was thoroughly politicized by the later. The historical avant-garde explicitly set their hope on art's ceasing to be a cult object and becoming part of a general revolutionary praxis. For them, a politicized form of art must involve a radical change of form in order to escape reification.

Brecht's idea of avoiding such reification of the theatrical art was to be through a complete revolution in the theatrical form - a complete break from the theatre of Aristotelian Mimesis! Thus he came up with his idea of an 'Epic Narrative Theatre'... with a set of associated theatrical practices like the *Verfremdungseffekt*, the episodic narrative, the bright and visible light settings, the suggestive (not realistic) stage setting, the Gestus technique etc.

Brecht wanted to develop a new 'Theatre for the scientific (Modern) age'. He was opposed to the 'involved trance' in which the conventional bourgeois theatre sent its audience. It rendered them unable to think and

to critically analyse the social conditions that lead to the crisis portrayed on stage. Brecht contended that conventional illusionistic staging deluded the audience into thinking the events witnessed as real and reach an empathetic identification with the characters in the play. Thus, such a theatre, prevented calm detachment and critical reflection. "It conjures up the illusion that it is reflecting real-life incidents with a view to achieving more or less primitive shock effects or hazily defined sentimental moods." (Willet 160)

The resultant empathy, Brecht thought, "forced upon the audience the feelings, insights and impulses of the protagonists" (Willet 190) and the audience was too preoccupied with seeing through the protagonist's eyes to be able to use their own and regard things critically.

In order to avoid this danger, Brecht proposed his *Verfremdung*, translated in English as Alienation Effect:

The A-effect consists in turning the object of which one is to be made aware, to which one's attention is to be drawn, from something ordinary, familiar, immediately accessible, into something peculiar, striking and unexpected. What is obvious is in a certain sense made incomprehensible, but that is only in order that it may then be made all the more easier to comprehend. Before familiarity can turn into awareness, the familiar must be stripped of its inconspicuousness; we must give up assuming that the object in question needs no explanation. (Willet 143-144)

Thus, Brecht's theory of alienation was first and foremost a device for emphasis. Its main point was: the artist must see critically and scientifically so as to portray life realistically, the spectator must see critically in order to understand life properly. Thus, in principle, both must be distanced from life not in the sense of being uninterested in it, but in the sense of observing it carefully, with amazement, as though everything one looked at were emphasized.

As an avant-garde form of modern theatre, Brecht's epic theatre aimed:

1. To end the mass hypnosis of the audience

2. Emphasize the peculiar historical (and not eternal) characteristics of human action
3. Break the illusion of reality created by the conventional theatre
4. Block the mindless emotional identification of the actor and the spectator with the character

Christopher Sperberg succinctly sums up Brecht's wise saw: "To be worthy of the scientific age, the theatre must not simply wrap social criticism in an entertaining package – it must make social criticism itself entertaining."

A great, ground-breaking theatre theorist... but as a theatre practitioner Brecht happens to fail at achieving these desired effects. A record of the reception of his magnum opus *Mother Courage and her Children* brings home this point clearly:

Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children* was first performed on April 19, 1941, in Zurich. The director was Leopold Lindeberg: Mother Courage was played by Therese Giehse: the settings were designed by Teo Otto. The play was received emotionally: Brecht's biographer Martin Esslin says that the audience was "moved to tears by the sufferings of a poor woman who, having lost all her children, heroically continued her brave struggle and refused to give in, an embodiment of the eternal virtues of the common people" (Esslin 242)

Obviously, Brecht denounced the public sympathy for the protagonist as incorrect and revised the play extensively before presenting it under his own direction in East Berlin on January 11, 1949. Brecht's wife Helene Weigel played Courage, the set designs were again those of Teo Otto. Brecht's textual revisions and his directing aimed to make the public see Courage as he himself did: critically and without sympathy – a war profiteer who instead of working for peace acquiesces in war. But the public in Berlin responded much as the Zurich audience had: they saw in Mother Courage one of themselves, a symbol of the "little people" swept by the "big people" into a war and into hardships they could not escape. "Mother Courage", wrote the critic Max Schroeder "is a humanist saint from the tribe of Niobe and the mater dolorosa, who defends the life to which she has given birth

with her bare teeth and claws.” (qtd. in Sperberg 1)

Tears flowed, and many praised Brecht’s portrayal of war’s helpless victims. Critics spoke of Mother Courage with reverent spirit fit for Mother Merry!! Brecht, the theorist, was rendered helpless and ineffectual!!

Even today, teaching this text in a post-graduate class, the teacher has to struggle getting Brecht’s own view of his protagonist down the throats of the students who instinctively keep defending Courage’s maternal instincts and helpless condition!!

Where did things go wrong? Was Brecht a bad theorist but a great dramatist – as is evident from the overwhelming response to his dramas? Or was he a great theorist but a bad practitioner himself? Rare chance - given his profound thinking and ardent commitment to his art!! Or are there some inherent flaws in the concept of *Verfremdung* itself which seems to have failed to alienate the audience/reader sufficiently as in the present case of *Mother Courage*? Many studies have been taken up to find out the reasons of this failure.

Some critics feel that Brecht himself didn’t fathom the extent to which his demands for radical changes in theatre as an art form were penetrating. His demand that the audience come to the theatre not simply to feel, to experience catharsis, but to think and to experience enlightenment - demands corresponding changes not only in acting or dramaturgy but even in the conventions of reception of dramatic art in the theatre. But when the audience is made conscious of the performance itself, its attention is distracted from the social conditions being presented onstage. Ironically, the theatrical innovations that Brecht championed, in their efforts to bring spectators “to their senses”, to reawaken their judgement by reminding them that they are in a theatre, only left them further than ever from judging the social conditions portrayed, by interposing the performer between the spectator and the representation. “Above all things, Brecht wanted the audience to criticize the social circumstances represented; it is ironic that to that end he resorted to techniques which draw the audience attention not to the world represented on the stage but to the stage itself. Brecht’s techniques lose the audience in exercises in semiology and the ontology of the theatre,

instead of in consideration of the situation being represented.”(Sperberg 44)

Theatre theorist Paul Woodruff finds that the notion of ‘empathy’ in Brecht is very vague. Although Brecht tries to treat ‘empathy’ as a single concept, he uses it to cover a host of different things he wishes to banish from his theatre: carrying the audience away emotionally, drawing them together in a collective entity, including them to share feelings with a character or calling them to identify with a hero. But these are not the same things. Does then Brecht want his theatre to be an emotion-free zone? No. As against the Aristotelian theatre’s acceptance of inevitability of human fate, Brecht wants his audience to feel outrage, anger and an urgent desire to change the society for the better. So, actually, Brecht *does* want an emotional response and a very heated one at that: against the horrors of war and capitalism say as in the case of *Mother Courage*. “Obviously Brecht didn’t go wrong in practice, in Theory he seems to have erred...The Theory is bad because it is fuzzy about what it counts as empathy.” (Woodruff 169)

In theatre, strictly speaking, the emotion does not belong either to the subject (audience) or the object (actor). Instead, the emotion in question belongs to the subject’s make-belief in theatre. To manipulate this very make-belief, Brecht introduced unconventional shock-effects in his theatre. He expected them to shock the audience into both a permanent consciousness that they are in theatre, and a new way of relating to the play. But shock value has a way of fading, and the effect of Brecht’s new conventions faded as the audience became accustomed to it. Fashions in conventions go on changing and have changed several times since Brecht formed his basic ideas about the theatre! It has been proven beyond doubt that such changes in fashion do not cause any significant variation in the ability of the audience to make believe.

“The hallmark of the Epic theatre is its emphasis on the production of the text. Brecht’s aesthetics is based upon a view of the text that has become mandatory in post-structuralist theory: the text as a site of production involving the author, the reader and the Other, which for Brecht is History... the fictionality of life, the re-writability of the text of history offers a model for his theatre.” (Wright 31). This very ‘re-writability of text’

probably proved to be Brecht's Nemesis! The audience and the critics re-wrote his text in their own ways!

This was probably the result of Brecht's inability to fathom the 'power' of the ideological apparatus working against him. I feel, the failure of Brecht, the Theorist, lies predominantly in the fact of his unique threshold position between Modernity and Postmodernity. His avant-garde theory was being executed at a time when the conditions of 'Postmodernity' had already started evading the world around him. He was placed in times of unique historical flux. His 'Verfremdung', which was meant for analysis and criticism of bourgeois capitalism, was rendered ineffectual in the 'dominant cultural logic of late capitalism' (Fredric Jameson) – the Postmodernism. Late Capitalism refers to the phase of Capitalism after World War II (1939-1945) as described by the Marxist theorist Ernest Mandel. Brecht's audience in Zurich or Berlin or anywhere on earth, now, could not be left untouched by the exacerbating effects of the experiences of Nazi totalitarianism and mass extermination, the threat of total destruction by the atom bomb, the progressive devastation of the natural environment and the ominous fact of not one but multiple avatars of Capitalism – global, multinational, digital and so on tightening their grips on the world. For this postmodern audience, world simply could not be divided into neat structuralist binaries of good/evil, bourgeois/ proletariat and so on but was a terrifying post-structuralist flux of contending power structures. Brecht undermined the power of this new ideology and how the technological progress, he and Walter Benjamin revelled in, could conspire to be the powerful Ideological State Apparatus reifying and thus nullifying even his *Verfremdungseffekt*.

To add insult to this injury, Brecht's epic idiom, started to find itself at the centre of avant-garde movements from the early part of the century onwards (Servos 438), and as Andrzej Wirth observes 'became the universal language of contemporary theatre, irrespective of its ideological origin' (qtd. in Wright 113). The techniques of montage, of epic narration, of diverse visual and auditory effects, are now used far more radically than in Brecht's own plays.

In the Postmodern Theatre, then, the kitschification of the Epic conventions became

rampant. Many such 'kitsch'¹ pieces of epic style were then written in writers' workshops, theatre amateur groups... all over Germany, Britain, and France in fact all over the world. Gradually, this phenomenon developed into 'Camp'² *Verfremdung*... A casual glance at books like *Bertolt Brecht and Post War French Drama* (1976), *After Brecht: British Epic Theatre* (1996), *Brecht, Broadway and United States Theatre* (2007) etc. can help one preparing an exhaustive inventory of dramatists imitating Brechtian theory and critics thriving on their criticism. Today, postmodernism, with its inherent suspicion about the power relations in formation of ideas and beliefs, has started questioning "When did 'Brechtian' become such a dirty word?" (Billington)

Evidently, Brecht - the dramatist lives on... Brecht - the committed political Theatre Theorist has been devoured by the forces of postmodernism.

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¹ Kitsch – The reduction of aesthetic objects/ ideas into easily marketable forms.

² Camp – A sensibility that revels in artifice, stylization, exaggeration. It could be considered as a self-conscious kitsch.

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Postmodern Translation Theory

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Abstract: Today Translation has gained an immense significance along with creative writing as the copies of translated books are at the height of sale; even some translated books crossed the creative writing book sales. Translation is one of the best mediums to spread literature into many languages in which (originally) it is not written. The great literatures—religious texts like Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bible, Quran and thinkers like Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Horace, Longinus and literary persons like Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Shelly, Arnold and many more—came to us through translation. Today both every literary person and common reader knows Shakespeare only because of translation of Shakespeare in native languages. The role of translation in shaping Postmodern Literary Theory and reshaping Postmodern Translation Theory itself is major one. With the historical perspective, it seems that translation studies has taken a major turn in 1980s; the shift from conventional translation theory based on linguistic aspects of the source and target language texts to the modern and postmodern translation theory involving the interdisciplinary status based on social, cultural, economic, political and geographical aspects rather than the only linguistic aspects have marked the research area in literary theory. Recently, the English biography of one of the most celebrated technology icons Steve Jobs came into Marathi and it opened the gates of free knowledge society receiving the same response as it received in English world. Hence it becomes obligatory to deal with the postmodern trends in Translation Studies contributing to the Postmodern Translation Theory.

Keywords: Translation, Postmodern, Theory, Translation Communication, Culture and Translation, Translation and Philosophy, Translation and Gender, Functional Approaches, Translation Equivalence.

If we ask a simple question “what is translation studies?” We get two main perceptions: one many people think that Translation Studies (TS) is nothing but Literary Theory and Cultural Studies; and second some may think possibly that it is Communication Studies. But Translation Studies has different perspectives from different streams of knowledge, e.g. Philosophy, Information Technology, Linguistics, Literary Criticism and Theory, etc. linguistic philosophy tries to attempt what language means: the ideal languages of logic and ordinary languages of philosophy. And philosophy of language attempts to find out how language means: general features of language such as meaning, reference, truth, verification, speech acts and logical necessity. It brought the basic form to the translation theory because language is the centre of translation activity. If we think about philosophy of linguistics, it tries to study the language through linguistics. And the view of information technology is different from that of the philosophy of linguistics, for IT professionals Translation Studies mean: machine assisted translation, machine translation, knowledge engineering, information retrieval and artificial intelligence. And these two

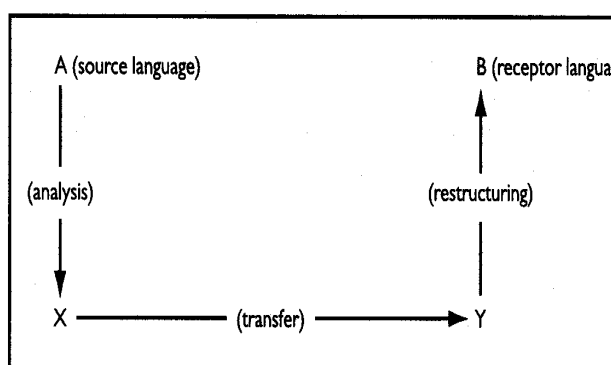
perspectives formed a major distinction between the linguistic and the other perspectives of translation theory, albeit it is the inception of the Postmodern Translation Theory.

The present paper “Postmodern Translation Theory” tries to disclose, rearrange and disseminate the issues, thoughts and problems in postmodern translation theory. Generally postmodern translation theory is divided into main three types:

1. Product-Oriented: it focuses translation as a product. It is materialistic view.
2. Function-Oriented: it examines the purpose and context of the translation. It is functional view.
3. Process-Oriented: it analyses the psychology of translation, translator and translation process. It is translation process view.

The above views are integral part of postmodern translation theory. Let us look at the early view of translation theory for we have seen that people have been arguing for centuries about literal, free and faithful translation achieving it by word-for-word and sense-for-sense translation. The thinkers like Cicero, St Jerome,

St Augustine, Martin Luther, Etienne Dolet, Alexander Tytler, Jonathan Wolfgang von Goethe, Friedrich Schleiermacher, Wilhelm von Humboldt and Arthur Schopenhauer (see Robinson 1997/2002) discussed in favour and against these views and tried to establish new patterns in translation theory. Scott L. Montgomery (2000) has given a historical view of science in translation in his book *Science in Translation: Movements of Knowledge through Cultures and Time* describing how scientific texts have been translated, adapted, revised and added to down the centuries e.g. Western Astronomy, Greek and Arabic Science and Japanese Science. Here the chief contribution is from the linguistic theories to the field of postmodern translation theory; linguistic theories are—language universals versus linguistic relativism, science of translation, equivalence, semantic and communicative translation, correspondence and equivalence, translation shifts, discourse and register analyses. Language universals presuppose that languages and our capacity for language are universal or innate. Language relativism states different languages show us different ways of viewing the world. In *Science of Translation* Nida (1964) has given the notions such as linguistic meaning, referential or denotative meaning, emotive or connotative meaning, hierarchical structuring, componential analysis, semantic structure analysis and formal and dynamic equivalence. He has given the process of translation through the following diagram:



The next concern in Postmodern Translation Theory is the problem of equivalence. According to Roman Jakobson (1959/2000), equivalence in difference is the

cardinal problem of language and pivotal concern of linguistics; he discusses equivalence at the level of obligatory grammar and lexicon, e.g. gender and aspect. But Baker finds five types of translation equivalences—equivalence at word level, equivalence above word level, grammatical equivalence, textual equivalence and pragmatic equivalence. Equivalence at word level consists of morphology and morphology consists of lexical meaning, e.g. propositional versus expressive meaning, presupposed meaning and evoked meaning. Evoked meaning refers to dialect that is geographical, temporal, and social and register that is field/ tenor/ mode of discourse. Equivalence above word level includes collocation—collocational range and markedness, collocation and register and collocational meaning—and idioms and fixed expressions. Grammatical equivalences emphasizes grammatical versus lexical categories where number, gender, person, tense and aspect, voice and word order plays an important role. Textual equivalence has four aspects that are—thematic and information structure (theme and sentence analysis), information structure (old and new), word order and communication function and cohesion (reference, substitution and ellipsis, conjunction, lexical cohesion). And the last pragmatic equivalence implies coherence, presupposition and implicature. Here Newmark’s (1981) opinion is notable compared to Baker for Newmark has seen semantic/ communicative translation at the level of transmitter/ addressee focus, culture, time and origin, relation to source text, use of form of source language, form of target language and appropriateness. It means that to Newmark the semantics of source and target language is more significant criterion for evaluation of translation has also been taken into consideration by Newmark. Further the same notion of translation equivalence is extended by Kollar (1976/89) as translation correspondence and equivalence. According to him, these correspondences and equivalences are denotative equivalence, connotative equivalence, text nominative equivalence, pragmatic equivalence and formal equivalence. Kollar did nothing but reshape and revalue the problematic of Baker creating new base for Newmark.

The next significant concern in Postmodern Translation Theory should be considered translation shifts put forward by Vinay and Darbelnet (1977/2000). It has two major types—direct translation and oblique translation—divides direct translation in borrowing, calque and literal translation and oblique translation in transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation. Catford (1965/2000) theorized translation shifts as level shifts and category shifts; category shifts can be structural, class, unit or rank and intra-system. Further Van Leuven-Zwart (1989/90) extended eight categories and thirty seven sub-categories to translation shifts. Many translation theories are text (source and target) and language oriented, thus it has been established a strong relational thread between linguistic theories and translation; for most of the translation theories are considered ‘linguistic’ and are useful for teaching translation. Because most translation (practical activity) of course at the linguistic level at some stage of the process. But one thing should not be ignored that is too much stress on linguistic levels can have negative effect at the text level. This has given birth to functional approach to translation.

Reiss’ (1970s) Functional Approach to translation theory and practice is one of the practice oriented developments in the postmodern translation theory. Reiss has been classified the translation texts as: informative, expressive, operative, and audio-medial. Reiss’ (1971) text types in detail are:

Functional characteristics of text types and links to translation me (Reiss 1971)

Text type	Informative	Expressive
Language function	Informative (representing objects and facts)	Expressive (expressing sender's attitude)
Language dimension	Logical	Aesthetic
Text focus	Content-focused	Form-focused
TT should	Transmit referential content	Transmit aesthetic form
Translation method	'Plain prose', explicitation as required	'Identifying' method, adopt perspective of ST author

Holz-Mantarri (1984) described what translation action or actual translation practice from the

above text types. According to him, a communicative translation process involves the initiator, the commissioner, the source text producer, the target text producer, the target text user and the target text receiver.

One of the celebrated theories of translation in postmodern era is Skopos Theory based on language and linguistics advocated in translation by Reiss and Vermeer (1984). The theory focuses on purpose or skopos of translation. There are some rules of skopos theory:

1. A target text is determined by its skopos (purpose)
2. A target text is a message in a target culture of target language concerning a message in a source culture or source language.
3. A target text is not clearly reversible.
4. A target text must be internally coherent.
5. A target text must be coherent with the source text.

These rules have established a set framework of translation activity for sometime which proved useful and directing to translators.

The next turn in postmodern translation theory came up with the Polysystem Theory. The theory is propounded by Even-Zohar (1978/2000), Toury (1995), Chesterman (1997), Lambert; van Gorp, Hermans and the Manipulation School (1985 and 1999). The theory brought to light the social and the culture norms and issues involved in translation activity. Evan-Zohar considers translated literatures to include children’s literature, thrillers, other popular works of fiction and bio and autobiography. Say for example informative writing of all kinds—travel, art and sport, journalism, university text books, etc. Toury emphasized on Descriptive Translation Studies and thought it as an important point in translation studies. It encouraged the description of all kinds of translation and provided a wide basis to translation activity on which to conduct research. His term ‘tertium comparationis’ attempts to postulate neutral translation versus culturally and socially loaded real translations. But many translation theorists objected it as

impractical proved unsatisfactory and abandoned the term. Though Toury's notion proved useless in a particular context, his translation norms cannot be neglected. He adhered to three types of translation norms—initial norms where source text norms become adequate translation and target text norms become acceptable translation. The second norms are preliminary including translation policy i.e. selection of texts and directness of translation i.e. is source text an original? The third operational norms are metrical norms or completeness of the target text and textual linguistic norms. Toury's law of growing standardization suggests that the target text standards override those of the original text. This will happen when source language culture is more powerful. Again Chesterman has talked about two types of translation norms: one being expectancy norms meaning expectations of readers which allow evaluate judgments and validated by a norm-authority. The second professional norms included accountability norm (ethical norm), communication norm (social norm), and relation norm (linguistic norm between source and target language). The usefulness of these norms is good up to an extent but is more complex for applying in practical translation activity. These norms are accepted by many scholars with some precautions. Now, let us compare Polysystem theory and non-literary text for usefulness and complex issues of translation theory. Evan-Zohar, Toury, Chesterman and others see source text as part of much wider social and cultural context. Although they may consider literary text primary their theories and suggestions are applicable to all texts.

In 1980s a major shift has occurred in translation theory that is translation has taken cultural turn from language oriented theories. Bassnett and Lefevere (1991) has dismissed linguistic theories as having moved from word to text as a unit, but not belonged and talked of "painstaking comparisons between original and translation" which do not consider the text in its cultural environment. [Munday, 2001:127]. Lefevere (1992) moved forward one step more and stated that power and patronage is an influential factor in translation theory. He divided it into three categories: professionals

within the system and patronage outside the literary system where we find the ideological component, the economic component and the status component. And the last category is the dominant poetics which refer literary devices and the concept of the role of literature. Here, some examples should be added to Lefevere's theory: Edward Fitzgerald's improvement of work by Omar Khayyam, an 18th century translator's improvement of Camoes' *Os Lusíadas*, Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*—softened for children and censorship of bad language. Bassnett's discoveries and research made a valuable contribution to the translation theory. It diverted the attention from so called traditional theories of linguistics to more supple and enhancing socio-cultural theories. The confluence of different cultures has imparted the new insights not only to language and literature but translation also. Language is rooted in culture and culture manifests its own culture; hence source language culture and target language culture shares different views and patterns at the level of translation.

Some feminist theorists have been raised the question about translation and gender. Simon (1996) one of the theorists viewed translation and gender for masculine language of translation theorists over attempts to promote a feminist stance through translation practice and contribution of women have made by translating works of literature over the centuries. He also stated the relationship between women and culture through translation for the translator is self-effacing and it creates a new work with a feminine point of view. Again he pointed the link between feminist and postcolonial studies.

The translation thinkers like Spivak (1993/2000), Niranjana (1992), Venuti (1995) and Cronin (1996) have contributed their views to the Postcolonial Translation Theory. Spivak stressed out the cultural implications of translating between colonized and colonizing, politically powerful and weaker; and languages and cultures. This has brought power relations, translational and transnational factors. E.g. Spivak translates out of Bengali into English. Now try to imagine how an educated bi-lingual (English/Bengali) woman with international feminist connections might try to translate

poetry by Mahashweta Devi—a poet from a distance village. The other examples are Brazilian Cannibalism (1960-1999): colonized devours colonizer is enriched and the Irish language and imperialism over the centuries. Again the emphasis seems on the cultural studies and non literary texts. Cultural studies theorists rarely refer to non literary text then tend to claim any interesting text as literary. Yet Cultural Studies should—by its nature—go beyond literature or at least Literature. But there emerged a few relations against target language oriented texts: what can be done to avoid too much standardization? How can one avoid social or cultural bias? Antoine Berman (1984) introduced a concept called ‘negative analytic’ of translation focusing rationalization, clarification, expansion, ennoblement, qualitative impoverishment and quantitative impoverishment. Berman’s under the experience of the foreign the next points are considerable: the destruction of rhythm, the destruction of underlying networks of signification, the destruction of linguistic patterning, the destruction of vernacular networks or their exoticization, the destruction of expressions and idioms; and last the effacement of superimposition of languages. Berman’s can be the directive principles in the translation theory and activity for his detailed analysis of the various problems and their solutions—how to avoid them!

Venuti (1995) tried to turn translation theory towards translator himself and conceptualized it as “the translator’s invisibility”. It (the invisibility) criticizes those, like Toury, who aim to produce value-free norms and laws of translation as we have seen before. It also interprets Lefever’s notions of patronage and its influence in the context of Anglo-American publishing. Venuti uses invisibility more to describe the translator’s situation and activity in contemporary Anglo-American culture. With the notion of invisibility, the questions arise: can the translator be invisible? Should the translator be invisible? And can the translator be invisible and creative at the same time? Venuti extended the view with an example: pride, prejudice and power: consider how literary translators’ describe their work—pride, how reviewers and the public

receive translations—prejudice; and the publishing industry and the effect of globalization—power.

Next concern in Postmodern Translation Theory is to check out the interdisciplinary status of philosophy and translation. Philosophers like Walter Benjamin (1923/2000), Ezra Pound (1929/2000), Steiner (1975/92/98) and Derrida and Deconstruction (1961) often find translation a fascinating thing. Benjamin’s metaphor ‘liberation’ of the original text through translation believed in interlinear translation reveals the original in all its complexity. According to him, target language is powerfully affected by the foreign tongue. And extreme example of foreignization believed that this would allow pure language to emerge from the harmonization of the two languages. Ezra Pound influenced much literary translation idea that one does not need to know the source language well; it is enough to feel the spirit. He has belief in archaizing and foreignizing to effect led to literary translation workshops for inspiration. This activity leads to very good translation or pretentious and impenetrable texts. Steiner thought of Beyond Babel and his concept Hermeneutic motion is famous for initiative trust, aggression, incorporation and compensation. He found the imbalance between source text and target text, resistant difference of the text and elective affinity to the translator. Derrida and his deconstruction set an objective: to demonstrate the instability of language in general and the relationship between signified and signifier in particular. Deconstruction can and has been used to deconstruct much more than traditional literature, e.g. political discourse, philosophy, psychology and sociology and science. Philosophy has been discussed from years and established a relation; so far how philosophy and non literary text should be conceived? At first sight, these theories would seem to be furthest from non literary texts but we should consider implications for knowledge engineering, ontologies, semantic frameworks and descriptive terminology.

These all theories—discussed before—belong to postmodern translation era and pointed a finger towards interdisciplinary status of Translation Studies. In practice, literary

translation is confined to Modern Languages Departments but non literary translation is essentially interdisciplinary in use of language, use of text, and use of technology. In this regard, Snell-Hornby (1995) has given text types under the head technology and translation: desktop publishing, translation memories, terminology databases, translator's workbench, and machine translation and information resources. The other aspects attached to it are Bart Esselink's localization, Yves Gambier's multimedia translation, conference interpreting and translation in context, Daniel Gouadec's terminology and translator training; and Don Kiraly's a social constructive approach to translator education that is empowerment from theory to practice. Anthony Pym is perhaps one of the best examples of multi-disciplinary work and interests in this case.

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Web-Links

- Anthony Pym's homepage <http://www.fut.es/~apym/>
- The virtual symposium "INNOVATION IN TRANSLATOR AND INTERPRETER TRAINING (ITIT)" at <http://www.fut.es/~apym/tti.htm>.

- Post-ColonialStudiesatEmoryWebsite:
<http://www.emory.edu/ENGLISH/Bahri/Contents.html#Authors>
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BLINDNESS : An Apocalyptic and Post-modern Vision of Jose Saramago

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Postmodern can be written with hyphen or without hyphen. According to Jurgen Habermas hyphenated post-modernism means continuation of modernism. Non-hyphenated postmodernism means oppose to modernism or departure from modernism. Peter Barry in his '*Beginning Theory*' observes the non hyphenated postmodernism. To quote his words 'they (modernism and postmodernism) are not two successive stages in the history of the arts but two opposed moods or attitudes.'¹⁵ Jean Lyotard said that postmodernism is a departure from modernism. These two concepts are different.

Modernism has limited scope. Post-modernism is unlimited. Post-modernism is breaking away from the established values, rules and regulations of European civilization. Postmodern philosophy deals with surface, neglected voices, fragments, portions and specificities. It challenges the totalizing philosophy and believes in mass culture rather than class culture.

Blindness is a post-modern novel because it is written in 1995 and which contains the features of postmodernism. *Blindness* deals with mass culture of an unknown city. It has recorded even the voice of a little boy whose mother was not with him. The novel dominates with technology; supermarket which also is the feature of post-modernism.

Jose Saramago was a Portuguese novelist, journalist and playwright. He is the first Portuguese author to win the Nobel Prize for literature in 1998. He had born on 16 Nov. 1922 in Azinhaga, Portugal. He passed away on 18 June 2010, at the age of 87, in Spain. He had been a member of the Communist Party since 1969. He was also atheist. His father Jose de Sousa and mother Maria de Piedade, were landless laborers. Jose

Saramago attended Local Lisbon Grammar School till his economic progress. He took full advantage of this opportunity and studied French literature to get mastery on art of translation.

He founded National Front Defense of culture. He worked as a car mechanic, translator and journalist. He was an assistant editor of the newspaper '*Diario de Noticias*'. While assistant editor, he fired 24 journals that demanded more pluralism in the field of edition. This job he has to leave after the political events in 1975. Jose Saramago married Ilda Reis in 1944. They have only one child named Violante. In 1988 Ilda Reis is dead. After that he was married to the Spanish journalist Pilar del Rio, who is an official translator of his books into Spanish. He did not achieve widespread recognition and acclaim until publication of '*Baltasar and Blimunda*'. It brought the attention of an international readership. This novel owns 'Portuguese PEN Club Award' also.

Jose Saramago was also an atheist and self-described pessimist. His views have aroused controversy in Portugal after the publication of '*Gospel According to Jesus Christ*'. Catholic Community was outraged by his representation of Jesus as a fallible human being. Conservative Government wouldn't allow his work to compete for 'European Literary Prize'. So he went to Spain. Once he rightly said "The possibility of the impossible, dreams and illusions, are the subject of my novels".¹

The researcher here wants to analyze an 'apocalyptic and post-modern vision' of Jose Saramago. He has analyzed a number of themes in his novels. Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary defines 'apocalyptic' as 'describing very serious damage and destruction in past or future event'. The

novelist here described bad situation of the internees. Blindness is a contagious disease and it has broken the social health. He has employed paradox with irony, humor with melancholy and skepticism with fantasy. His fictions provide a Portuguese view of Iberian history. His stories are told by unidentified narrator. His attitude is sly and jocular. His protagonists are portrayed resisting some kind of issue and dehumanization of social institutions. He wrote thirty novels, of which fifteen novels are translated into English. They are *Baltasar and Blimunda* (1982), *The year of the Death of Ricardo Reis* (1986), *The Stone Raft* (1986), *The Gospel According to Jesus Christ* (1991), *Blindness* (1995), *All the Names* (1997), *The Cave* (2001), *The Double* (2003), *Seeing* (2004), *Death with Interruptions* (2005), *Cain* (2009).

Blindness focuses on an unnamed epidemic of white blindness affecting each one in an unnamed city. Due to white blindness social-health is at risk. A driver is waiting at traffic signal, suddenly goes blind. Samaritan helps him and drives his car to his home, eventually steals his car. This man is referred as 'the thief' by the novelist. The first blind man's wife took him to the doctor who used equipped laboratory to treat and find out the problem. Here the doctor is dependent on the technology which is the very feature of post-modernism. The doctor, who treats the first blind man, also goes blind. In this way other people soon find that they too became blind. The leading characters are not given personal names, but the general names. These all characters are brought together in the asylum.

The sudden and unexplained origin of blindness causes widespread difficulties and social health rapidly changes. The government announces help and puts control on them. This blindness is infectious. So whosoever became blind, they are sent to the asylum. There all the characters gather i. e. the first blind man, the first blind man's wife, the doctor, the doctor's wife, the girl with dark glasses, the man with black eye patch and all the patients of the doctor. They live in the filthy atmosphere of an asylum. They told that they would be provided good food, pure water, and proper sanitation. But unfortunately they are not provided any of the

said facilities. Food delivery is also irregular. If food is available it is not distributed fairly. Soldiers were appointed to look after them. But one after another soldiers became blind. So hungry patients want to demand food but soldiers shoot down them. 'The word Attention was uttered three times, then the voice began, the Government regrets having been forced to exercise with all urgency what it considers to be its rightful duty, to protect the population by all possible means in this present crisis . . . provisionally known as the white sickness.'²

Near about fifteen instructions were given to the internees. The light will be kept on all the time. The internees should not leave the building without authorization. If they leave the building, result will be death. In each ward there is a telephone that can be used only to demand anything from outside. The internees should wash their own clothes by hand. The ward representatives should be selected as their leaders. They should form the rules and regulations for their welfare. Three times a day food will be provided. All the left-over must be burnt. This includes food, containers, plates, and cutlery. Burning should be done in inner courtyard. The internees are responsible for any damage caused by the fires. The firemen will not help them. The internees should bury the dead bodies in the yard without any formalities. The blind persons will be transferred immediately to the other wing. This message will be announced daily at the same time for the benefit of the all new arrivals.

Moral degradation also occurs there due to congested and overcrowds internees. A number of blind patients joined the asylum. They have also formed groups and selected their leaders. The weak group always exploited and the ladies raped.

One must not look for rational explanations in the novel *Blindness*. The important thing is that the epidemic happens and the certain impact one may see. If one wants to apply the rational mind to analyze it, he or she may fail. Because the epigraph to the work is taken from '*Book of Exhortations*', the epigraph is "If you can see, look; If you can look, observe".³

White blindness spreads due to lack of faith. There is lack of trust in others and generosity of spirit towards others. This is true in two things. Firstly, the relationship between those who have not become blind and those who are blind. The victims are not effectively treated by the authorities of the hospital as human beings. Secondly, the car thief came to help the first blind man but steals his car so he became blind. Later on when he demanded food and medical help, he was executed by the soldiers.

Appadurai has described as the new social practice of imagination, no longer ideologically suspect of entertainment for the masses or an elite past-time of little general consequences, 'the imagination has become a organized field of social practices a form of negotiation between sites of agency and globally defined fields of possibility'.⁴

Jose Saramago is a political moralist. He is not only novelist and Nobel Prize winner but also champion of people, culture and spiritual values of nations. He uses the technique that shows us more the things which he tells us. Craig Nova wrote of *Blindness* that 'by the way it is written, in the details that Saramago uses to such a good effect, almost all of the horrors of the twentieth century are addressed.'⁵

Blindness focuses the importance of a creative and imaginary response. It records the human experiences faithful to their nature. The protagonist struggles to assert some control over the circumstances in which they must live their lives.

In *Blindness*, all the major characters go through the hell and expected to come back with stronger human beings, with a greater bond to their fellows. Here doctor's wife is not blind but she pretends to be blind. She has to endure all the misery but others have to follow without seeing. 'I am simply the one who has born to see the horrors.'⁶ She herself joins her blind husband, even though she did not become blind. 'At last she climbed in and sat besides her husband round to protest, I can only take him, those are my orders, I must ask you to get down. The woman calmly replied you will have to take me as well, I have just gone blind this very minute'¹⁴ She brings food from the

supermarket for other blind people. Again she pretends as a blind woman and goes to toilet in her home for bringing water. She kept contacting with desperate and needy people and wants to serve for humanity, who is in the greatest difficulties. She also insisted to bury the dead body of a woman. She brings all her friends to her own house. She cleans their cloths and dresses them neatly.

All these characters have seen the heaven and hell. They observed asylum as equal to the hell and doctor's wife's house is equal to heaven because in those period of disease nobody was lived in her apartment. The sign of civilization one can notice on the part of doctor's wife, because she has accepted all sufferings for the sake of others.

Some readers comment moral judgment on the characters. Samaritan became blind, because he steals the first blind man's car and they meet in the asylum. At that time, the first blind man recognized that who has stolen his car. Samaritan shows sympathy to the first blind man but evil things came into his mind and he stole the car. After that he became blind. Thirty steps of the car thief can be related to the betrayal of Christ only if we care to in that reference. It should be considered that blindness occurs when the thief, 'had gone not even thirty paces'.⁷

The girl with dark glasses is a prostitute. She loses her sight with an encounter of a client. She whenever wants physical satisfaction, she used to go with anybody. She is punished because of her disrespectful conduct, for her immorality. 'Without any doubt, this woman goes to bed with men in exchange for money.'⁸ But one should not make hasty judgment about woman's business of prostitution. There are other liberal events in which she demonstrates good actions. She also possesses many good virtues. She shows kindness to the young boy with the squint. She also voluntarily washes the back of the old man with eye patch.

The same principle also applies to who those are in asylum. There were so many groups, those groups have quarreled over the food supplies and good sanitation. The one group was so dominant to control all other small groups.

Jose Saramago presented the worst side of human nature. The lack of faith runs throughout the novel. Even the blind-people also oppressed blind-people. For release of food, strong group anticipate women in return. Some group expects that the woman should go to other group and satisfy their physical need for the sake of the survival of community in the asylum.

The first blind-man forbids his wife to be a prostitute for the sake of food. So other women must work as prostitute; is not reasonable. This incident focuses on homophobic intimidation. When one woman raises the question that instead of women, men should be provided for the release of food.

When all the blind people were released from the asylum at that time they gathered on the street for the sake of food, just as the street-dog gathers. It suggests that the writer has not deliberately named any character or any spot and any city. It is not his intention to make this literary work universal, but to portray the realistic picture of the loss of humanity, compassion and solidarity.

One of the important aspects of this novel is 'passivity' of the characters. Whatever happens to them is plainly accepted. When they became free, they were not leaving the place immediately. They lost their consciousness and liberty. They were habituated to quarantine situation and were living useless life. They experienced the unpleasant atmosphere for longer time. --- 'Say to a blindman, you're free, open the door that was separating him from the world, go you're free, we will tell him once more, and he doesnot go, he has remained motionless there in middle of the road, he and the others they are terrified, they don't know where to go'.⁹

All these characters lack humanity except the doctor's wife. When all the characters released from the asylum, it was doctor's wife who searched food for other internees. They treat others with courtesy not because of human beings but because of the loss of their own former status. The doctor's wife did not look for short term need but also reminding them of their own status. There is

no future for the blind person. When there is no future what is the use of the present.

This discussion raises the question of whether or not there would be politics in the blind people's reign. To this question the doctor's wife has not given positive remark. She said why there should be rules and regulations for the blind man's reign. It will not organize anything. Because 'a government of the blind trying to rule the blind, that is to say nothing trying organize nothingness'.¹⁰ According to her opinion, man or woman's life is organized because his or her body is organized. She compares human body and government as organized institutions. When there is disorganization of both, there is death. 'A government, said the wife, an organization, the human body is also an organized system, it lives as long as it keeps organized, and death, is only the effect of a disorganization.'¹¹

The doctor's wife met a woman outside the asylum and asked her, who she is? The woman's replay is, 'I am not from here?'¹² This remarks is baffling one. The woman's house was not far away from her. She does not call that city as her native place or heaven because of the dirty and filthy atmosphere that covers the city.

Throughout the novel, the doctor's wife took great care of all the patients and her husband in particular. She gave water and food to the boy whenever he needs. She searched food for all the victims. She also stopped the quarrel between the first blind man and Samaritan. So other victims asked how long she will do the service to them. The doctor's wife replied 'I'll carry on as long as I can, I can't promise you more than that, one day, when we realize that we can no longer do anything good and useful we ought to have the courage simply to leave this world.'¹³

At the end of the novel some of them were recovering their sights. So they were very happy and enjoying the moment. The doctor's wife thinks that other people recover their sight, but she will lose her sight. She also comments on the existence of the city. The city was there but civilization, good society has been lacking. Once Jose Saramago, in his interview said 'the radical break' after the publication of

Blindness.(1995) There is common thread running through Saramago's major novels, is the need for a reappraisal of where humanity finds today.

In *Blindness*, Jose Saramago focuses on the social and bureaucratic surface reality. Because post-modernism believes in surface and not in depth. The emergence of white-blindness is mysterious and unexplainable which shows terror and fear to the humanity. The institutional powers also exercised to control and punish the same. The novelist allegorizes the sins of the victims of the Holocaust. Throughout the novel one can see the destructive scene which damaged the society. The Portuguese people were living under the horror and terror called 'blindness'.

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Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* as a Postmodernist Text

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Abstract: Shashi Tharoor appeared on the literary scene in 1989 with his first work of fiction *The Great Indian Novel* and established himself in the front rank of contemporary Indian writers in English. The present paper is a sketchy study of *The Great Indian Novel* as a postmodernist fiction. Here, Tharoor reinvents India with a dazzling marriage of Hindu Myth and modern history. The novel is a replica of postmodernism. Stylistically, thematically and literally, it is representation of history and myth through the corridors of postmodernist philosophy.

Keywords: Postmodernity, multiplicity, indeterminacy, circularity, fragmentation, ambiguity, assignation and deconstruction.

It is generally believed that Indian English novel made a quantum leap from modernism to postmodernism with the appearance of the Rushdie tradition in 1980's. Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* is, like Rushdie's pioneering works, a postmodernist text; which rewrites the ancient epic *The Mahabharata*, for a mocking, witty and highly entertaining parody of recent Indian history. It fulfils all the major features of postmodernism, both in theory and practical applications.

Before going to the discussion of how Shashi Tharoor has introduced the postmodernist insight into his novel, it is important to know the basic tenets of the theory called postmodernism. The postmodernist writers like Thomas Pynchon, John Barth, Carlos Fuentes, Donald Barthelme and their theoretical counter parts like Jacques Derrida, Michal Foucault, Roland Barthes, Jacques Lacan and J. F. Lyotard etc. assert that the western civilization has arrived at a point beyond consensus, at a fragmented time; in which doubt, anxiety and a kind of rudderlessness dominate life. They recognize the fundamental instability of the world where meaning is a hopeless illusion and knowledge is conditional.

Derrida argues that no meaning exists beyond language and that any discourse is detached from the world. The world of meaning fragments. In his seminal work *Of Grammatology*, Derrida (1974:51) defines the science of writing as the science of 'The arbitrariness of sign.' Writing is seen by him as the endless displacement of meaning which

governs language and at the same time places it beyond the reach of a constant knowledge. There is no transcendental signified which is meaningful in itself and which escapes the ceaseless interplay of linguistic deferral and difference. Therefore the search for meaning, truth and presence is futile. The belief that there is a reality is a myth on which people build their metaphysical notions of origin and truth. The text, according to Derrida, should be regarded as deceptive narrative which never achieves any stability. This stress on the indeterminacy of text undermines the logo-centric stance of modernism. With the disappearance of meaning, the search for any distinction between the real and the unreal, the true and the untrue becomes a baseless exercise.

Derrida introduce the concept of 'Decentering' by which he means that outside any discourse there is no centre; from which one can establish metaphysical boundaries for linguistic signifiers. The desire for the centre is the metaphysics of presence. The postmodernist writers accept uncertainty as the only constant, change as the only certain thing. Wholeness and certitude are no longer possible; fragmentation, uncertainty, ambiguity and doubt are accepted as a part of life. This decentering, negation of certitude, and replacement of fixity by multiplicity are the hallmarks of postmodern sensibility.

Roland Barthes regards the text as the methodological field, as something that can be experienced as a mere production. He insists on the infinite multiplicity of a given text. According to him, a text is always plural. So, the

boundaries between knowledge and world or text and interpretation cease to exist. A text is always rewritten and reproduced by its consumers. The author is removed from the text. He argues, in his *The Death of the Author* (1977:157) that:

To give a text an author is to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing.

The rejection of the notion of the text as an organic whole, of myths of origin and metaphysics of presence claims to have a totalized explanation of the world and the acceptance of the fragmentation of truth. David Lyon (2002:97) in his work *Postmodernity* asserts that:

All that is solid has melted into air, that reality and morality are not givens but imperfect human constructs.

Postmodernism is essentially subversive; it disrupts almost everything in the tradition. It challenges the validity of the received notions of language, the text, the author, the power of authority and the role of history. The postmodernists have made a radical swing from theoretical certainty to uncertainty. They have called in question every aspect of realism. They present a universe which is devoid of the assurance of truth. Living in an age cut adrift from the traditional value system, the postmodernists prefer doubt and suspicion to certitude and conviction. They view their task defamiliarization, decentering and deconstruction.

In the great Indian Novel, Tharoor takes his readers down through the country's 'Assignment with destiny', with the leading figures from contemporary history cast in the mould of great epic characters. Gandhiji, for instance, is cast in the role of Bhishma, the celibate Kaurava patriarch, who is obsessed with truth, non-violence, untouchability and toilet-cleaning. He is referred to in the novel as Gangaji, and described by the British Viceroy, Sir Richard, as 'Public Enema Number One' (p. 113) Dhitarashtra, is the blind son of Vichitravirya and a favourite disciple of Fabian socialism and

is a fatal charmer of the ladies of Bloomsbury. He found 'Education in India as a harrowing experience.'(p.41) and was sent to England where he acquired 'traces of the right accent along with streaks of the wrong ideas.' (p.110) Mohammad Ali Karna, the fruit of the error of Kunti's adolescence and adopted son of a rich man's driver, is the lawyer disciple of Gangaji. He becomes the founder of the Muslim state Karnistan, a country which is carved out of India. The teacher of five Pandava brothers is a socialist named Jayaprakash Drona.

The narrative begins with Gangaji's emergence as a national leader and his election as the president of the Kaurava Party which led the country to freedom and which spilt after independence, one side going to Priya Duryodhani, Dhitarashtra's only child with the famous arched blow who, as prime minister, imposed a blockade on the country. It ends with the death of Duryodhani, her murder by her own security guards. The historical narrative follows the line of *The Mahabharata*, giving insight both into the current politics and the epic. The old narrator Ved Vyasa tells in his story:

Of past, present and future, of existence and passing of efflorescence and decay, of death and rebirth; of what is, of what was, of what should have been.' (p.18)

He claims 'nothing less than *The Great Indian Novel*' (p.18) history is transformed into myth and the epic characters become figures of contemporary history. The dividing line between fact and fiction, myth and history become fuzzy.

The novel inhabits the world of manifold realities and of manifold interpretations of reality. The reader is stunned to find that his knowledge of history and myths is no authentic guide to reality. There is such indeterminacy in the text that neither certainty nor stability is feasible. The text becomes an elusive narrative which never provides any stable knowledge. Well known facts of history and ancient legends are presented in a new and unfamiliar way. Many of the characters, incidents and issues in this novel are based on the people and the events described in the great epic. Again, the famous utterances of historical figures such as Gandhi,

Nehru, Subhash Chandra Bose, Jinnah, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad and Mountbatten are changed to depict familiar matters in an unfamiliar way. Many of these respected leaders go down like nine pins in the novel as the *dramatis personae* of the epic.

In the same way, historical events of India's struggle for freedom and her subsequent experiment with democracy are reorganized to suit the fiction. The result is defamiliarisation, demystification and negation of history. There is no trace of reality. Underlining ambiguity and negating history, the text subverts closure and suggests alternatives. The narrator says: "for every tale I have told ... every perception I have conveyed, there are a hundred equally valid alternatives I have omitted and of which you are unaware... This is my story of the India I know, with its biases, selections, omissions, distortions, all mine. But you cannot derive your cosmogony from a single birth, Ganapati. Every Indian must carry with him, in his head and heart, his own history of India." (p.373) it reminds us what Roland Barthes would call a 'creative text' which resists finality and remains open to doubt and indecision.

In this novel Shashi Tharoor seems to suggest more than one truth, more than one way of looking of looking at history and myths which have shaped Indian people and their culture. At one point, the narrator says that the novel is his version of reality. "It is my truth, Gannapati, just as the crusade to drive out the British reflected Gangaji's truth and the fight to be rid of both the British and the Hindu was Karna's truth. Which philosopher would dare to establish a hierarchy among such verities? (p.164) There is no clear answer in the text.

By accepting the multiplicity of truth and acknowledging the multiple versions of reality as equally valid Tharoor catches up with the western postmodernist writers who have asserted the end of truth. He insists on the provisional nature of all truths. "All knowledge is transient, linked to the world around it and subject to change as the world changes." (p. 163) Therefore he does not claim any finality for his story. "What happened in the end? ... 'The end'

was an idea that... meant nothing to me. I did not begin the story in order to end it; the essence of the tale lay in the telling. 'What happened next?' I could not answer, but 'What happened in the end?' I could not even understand. (p.162) He believes, there is no end to the story of life, there are only pauses: "The end is the arbitrary invention of the teller, but there can be no finality about his choice." (p.163) Thus truth and history are given terrible push in the novel and traditional assumptions like finality, fixity, certitude are rejected.

Like other post modernist writers, Tharoor finds no certitude in any particular ideology. Since history "indeed the world, the universe, all human life, and so, too, every institution under which we live is in a constant state of evolution." (p.245) since all knowledge suffers from the crippling defect of ephemerality, one must accept doubt and diversity. Thus his Yudhishtir declaims at the end of the novel: "There are no classical verities valid for all time. No more certitude... Accept doubt and diversity. Let each man live by his own code of conduct, so long as he has one. Derive your standards from the world around you and not from a heritage whose relevance must be constantly tested. Reject equally the sterility of ideologies and the passionate prescriptions of those who think themselves infallible ... Admit that there is more than one truth, more than one right, more than one Dharma." (p. 418)

By setting all certitudes, the novel illustrates in fictional terms what the deconstructionists critics describe as 'Difference'. It accepts the impossibility of a centre and celebrates diversity, fragmentation of truth, anxiety and doubt. At the end, the narrator Ved Vyas wakes up from his dream in today's India, "A land of computers and corruptions, of myths and politicians and box-wallahs with moulded plastic briefcases. To an India beset with uncertainties, muddling chaotically through to the twenty first century." (p. 418) He wants to dream again; he wants to retell his story. Because his last dream, which comprises the narrative, leaves him with a serious problem: "If it means anything at all, it means that I have told my story so far from a completely mistaken perspective." (p.418) There

is circularity about the narrative; it ends where it began, the last line of the book being the same as its opening line.

The novel also illustrates the authorial involvement with the reader and the text as opposed to the practice of the modernist writers who laid emphasis on objectivity. There is indeterminacy in his form of expression. He makes no distinction between fact and fiction, history and legend, prose and poetry. He occasionally breaks into poetry and light verse and thus affirms the ineffectiveness of Standard English prose for his story. Tharoor uses the broader base of fiction to unite the two different genres of poetry and prose. He fictionalizes the traditional poetic epic and synthesizes it with politics. By doing so, he contributes to the well known 'Blurring of the genre' of postmodernism.

It must be mentioned at the end that postmodernist sensibility manifest in *The Great Indian Novel* bears an affinity with the Indian view of reality. As Ved Vyas says: "How easily we Indians see the several sides to every question! That is what makes us such good bureaucrats, and such poor totalitarians. They say the new international organizations set up by the wonderfully optimistic United Nations are full of highly successful Indian officials with quick, subtle minds ... for ever able to understand every global crisis from the point of view of each and every one of the contending parties. That is why do so well... in any situation that calls for an instinctive awareness of the subjectivity of truth, the relativity of

judgment and the impossibility of action."(p. 373)

Thus the novel's insight is said to be an offshoot of India's pluralistic culture. It grows out of and speaks for, an India that welcomes multiplicity and honours all interpretations of reality, of the world and the text as potentially valid. The book gains an added significance in this troubled time of religious intolerance which wants to proclaim the supremacy of one religion, one God and one interpretation of reality.

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O.V.Vijayan's *The Wart* : A Postmodern Study

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Abstract:-O. V. Vijayan is prominent writer in postmodern Indian fiction. He blends reality and fantasy in his works. He portrayed the reality of emergency periods in India in the story *The Wart*. He used postmodern technique in his short stories like *The Wart*. The unnamed narrator in the story presents the dilemma of postmodern man. The narrator is caught between the world of sin and suffering and ultimately gets salvation in the spectrum of Indian prism. In the story, we can see the alienation of bourgeoisie society. It is magic realist text in Indian canvas and reflects the zugzwang of postmodern milieu.

Keywords:-1.Indian Existentialism
2.Derridean supplement
3.Hardisque concept of destiny
4.Derredian Differance
5.Foucauldian Power-structures
6.Baudrillardian Virtual-reality
7.Lyotardian Conditionality
8. Postmodern Symbolism
9. Fragmented Nostalgia

O.V. Vijayan (1930-2005) is one of the most imaginative authors in Indian writhing in English. His style has been described as a landmark, expanding the use of the language and allegories of conveying the mystery of post-apocalyptic world. His first novel *The Legends of Khasak* (1969) brought revolutionary change in Malayalam fiction. The former era was romantic and realistic; the latter is modernist, post-modernist, and post-post-modernist, with tremendous experimentation in style and content. Vijayan released Malayalam fiction writing from the shackles of tradition. In 2003, he was awarded the Padma Bhushan for his contribution to literature.^[1]

O.V. Vijayan's best-known collection in English is *After The Hanging and Other Stories* which contains several masterpieces. In particular, the title story about a poor, semi-literate peasant going to the jail to receive the body of his son who has been hanged. *The Wart* and *The Foetus* have been described by the author as "allegories of power" and were said to have been inspired by the atrocities of emergency. In both the stories evil was either overcome or liberated (from it was achieved through a reliance of patience, prayer and natural remedies).

The present article is the study of Vijayan's *The Wart* in post-modern perspective. It is the powerful allegory which throws light on human alienation and helplessness in the hands of destiny. The wart below the lower lip of the protagonist is a metaphor which ruins him and his family. At the beginning of the story, it is a sign of luck but gradually it became a sign of curse. The wart transformed into a lemon, then big tomato, and finally big elephant. It separates from its master and orders him to rape on Naani's (maid-servant) corpse again and again. To quote from the text:
The wart asked me to lie down on Naani's corpse once again for a funeral mating.(OV:p27)

Vijayan, through this story, wants to say that how modern man is sexually frustrated while making love with his spouse. The narrator finds her reluctant towards sex because of growing wart. Vijayan says "something told me that she had made love not to me but to my other self, the one without the wart, an adulterous fantasy which made me despair". The sex which is life-force is causing despair in the life of husband and wife in post-modern culture. Like Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* (1912), Gregor Samsa, a travelling salesman, finds ecstasy in the portrait of a girl hanging in

his room. The narrator in the story also finds ecstasy in mating with his wife. The narrator, like Gregor Samsa, searches for spiritual meaning in a world of sorrow. It is the world driven by human greed, lust, fragmentation, and 'brief but intense living' culture.

The narrator, a landlord, is alienated not only from society where he lives or where he tries to live but it is the alienation from his own self. His wife and son departed from him causing him the pain of separation. Chaaththan, peon at home, gives the letter of Suma, his wife, to his master latter she abandons her husband forever . To quote her own words from the text:

You and I can only console ourselves that such is our destiny... Afflicted as you are, I shall not burden you with his (son) care. (Ibid:p21)

The protagonist who is unnamed, may be, author wants to show a universal human being who is devoid of sin, despair and guilt. Aechchu Menon, a surgeon, advises the protagonist to cut away the wart but he declines. He believes in Ayurvedic medicine of his ancestors. The wart is the metaphor of sin and narrator is communicating with it to revisit his sin . The writer also uses self-reflexivity as a post-modern technique to say it is a story. To quote:

I cannot recall with any measure this story runs a perennial truth whose beginnings go back beyond the times we have known.(Ibid: p24)

His community believes the medicine of Dhanvantari, the Lord of Health. Generations of his people had belived on this seer with trust, and the narrator could see no other path for him, He says " this was my sin, and this now my moment of unburdening...". The narrator's late uncle Koppunni Nair is an important person in his life. Koppunni is proud, adulterous man who had illegitimate relationships with wedded matrons. It is,

perhaps, the curse and sin of this man who is looking at salvation in the form of the wart on the face of the narrator. Protagonist's relationship with Naani, sister-in-law of Chaaththan, the head serf of the house, is an important episode in the story. She used to come to home to serve her master in the absent of Chaaththan. She is young and beautiful in the manner of aboriginal woman. She is loyal to her master. She is helpless woman in the hands of destiny who died because of the evil of the wart. He searches out peace and salvation in her lap. To quote Vijayan:

Thus does the unfree man seek freedom, in lust; like the condemned prisoner who spends his last moments not on God but mating with empresses in his fantasy(Pillai&ov:p104)

The narrator is oppressed by desire and lust and he fulfilled his desire in mating with Naani. In this process, wart separates from its master and orders the narrator to rape again and again on Naani's corpus. "It is a parasitical protuberance metaphorically symbolizes dictatorship. In credibly, a phallus grows on it. It takes Naani to a tumultuous and fatal orgasm". (Ibid:104) He is living the slogan of post-modern culture 'brief but intense living'. The Narrator satisfied his desire in lust with Naani, his sin becomes greater and greater and the wart became an independent creature that orders the narrator and told him to speak respectfully with him. He also shares the sexual gratification with the wart with the corpus of Naani. "In the story, necrophilia reflects the evil of power".(OV:27) The Narrator recounts:

The wart asked me to lie down on Naani's corpus once again for a funeral mating. It kissed the black parted lips, then I heard noise like

the ship-shipping of barber's
scissors.(CT:62)

Gradually, author has used the technique of magic realists writers like Garcia Marquez. Naani's lips vanishes, soon the eyes and cheeks and nose disappeared. When all was over, he was given command to rise by the wart. Vijayan asserts, 'from all over her underbelly seeped fearsome secretions, while within her womb grew the foetus of death'. The 'foetus of death' in the womb of Naani is, perhaps, the sin and guilt of the narrator who made him fragmented from society and ultimately from his own-self. Post-modernism is all-pervasive cultural phenomenon that encompasses ambiguity, fragmentation, chaos, disorder and so on. W.B. Yeats in his 'The Second Coming' says:

Things fall apart, the centre cannot
hold
mere anarchy is loosed upon
the world.(OV:29)

There is no morality existed in post-modern age, everything is illusion or false reality, because it is very difficult to reach ultimate meaning of every text. *The Wart* is also one of the texts which focuses the chaotic journey of post-modern man. The narrator in the story is totally caught between the world of chaos and disorder and other is powerless to be born in the womb of future. The narrator remembers his wife and son but in vain. He is helpless against the power of the wart. All his nutrients are withheld from his bloodstream. The wart grew and in its growing changed. Its black hide shone. It has legs, great flapping ears, a trunk and tusks. The wart had become an elephant. People surrounding the land surprised to see this elephant. People worship him in the temple; offer the fruits, the palm sugar and coconut. Narrator asserts that the wart had given him freedom who is his prison warden. At the end of the story, the wart is the metaphor for narrator's freedom which unfrees the narrator from the burden and ultimately gives him salvation. At the end, like T.S. Eliot's 'The Waste Land', Narrator accepts the peace in the words of

God. The narrator accepts the omnipresent Almighty and His benevolence. To quote the concluding lines from the text:

Om bhoor bhava swawaha
Tat savitur varenniyam
Bhargo devasya dheemahi
Dheeyo yonah prachotayat.
Almighty Light
pervader of the earth and the sky
of the gross and the subtle
illumine my intellect.(Ibid:74)

In the present research paper, we can see the influence of post-modern elements like decentred world, eroticism, counter-hierarchy and magic realism can be seen in the writings of Vijayan. It is the destiny of post-modern man to be helpless causing him alienation. In the short story *The Wart* we can notice the post-modern thematic dimensions like separation, death and predicament of the modern man. The writer also uses the post-modern technique like fragmented narration, epiphanies, blurring the reality and fantasy, and amalgamation of sujet and fabula. It also endorses the theoretical concepts like aporias, traces, hierarchy, difference, traces and transcendental signified. We can also notice the concepts like Foucauldian Power-structures(rape of Naani) Baudrillardian Virtual-reality (metamorphosis of the wart) and Lyotardian Conditionality (mental divorce of the narrator and his wife).
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Albee's *The Zoo Story*: A Personification of Postmodern Life

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As we progressed and grow older,
We have more and more things to talk
about, And less and less people to talk
to.....¹

Above words, finely reflect the state of human in the world of postmodernism. Postmodernism is said to be an advanced modernism. It is difficult to pinpoint an exact date for the beginning of postmodernism. However, a line of cleavage is found between the Premodern literature and the Postmodern literature. This distinction is caused by the consequences of World Wars. Because of the two world wars, we find vast consequences of upheaval in individual as well as society. Generally, the first half of the 20th century can be called as of Modernism while the second half can be called as of Postmodernism. To say in Nil Korkut's words_

The late 1960s and 1970s witnessed various artistic, literary, and cultural productions, which may be called 'postmodern', but the concept became a subject of academic study and discussion in the 1980s.²

From the above words of Nil Korkut, it is known that the concept of postmodernism became a subject of academic study in 1980, but the reflections of postmodernism in literature is found in the previous years of 1980 or in second half of the 20th century.

In the term of postmodernism as far as the field of literature is concerned, drama is one of the remarkable and most likely genres of it. Upright presentation of postmodern society found in the plays of late 1950s. Edward Albee is one of the distinguished postmodern playwrights whose plays possess significant components of the postmodern outlook. His plays present a high degree of skepticism about the existence of universal truth, lust for power and money at the stake of one's relations, extramarital relationship and the devastation of moral values, and the

dehumanized state of human in the postmodern world.

The Zoo Story (1959) is one of the celebrated works of Albee. It is his first one act play. It creates convincingly the universal human situation. The sense of isolation and the resulted sense of loss of communication, that Albee experienced, are carried into the play. In existential terms of life, the playwright presents the postmodern man with his basic conflicts and problems. The play is also a depiction of postmodern life with a solitary free passage characterized by indifference towards others. The word 'zoo' in the title of the play, *The Zoo Story* itself reflects the agony of alienation. The image of the 'zoo' stresses the universal human isolation, which is compared with that of animals in zoo.

The story of the present play is of mainly two alienated men of contrasted types. The isolation and anguish of the central figure Jerry, express the playwright's own situation. A greatly distressful portrait of young man, Jerry presents a human completely alienated from rest of the society as like the animals in zoo. He tries to have human contact. Until his last breath, he took efforts to share his feelings and ideas with various persons including an animal. Since he does not get success in making contact with human beings, he tries to have with dog. He tries by fair and foul means, but fails to do so.

Then Jerry visits a park where he finds Peter. He comes to the park and tries to come close to Peter through conversation. In the beginning, there is casual conversation between Peter and Jerry. To some extent, it is only Peter, with whom Jerry succeeds to share his feelings. Peter is a man who is content with his life. He has himself carefully made his isolation. That's why he would not prefer to talk with Jerry. Even so, he is polite to Jerry. The reason behind his politeness is his fear of anyone's bad opinion about him. He does not have the courage to be rude.

Peter's talk reveals his complacency in middle class family. While Jerry's agony reveals failure of his attempt at friendship. His talk reveals the reason behind his visit to zoo. He had been to zoo, to find out how men and men, and men and animal maintain to remain close to one another. Peter does not show any interest to Jerry's conversation. Soon Jerry realizes Peter's defensive attitude towards solitariness. But, Jerry continuously experimenting to establish human contact.

At the end of the play, Jerry played an aggressive game of territorial acquisitiveness. He argues with Peter. He said that the bench, on which Peter is sitting, comes in his territory. He punches Peter hard and tries to dispossess him of that bench. He even tosses the knife towards Peter, who tries to run away. Lastly, in a very mysterious way Jerry impales himself on the knife, and dies.

The story of the present play mirrors the alienated condition of postmodern humans, which resulted from the failure of communication. Jerry represents the torment of alienated people, while Peter represents the kind of human beings who are content with solitariness. Jerry's isolation is imposed on him by the circumstances in which he lives, while Peter's seclusion is self-imposed. The play depicts the unwanted isolation imposed on humans by society as animals in zoo, and how some consciously human beings willingly caged themselves. The condition of the estranged persons is same as that of the animals in zoo. This theme of isolation and salvation through sacrifice is not the new one but the centuries-old one. The only difference is that in the past the isolation is deliberately made for salvation, while in present it is both forced by the social milieu and self imposed, too. In the postmodern world the self-imposed isolation is not for salvation but for the security of one's material life, as of Peter.

Albee in *The Zoo Story*, also aptly presents the acceleration of changing feelings of postmodern people. It is presented through the communication of Jerry and Peter. Jerry is a dejected man in search of communication. He purposefully disturbs Peter but very politely. Later when he finds his efforts to communicate meet failure, he becomes very aggressive towards Peter. The conversation that starts with love and politeness is turned into hate and rudeness, and then again love and forgiveness. It reflects the fuming postmodern generation.

Concisely Albee succeeded to portray pertinently the postmodern human in *The Zoo Story*. The harrowing portrait of a young man alienated from the society, reflects postmodern humans, who live together without developing intimacy with one another. The hyperactive consciousness of isolated individual makes him to suffer from psychosis. The play delineates the incongruities, the existential anguish, acceleration of changing feelings, incensed temperament, the acrid sense of loss of communication and the resulted segregation. It seems that both social and individual questions have suffered the sea change, from the shore of premodern period to that of postmodern. Thus, the dramatic presentation of the problems of postmodern life and its vicissitudes viewed *The Zoo Story* as a personification of postmodern life.

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Bertolt Brecht and the Idea of Epic Form

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Abstract: Brecht's important dramatic conventions can be briefly summarised. He is able to use with a new freedom at many point in his work. His major works, holds the element of epic form at first sight, that we can easily overlook it's originality. The major plays *Mother Courage*, *The Good Woman of Sezuan* *The life of Galileo* and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* shows Brecht's own the idea of 'Epic form' is practiced in drama and theatre.

Keywords: Epic Theatre, Marxism, Alienation Effect ect.

Present paper is an attempt to explore a new kind of dramatic world. No doubt Bertolt Brecht is a revolutionary Marxist thinker who had not only proposed theory but practiced Marxism in his dramas in true sense. So he is one of the most significant theatre practitioners and theorist of the 20th Century. His works has had a major influence on British drama since the late 1950^s Brecht's early plays were written shortly after the world War- I and were influence by the expressionist movement. From mid 1920^s he became interested applying Marxist ideas to plays and performance and developed his concept of 'epic theatre' After reading Marx his view is converted to conscious political commitment. Around 1930 he wrote didactic plays intended for working class people and audiences.

Along with Brecht, Theodor Adorno and Walter Benjamin contest Lukas' anti - modernism because they feel that a truly revolutionary art must radically break with traditional forms. Gradually Marxist criticism novel moved away from Marxism as a system and became interdisciplinary in the 1960^s

Brecht's work is the most important and original. *Mother Courage*, *The Good Woman of Sezuan*, *The life of Galileo* and *the Caucasian Chalk Circle* belong to a remarkable period between 1937 and 1945. Now Brecht had been writing almost continuously since 1931 and after the major writing period influenced theatrical production varies widely. But it is founded by Berliner Ensemble in 1949. The two major contributions. The idea of 'epic form' and the plays of 1937-45 in a primarily analytic rather than historical aspect. They are Brecht's own

development and the general situation in drama and theatre.

When a writer tries to set down the general principles of work, he is often tempted to define it negatively by rejecting his predecessors and often collecting them, arbitrarily into a 'tradition'. Brecht certainly did this not only because it is his artistic manifesto but also because the whole cast of his mind was critical. What matters in the manifesto, is positive content. He strongly rejected naturalism of European Drama after Ibsen. Brecht list many points but four can be taken as decisive.

1) The drama he opposes involves the spectator in a stage action and consumes his capacity to act; the drama he recommends make the spectator an observer but awakens his capacity to act.

2) Again the drama he opposes presents experience, drawing the spectator inside this until he is experiencing the action with the characters; the drama he recommends presents a view of the world, in which the spectator confronts something and is made to study what he sees.

3) Further, the drama he opposes makes, one scene exist for the sake of an other, in what is seen, under the spell of the action, as a revolutionary can't be avoided; the drama he recommends makes each scene exist for itself, as a thing to be looked at and develops by sudden leaps.

4) Finally, the drama he opposes takes man in the run of its action, as known, given the drama he recommends shown man producing himself in the course

of the action, and therefore subject to criticism and to change.

What is being basically, attacked here is the central naturalist thesis of the illusion of reality. in which the action is so life like that absorbs the whole attention of both dramatist and audience At the simplest level, he is calling for their restoration historically these had been the convention of chorus, narrator, soliloquy the achievement of a dramatic design which was more than the design of the action. Brecht sometimes confused the issue by concentrating on the spectator's reactions. The spector (as Brecht learned) is the one element the dramatist can't control in any form. It is in the action, the dramatic design, that the choices Brecht insist on must be made the alternative then 'open theatre', is in some ways preferable to 'epic' Essentially what Brecht created, after long experiment, was a dramatic form in which men were shown in the process of producing themselves and their situations. It is nothing but Marxist theory of history in which, within given limits man makes himself. Brecht developed methods of writing, producing and acting which includes a view of critical detachment. so he show men in the process of producing themselves and their situations, as opposed to discovering themselves in a given situations. The producing and acting methods have been widely discussed around the concept of *verfremdung* 'making strange'

Brecht's methods varied, widely but were consistent in their intention to show the action in the process of being made, to confront an audience with a performance a deliberate action in a theatre. A kind of explicit contrast with all those means toe suspension of disbelief before an illusion of reality. What happens on the stage is not so much lived as shown and both the consciousness of an audience and the distance between that audience and the deliberately played action are made central to the style.

In acting Brecht emphasized the same elements of distance and demonstration. He encouraged the same kind of thinking about the character but for an objective rather than subjective understanding.

He has merely to show the character. or better, not merely to experience it but this does not merely to experience it but

this does not mean that when has to act passionate people he must remain cold. The feeling should not be same; so that feeling of his audience do not became fundamentally those of his character.(Williams:319)

He encouraged this objective relation in rehearsal by getting actors to precede their words with the said' or to translate them into the third person. Instead of subjective involvement there would be objective critical presentation. But it is more than techniques to be dramatic conventions; they have to be applied to plays which are written in some terms. It is possible to say that application of a critical objective treatment to any play by letting the technique of production take priority. It is what Brecht himself said.

Today we see the theatre being given absolute priority over the actual plays. the theatre apparatus priority is a priority means of production. These pirates resist all conventions to other purpose by taking any play it encounters and immediately changing it so that it no longer represents a foreign body within the apparatus the theatre can stage anything. it theatres it all down. (Ibid, 321)

This has been, in practice of Brecht's on the production of the *Three Penny Opera*.

Complex seeing must be practiced.....

Thinking above the flow of the play is more important than thinking from within the flow of the play.

In this Latter sentence he is still prescribing an attitude for the spectator

He can mark the passage from a theatrical technique to a dramatic convention by the example from '*The Three penny Opera*' We can see a technique becoming a local convention in Pea chum's commentary on pity:

(A large board is let down from the flies and it is written: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive')

PEACHUM: What's the use of the finest and most stirring sayings painted on the most enticing boards if they get used up so quickly? there are four or five saying in the Bible that really touch the heart. But when they're used up. one's daily

bread's just gone. (Ibid, 321)

Above passage is direct self revealing address to the audience, on pity as a calculating trade, is an open irony which sets a tone for action. It is objective critical an engagingly cheerful dishonesty, frankly confessed.

One of the simplest and most brilliant examples is *The Good Women of Sezuana* of 'complex seeing' have dramatic action itself. In which the woman, realizing that he society like this, adopted a cheerful, tough anomalism *eats first, morals later. In The*

Caucasian Chalk Circle the issues are simpler there is survival qualities of goodness and evil: the of definition of justice by the needs of life have centrality in Brecht.

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Post Modernism as a Continuation with Gain and Loss: A critical view.

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1) Introduction-

The present scenario of literature and literary study is thoroughly dominated by the spirits of modernism and postmodernism as an intellectual revolutions and reactions to the traditional literature. We are forced to take them as a kind of storm and Tsunami came in the tranquil ocean of traditional literature. The hallucination of the two world wars, the financial depression, the economy based on consumption and production relation, informative technological revolution, Darwin's 'Theory of Evolution', Einstein's ideas of 'relativity', Karl Max's 'communalism', Sigmund Freud and Karl Jung's Psycho-analytical theories, and overall adverse situation to keep human and religious values became the responsible factors for such a disasters in which number of things were destroyed. The first casualty came in the form of 'romantic disappearances'. The emotionalism was replaced by intellectualism, the imagination was replaced by realism and hyperrealism, the naturalism was replaced by urbanianism, idealism by materialism, absolutism by relativism, poeticism by prosaic, and ultimately criticism by abstract theoriarism. The resulted changing senses, attitudes and spirits force us (as most of us are learner of traditional literature) to raise number of questions against the 'isms'. The very first question, which haunts in our mind, is relating to their concrete contribution to literary creation and literary study. However, the very exploration to problem gets negative answer as they have killed the very literariness of literature or literary study. They have destroyed the very

source and very purpose of literature and its study.

2) Nature of Literature:-

Let us get the short critical review of the 'before literature (as literature is clear cutely divided by the year 1922) to show the loss by the gain. Of course, these 'isms' have widen the very scope of literary study, but it has been done at the cost of loss. Conventionally, the literature was written and studied with the sense of beauty and joy as parts of art. Mostly, literature would create emotional sense of wonder and intellectual sense of curiosity; and to get its poetic sense, 'Willing Suspension of Disbelief' activates our imaginative faculty us. The ocean was peaceful with a few waves and exploring became easy on the part of explorer. Everything was going rightly and smoothly without any efforts on the part of creator, or reader. Aristotle's concepts of 'Imitation', Hamartia', 'Credibility', and 'Catharsis', Longinus' idea of 'Sublimity', John Dryden's 'Classical tenets' were leading ahead literature without any fear of sudden accident' William Wordsworth's definition of poetry-'Poetry is a spontaneous overflow of powerful felling with get origin from emotion recollected in tranquility would refer the tranquility of literature and literary study. John Keats idea of 'Negative Capability' would force reader to go deeper in the subjective world. Matthew Arnold's concepts and ideas of 'Grand Style' 'Poetry' and Criticism', T.S. Eliot's ideas of 'impersonality' ' tradition and individual talent' 'dissociation of sensibility', New critics' formalism' I.A.Richards idea of 'Practical criticism' dominated the literary scene

to guide the creator and reader. However, above-mentioned senses have destroyed their hierarchy to replace by Anarchy. All 'isms' which ultimately resulted into ' nihilism' have killed the very notion, very purpose and very effect of literary study or literary creation. The emotion oriented literature and literary study was replaced by reason orientation, creation by criticism, and literariness by non- literariness. The arrival of these turmoils left the bewildering attitudes and senses in the realm of literary study.

The new senses, which came in the century, have brought many changes in every sphere of human life. Under the influence of senses, the century has developed special interest in the activity of destruction. A century is known, in the history of human civilization, for its notorious taste for destruction and glorious for its quest for perfection. As far as the realm of literature is concerned, it has destroyed what has been created and said by the earlier ages (literary ages). With its new attitude, sense and spirit, it has brought new outlook to think, to perceive and to believe. These ways of taking, believing, perceiving and thinking having different (sometimes reverse) moods are studied under two heads in literature- modernism and postmodernism.

Before getting the notorious and glorious nature of Postmodernism, it would be better on our part to go through the term Modernisms which is, with consensus of many critics, taken as a continuation of the latter. As a student of literature, I would like to say that there is no terms like modernism and postmodernism having separate entities. The year 1922 should be taken as a beginning time of modernism as well as postmodernism as it has given a reverse blow to literary creation. Of Course, it is accepted fact that both senses have cherished different moods but it cannot be denied that both are interrelated concepts in

senses as a modernism is the real basis to postmodernism. Where as Modernism was mostly related to creation with reverse attitude and naturally, Postmodernism has given reverse criticism to it as it is mostly concerned. With it, we can say that Post Modernism is a legitimate and natural development of the Modernism.

It is now clear that modernism and Post Modernism have cherished the same senses having opposite mood to them. Hence, it will be better to discuss the difference to get the real spirit of Postmodernism. However, before that, let us study, in briefly, the nature of Modernism.

Modernism is a culturally mind set which came on the wake of intellectual revolution. It should be noted that it was not a deliberate attempt on anybody's part, but natural reaction to the previous tendencies prevailing in social and literary panoramas of the age. In literary study, it is widely used to identify new and distinctive features in the subjects, forms, concepts and style of literature after the end of the First World War. The most important spirit of the new age was come in the form of question regarding the certainties that has supported traditional society as well as literature. In the literary turmoil, T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Marcel Proust, Thomas Mann, Franz Kafka, William Faulkner, Stephen Mallarme, W.B. Yeats and Wallace Stevens are the most notable names with their literary creations. The names of August Strindberg, Eugene O'Neill, Bertolt Brecht, George Kaiser, Ernest Toller should be mentioned in drama .As far as the matter of literary criticism concerned, the most notable names are James Fraser, Maud Bodkin, T.S. Eliot, William Empson, Dylan Thomas, Sir Author Symons, Andre Breton, Man Ray, Tristan Tzara, William Burroughs, and T.E. Hulme. They had given a radical, not a deliberate, reaction to the traditional literature. In his review on Joyce's 'Ulysses' T.S.Eliot wrote, "the inherited mode of ordering a literary

work, which assumed a relatively coherent and Stable Social order, could not accord with the immense Panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history. The romantic imagination was replaced by stern realism, beauty by dirt, poetry by prose, emotion by reason, unity by dissociation and simplicity by obscurity and heterogeneity. They experimented with “automatic writing” (writing without control by unconscious) and simple modes of language. A small group of self-conscious authors who are termed ‘avant guard’ had undertaken an adventure to create new by violating conventional orders and tenets. Artistic and literary movements like cubism, imagism, symbolism, Dadaism, expressionism, surrealism, futurism were born in the age to enforce the new spirit and sense of the age.

Differences between Modernism and Post Modernism-

The terms Modernism and Post Modernism, as senses and spirits, are not a well-organized ‘isms’. They are also not related with specific theories by that we can create or judge literature. They are purely abstract concepts, which refer the whole or total effect or impression. As we have mentioned earlier, both share the same features with reverse and different moods. The nature of distinction is well summarized in Jeremy Hawthorn’s ‘Concise Glossary of Contemporary Theory’, in which he says that both ‘isms’ give great prominence to fragmentation as a feature of 20th century art and culture, but they do so in very different moods. The modernist features it in such a way as to register a deep nostalgia for an earlier age. By contrast, for the Post Modernism, it is an exhilarating. In other words, the modernism laments fragmentation while the Postmodernism celebrates it. A second related difference between the two is also a matter of tone and attitude. An important aspect of modernism was a fierce asceticism, which can be seen in such a

proclamations ‘decoration is crime’ ‘less is more’. The same is also seen in Post modernism in the more refined’ ‘Minimalism’ ‘Maximalism’, ‘in more excess’, ‘in gaudiness’ and ‘bad taste’ mixtures of qualities. Hence, Modernism and Post Modernism should be taken as a senses rather than well organized movement or literary theories. They are the unspecific processes of taking the objects or idea with internal attitude, not in the frame of external. Where as modernism is a sense mostly concerned to create new literature and post modernism as a sense to interpret that new literature.

Form this, we can say that Modernism and Post Modernism as the abstract ways of thinking, perceiving and conceiving the external have brought a kind of ideological turmoil in the realm of the 20th century literature. These ways conceiving, perceiving, thinking, understanding and taking have given birth to various concepts and approaches to literary study and literary criticism. It is also noted that everything is done at the cost of loss-losing the traditional aesthetic and emotional approaches. Nevertheless, these save literature from the speed of time, and placed the literary study at the side of other branches or disciplines of learning.

Brief History-

The above discussion poses a difficulty to bring clear-cut line of distinction between modernism and Postmodernism as both are vague terms without specific nature or deliberate attempt on the part of some central figures. Some critics refer the beginning of Postmodernism in the year 1922, or other takes it as a continuation of the modernism. But, in spite of these diverse considerations, we can say that Post Modernism can be explained, not defined. Its very nature denies any well-organized definitions

The term 'Post Modernism' was first used by Arnold Toynbee, a well-known historian in 1939 in his book 'A study of History' to refer the historical period and its tendencies. Before Toynbee, the term was handled by Frederico de Onis and Dudley Fitts to refer a minor reaction to modernism which was going in every sectors of life. It was in the 1950s and 60s the term began to gather momentum particularly in absurd presentation by the absurd theatre of Samuel Beckett, Ionesco and by the anti humanistic poetry of Charles Olson. By the mid of 1970s. Postmodernism had become 'buzz-word', catch all terms to define art that was neither realistic nor modernist. It would be taken as manifestation of the counter culture, a form of anti-art reflecting Post war change in the structure of feeling which was anti-elitist, anti-establishment and anti-aesthetic. Some commentators apply the term since the early 1980s to the ensemble of cultural features characteristic of western societies in the aftermath of artistic Post Modernism. It is the view that Post modernity asserts itself from about 1956 with the exhaustion of the high Modernist Projects, reflected in the work of Samuel Beckett and others, and the huge cultural impact of television, electronic media, film and popular music (pop and rag). But the very historical period is destroyed by the statement made by Umberto Eco while commenting on his best selling mystery novel, ' The Nature of the Rose' which argues that Postmodernism can not be (confined) defined chronologically but it should be rather seen as a mode of representation present in every epoch.

Spirit of Postmodernism:-It is very difficult to define the term 'Postmodernism' in a single line proposition or to get the clear depth of the term. Any attempt, as mentioned earlier, to define the term goes against its basic nature. It is (should be taken) a way of looking, perceiving, taking and reflecting rather than literariness having

basic tenets or principles. Of Course, broadly, it refers historical period associated with specific state of mind and specific series for social and cultural tendencies. The period after the Second World War and its mentality is generally taken as an historical existence of Postmodernism. The specific tendencies or mentalities of the age were resulted from the hallucination and destruction of the recent wars, the birth of atom and hydrogen bombs, the clash of communism with capitalism, Nazi's totalitarianism and mass extermination, new Philosophy and Scientific discoveries and inventions. The very mentality of the age was influenced by the existentialism and nihilism of Albert Camus, Paul Jean Sartre and Alfred Jarry, the pessimistic attitudes to life and world by seminal figures like Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1804, Fredric Nietzsche (1844-1900) Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), George Fredric Hegel (1770-1831); the psycho-analytical ideas of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), language doubt of Ferdinand de Saussure, the deconstruction theory of Jacques Derrida (1857-1913), the communalism of Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820-1895), Charles Darwin's (1809-1882) theory of evolution, Albert Einstein's 'theory of relativity' quantum physics, Stephen Hawking, rejection of absolute ; and under the influence taken diverse paths.

The term post modernism has been applied to much contemporary writing, particularly with reference to the use of experimental forms. The fundamental philosophical assumptions of modernism, its tendency towards historical discontinuity, alienation, a social individualism, solipsism and existentialism continue to permeate in writing, perhaps, in heightened sense. To take broadly, it generally refers to the cultural and literary phenomenon which is chiefly characterized by diversity of interests and which acts as a potent force against modernism. Before going to

discuss literary phenomenon that acts as a potent force against modernism, I would like to bring some diversity of interests. As a controversial term (as we have seen earlier) it refers many things mostly contrary or paradoxical. It is taken as a dramatic break from modernism and at the other side as a continuation. It promotes many 'isms. It is abstract set of principles which destroy and the set principles. It advocates the dissolution of the grand narratives being a grand narrative of the end of grand narrative. It is loss of real in search of real. It denies any critical philosophical standard having its radical critique or philosophy. In our word, we can take it as a riddle to solve the riddle.

The very diversity (mentioned earlier) acts as a potent force against modernism. In this sense, Susan Sontag comment's Postmodernism is a refusal and rejection of the Modernist model of hidden depths beneath the surface. Thus, where as modernist art demanded interpretation, Post Modernism refuted (ironically) the very possibility of interpretation. Another commentator, Leslie Fielder, commented " Post modernism could be seen as a raptual break with Modernism, a way in which modernism's hierarchies of a aesthetic value could be broken down to create a new mongrelized literary form which would collapse any valuing system dependent upon distinction between art and pop, William Spanos argues that Postmodernisms exposed and explored uncertainties in nature of things (ontology) to create dialogue between man and history, a dialogue that is silenced by modernism. In spite of the diversity with Modernism, it is in very line to modernism as a nature of its existence.

Postmodernism is a world-view, which presents a vision and way of life. It takes everything in against to create confusion in the accepted norms of life. In this relation, Ihan Hassan quote' "Postmodernism" is an impulse to decentre, to create ontological and

epistemological doubts as we accepted and becomes intimate with chaos". While asserting these uncertainties, it offers critique of ideas regarding order, unity and acceptability in culture, art and life. It seeks to undermine the 'single vision' the reduction of the world to a unitary meaning, the notion that human beings are separate entities, each surrounded by an inviolable are of individuality within which reside our individual right, our individual Psyche and individual personality. Under the belief, it rejects all convictions and takes life and literature having relative existence. Not only the individual but also scientific and universal realities are rejected by the sense. It is also largely a reaction to the assumed certainty of scientific or objective effects to explain. It destroys the very assumption-based reality of life. It believes that reality is not simply mirrored in human understanding of it, but rather, is constructed as the mind tried to understand its own particular and personal reality. For this reason, Postmodernism is highly sceptical of explanations which claims to be valid for all groups, culture, traditions, races and instead focuses the relative truth of each person. In it, understanding or interpretation is everything, reality only comes into being through our interpretation of what the world means to us individually. It relies on concrete experience over abstract principles, knowing always that the outcome of one's own experience will necessarily be fallible and relative rather than universal certain. Under the various influences as mentioned earlier, it develops the spirit that there is no fixity of any kind in our life, everything is flux, and everything is virtual reality. It rejected 'absolute' or 'transcendental truth which lives out side the physical and historical existence by taking it as a part of human consciousness which is in real sense historical a physical. There is nothing which exists outside the physical and historical world. Everything located in the sphere of space

and time. It believes that even metaphysical philosophy, which seeks something after something beyond, is also located in the sphere of time and space. All assumptions, appearances and granted only inter-dependable, phantom creations. All things are relative and hence indefinable in themselves and there is no way of discovering their essences; and since their essences are not only indefinable and indescribable, but in comprehensible. No concept in itself reveals any intrinsic nature. Hence, it is impossible on our part to search or to get absolute or transcendental. The words of Jacques Derrida, a most influential figure in Postmodernistic sense, puts the very nature of Postmodernism- 'Metaphysic seeks absolute Foundations and imposes them on the world that in fact has no such foundation because it is characterized by difference and contingency. There is no absolute identity to anything. The attempt to locate such a thing is akin to trying to find the 'center' of the ocean. As soon as we have it, the watery point we designed flows away. The spirit can be summed in our words to say that it is an attempt to think against unthing to get nothing.

When one examines this spirit in context of Indian faith or Indian Philosophy, we get the impression that it was existed two thousand years ago in India in form of 'Sunyavaada' a theory of life forwarded by Nagarjuna, a Buddhist scholar of the 1st century A.D. It takes life with zero-angle having nothing to sustain.

However, when we take it under the light of Hinduism we can say that such a theories have no place in such a system. Hinduism takes absolute and believes that it exists outside time and space. It is not bound by any principle but imposes principle on the universe as said 'Brahma hi Satya Hay'. The 'Brahma' (absolute) has real existence which is self-sufficient omnipresent, omniscient omnipotent and eternal. It has no beginning;

hence, there is no question of 'ending'. The world has relative existence but it is definable in relation to 'Bramha' as a center to universe. It takes world as a kind of Leela (kind o illusion of Maya) but the omnipresence of 'Leeladar' provides concreteness to illusion. It is known as a theory of 'Akanatavaada'. Jainism theory of 'Anekantvaada' also goes in favour of the spirit of Modernism. It views reality having pluralistic existence. It also raises doubt to get fix reality with the belief that reality is ever changing complex hence any attempt to find absolute or center is futile.

To explain Postmodernism by putting it in context of Indian 'isms' we can say that Postmodern spirit is concerned to nothing to get many things or concerned to many things to get nothing. If there is nothing there must be many thing and if there are many things their must of nothing. We can say that it consists the theory of 'Sunyavaad' and 'Anekantvaad' to discard 'Akanatavaada'. It believes the existence of something depends on nothing and nothings on something. Relativity theory can be applied to physical world. In this sense, it is paradoxical. It places all principles under scrutiny to destroy them. There own principles also are not beyond question.

The overall discussion over the spirit of Postmodernism shows that it has destroyed the very source of our living. Of course, it is good to our brain but damageable to our heart, which is the very essence of our living. We can not take either point granted but can say that everything is illusion and can be transferred in to reality by absolute.

Post Modernism and Literary Study:-

The term Post Modernism has been much discussed in literary study during the period of 1980s and 90s. Jurgan Habermas, Francois Lyotard, Jean Baudrillard, Ihab Hassan,

Terry Eagleton have been considered the much studied regarding Postmodernism.

The most important incident took place in the history of Post Modernism is the influential paper 'Modernity-an Incomplete Project', delivered by the German theorist Habermas in 1980. In the paper he laments over the unfinished (which is ended at the middle) project of Modernism by taking Post Modernism as a reaction (Breakable) to it. He sets the beginning of modernity in neo-classical age (age of reason) as taking its habit of intellectualization of literary study. In that period, which is known as an age of Enlightenment, a new faith arose in power of reason. But this attitude, which is continuous up to modern age, is undermined in the Postmodern society and its literature. For him, the French Post structuralist- thinkers such as Jacques Derrida and Michael Foucault represented a specific repudiation of this kind of modernity. They attacked the very ideals of reason, principles, truth, unity etc. He concludes Postmodernism as an anti-intellectual, anti reason and anti-development. In this way, he distinguishes literature into two parts-Before Dudley Fitts Postmodernism after Postmodernism.

Another commentator on Post Modernism is Jean Francois, Lyotard whose book 'The Post Modernism condition' is the seminal work. For him, Post Modernism is heralded by a legitimize crisis in the grand or metanarrative that had provided the Framework of human understanding. He considers that such as grand narratives are unreal, untenable and repressive. He was the first to assert that the truth-claims and assumed consensus which have till now provided the firm base for human history and its grand narrative are unreal and Meta narrative is without any credibility.

Jean Baudrillard has been hailed as one of the most influential commentator on the Post modern condition whose book ' Simulations' (1981) Marks his entry into this field. His concepts of 'hyperreality' and 'imaginary reality' put much light on Postmodern scenario of literary study. He is usually associated with what is know as the loss of the real which is the view that while living age of electronic media our culture has lost the sense of reality. In the present life, the pervasive influences of images from film, Television, and advertising has led to loss of the distinction between real and imagined reality and illusion surface and depth. What we are getting in this world is kind of hyperreality or illusion of reality. His increasingly provocative and apocalyptic writings announced the reign of the simulacra (copy without original), simulation (illusion) and hyperreality (a famous notion he shared with Umberto Eco in (Travels in Hyper Reality). In his influential publication, 'Simulacra and Simulation' (1981), he explores this depthless world of unreflecting images. He asserts that signs no longer mask their 'real life' referent but replace it in a world of autonomous 'floating signifiers, and the result is that there has been ' implosion of image and reality'. This implosion leads into the simulated non-space of hyperreality which is an essence of Postmodernism spirit and sense. The real is now defined in terms of the electronic-media in which it moves. He rejected, in this sense, ontological reality. His later writing has developed the sense of 'nihilism'. He sees Postmodernity repeatedly in terms of the disappearance of meaning, of inertia, exhaustion and ending, whether of history or subjectivity. For him, everything is 'obscenely' on display, moving endlessly and transparently across a surface where there is no control or stabilizing reference or any prospect of transformation. He rejected everything as a hyperreality. He rejects

the “Gulf war” of 1991 and calls it an ‘ Media Projection’ – war without the symptoms of war. It shows Baudrillard is in favour of ‘Killing’ rather than ‘creating’, and in this sense goes against Habermas.

Ihab Hassan, a studied critic of the Postmodernism, brought real spirit of Post modernism by differentiating it from Modernism. He refers it as a free play without purpose, free change without design, anarchy without hierarchy, paratactic without hypotactic, destruction of constructed, priority of absence over presence, surface without depth, antithesis of synthesis, fragmentation without unity, anti-authorial, parody without seriousness. He defines it as an anti-formed anarchism. He asserts that Postmodernism is an impulse of negation and unmasking, a celebration of silence and otherness that was always present, though always repressed within western culture. He further has brought clear cut line between Postmodernism and Post-Structuralism by referring that Modernism is a much broader term and encompasses theories of art, literature, culture etc. It includes the many theories that date from 1950s. On the contrary Post-Structuralism is a specific approaches to literary study.

Terry Eagleton, professor of English at Oxford University, is also known as an important commentator on Postmodernism though he is, in his attitude, a marxist critic. His ‘Capitalism, Modernism and Postmodernism’ shows his Marxist attitude to see Postmodernism. He calls Postmodernism as a style of thought which is suspicious of classical notions of truth, reason, identity and objectivity of the idea of universal progress or emancipation of single framework , grand narrative or ultimate ground of explanation; and goes on to list the features of Postmodernistic art and culture which according to him are characteristically depthless, decentred, ungrounds, self-reflexive,

playful, derivative, electric and pluralistic. Fredrich Jameson argues that pastiche rather than parody is the appropriate mode of Post Modernistic culture. ‘Pastiche’, he writes, is like parody, the imitation of a peculiar mask, speech in a dead language. What is parodied Postmodern culture, with its dissolution of art into the prevailing forms of commodity production, is nothing less than the revolution art of 20th century ‘avant guard’

Postmodernism and Literary creation:-

Postmodernism has had serious impact on literary creation and literary criticism. It is often applied to the literature which came after the second war. It involves not only a continuation of the counter tradition or experiment of modernism but also divert attempt to break modernist form which had, inevitably, become in their turn conventional as well as to overthrow the elitism of modernist high art by recourse for models to mass culture in film, Television newspaper cartoon and popular music. The Postmodern literature is in Ihab Hassan’s word essentially anti- elitist anti-authoritarian etc. It contains irony, playfulness, absurdity, black humour, pastiche, parody of serious, intertextual metafiction, historiographic metafiction and hyperreality. The loss of reality, the absence of an authority, the heterogeneous perception of truth, plurality of perceptia, blurring of boundaries between illusion and reality have all contributed to what Tarry Eagleton calls, “ a strong current of anything- goes ism in literature”. Most of Postmodern creation cultivates hybridity of style, absurdity of theme and fragments of narration, parody of reality and self-reflexivity. J.A. Cudan’s ‘Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literature’ describes Postmodernism as characterized ‘a eclectic approach, aleatory writing parody and pastiche’. These attitudes changed the basic concepts or traditional creation.

The very discussion of Samuel Buckets ‘ Waiting For Godot’, ‘Endgames’, ‘Eugene Ionesco’s’, ‘The Bald Soprano’ subverts the foundation of our accepted modes of thought and experience so as to reveal the meaninglessness scrutiny is conceived to be suspended. Under the influence of Albert Comus and Paul de Sartre’s concepts of existentialism, absurdism and nihilism’ the Postmodern literature destroyed the very sense of Principles, very sense of narration and very sense of meaning of creation. Fielder and Sontage remarked Postmodernism was haunted by a sense of ending; it was an apocalyptic moment that would herald new more beginning that is democratic. Beside Samuel Bucket and Ionesco, Ronald Barthes, Thomas Pynchon, Doris Lessing, Nabokov, Faulkner William etc, are considered ‘ the Most Postmodern Writers’.

In art of literary creation, Postmodernist have used or practiced the unseen truth of literature to study it. They have seen the reality with Micro-insights. But, in the process, they have lost the basic of literature and its purpose. A simple reader of literature never takes a pain to go through such a production. Now a day it is related only to learner or scholar of literature still, the Elizabethan, Romantic and Victorian literature are studied more than the recent creation.

The theories that owe the post-modern sense have destroyed the centre or absolute. It destroys the authenticity of noble-souls of literature. In traditional study, the noble-souls as Homer, Aristotle, Virgil, and Dante had taken the place of absolute in literary study, and critics would judge literature based on law formulated by them. The Neo-classical would create and judge literature by using the rules and regulations of the classical geniuses. The Romantics would create literature by using the impressionistic attitude mostly based on emotionalism. They would take and see

everything though the glass of imagination. But modernism as well as post-modernism have affected by the various sectors of life such as scientific discoveries, cultural aspects and philosophical approaches etc. The post-modern theories study literature by using the glass of scientific discoveries of the century and taking the hybrid-cultural aspect. They are also highly affected by the philosophies of Fedrich Nietzsche, Hegel and Husserl etc. Naturally, they are concerned with the unseen parts of literature. The literary criticism has taken micro-sided insights to study literary creation. Of course, there is reflections but not the seen or familiar-reflections of unseen which directly and indirectly controls the whole. So we can take it as an exploration from external reality to internal.

The post-modern theories have brought an intellectual turmoil not only in the ways of creation but also in perception. They take everything not as a reality but as a complex reality. The post-modern theories have a sincere attempt to understand the image of complex reality, which is fluid. To study it, post-modern critics have developed and practiced various approaches such as language and text oriented approaches that include structuralism and deconstruction, author-oriented approaches such as reader response theory etc, context-oriented approaches, which includes Marxism, Feminism, Gay-criticism, New-historicism and cultural materialism, post-Colonialism, and Eco-criticism and impressionistic approach such as psycho-analytical criticism. These various approaches have helped literature to take its position or place at the side of other sciences. Critics like Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Roman Jakobson, Paul De Man, Ferdinand de Saussure, Jean Paul Sartre, Gayatri spivak, Jonathan Culler advocate for context of text and language in study of literature. Critics like Stephen Greenblat, Umberto Eco, Terry

Eagleton, Edward Said, Michel Foucault, Juliet Mitchell, Jean Baudrillard, Harold Bloom, and Geoffrey Hartman popularize the context-oriented approaches. Umberto Eco, Edward Said, Stanley Fish, and Wolfgang Iser develop reader response approach. Juliet Mitchell, Julia Kristeva, Terry Eagleton etc, uses psychoanalytical approaches. All these literary personalities have freed literature from the label of stagnation by widening its scope in to larger.

The over all discussion shows that postmodernism is a continuation of modernism.

But, it is accepted fact that both the 'isms', while widening the scope of literature, have lost to much.

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Postmodernism

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When we speak about the word 'Postmodernism', what does it indicate? If we find out its dictionary meaning, it is a late 20th century style and concept, which becomes the cause of distrust, problems and alienation in relations. Postmodernism may be a style, a post-modernistic style; something more than modernity but worst thing for our feelings, sensitivity and humanity. In other words, post-modernism is said to be skeptical of logic, coherence and ultimate usefulness in literary and critical discourse. Today post-modernism like an overarching, ubiquitous penumbra spreads over the entire intellectual world of ours. There is post-modern poetry and fiction, music and dancing, medicine and justice. There is a lot of speculation about its genesis. Ihab Hassan, for example in his pamphlet 'The Culture of post-modernism' gives his account of the origin of the term.

Whence this term? The origin remains uncertain, though we know that Frederico de Onis used the word post-modernism in his *Antologia de la poesia Espanola a his panoamerican* (1882-1932), published in Madrid in 1934, and Dudley Fitts picked it up again in his *Anthology of contemporary Latin-American poetry* of 1942. Both meant thus to indicate a minor reaction to modernism already latent within it, reverting to the early 20th century. The term also appeared in Arnold's *Tonybee's*. A study of History as early as D.C Somervell's first volume abridgement of it of 1947 for Tonybee. Post-modernism designated a new historical cycle in Western civilization, stating around in 1875, we now scarcely begin to discern. Somewhat later, during the fifties, Charles O 'son often spoke of post-modernism with more sweep than lapidary definition. Throughout the discussion it is clear that post-modernism was born with the outbreak of First World War.

Some of the advocates of post-modern literature locates its distinguishing

features in its blending of high-brow and pop art intertextuality and self reflexivity. According to Leslie Fiedler, modernist literature does not fight shy of pop or low-brow. One has only to recall how the epic of Piscater and Brecht makes use of newspaper headlines, placards and folk art forms in their dramatic production and realize the misleading nature of Fiedler's assertion.

The term 'Post-modernism' refers to the cultural and literary phenomenon which is chiefly characterized by diversity of interest and which acts as a potent force against modernist stand. It seeks to undermine the 'single vision', the reduction of the world to a unitary meaning, the notion that human beings are separate entities, each surrounded by an inviolable area of individuality, within which reside our 'individual' rights, our 'individual' psyche, our 'individual' personality. In this sense post-modernism celebrates collapse of modernism/liberal humanism and its attendant New Criticism.

The term Post-modernism is applied to the literature and art after World War II (1939-45). There were the effects of Western morale of the First World War. These effects were greatly exacerated by the experience of Nazi totalitarianism, mass extermination, the threat of total destruction by the atomic bomb, the progressive devastation of the natural involvement and the ominous fact of over population. It involves not only a continuation of the Counter traditional experiments of modernism. It also attempt to break away from modernist forms which had become in their turn conventional. Many of the works of post-modernism literature by J. L. Borges, Samuel Beckett, Vladimir Nabokov, Thomas Pynchon, Ronald Barthes and many others so blend literary genres, cultural and stylistic levels, the serious and the playful. Post-modernism in literature and art has parallels with the

movement known as post-structuralism in linguistic and literary theory.

Some eminent personalities think that the term post-modernism came into existence in the late 1950's and the early 1960's. Post-modernism introduces a mood of indeterminacy and 'a tone of self-conscious skepticism towards previous certainties in personal, intellectual and political life'. Interestingly, in doing so post-modernism betrays skepticism, sense of alienation and fascination for absurdity that characterize modernism. This overlapping has been described by one of the critics. "Post-modernist theory of art has no clear meaning among scholars and artists. In other words, there is no "Berlin Wall" existing between modernism and post-modernism".

So far as the basic framework of post-modernism is concerned, two names such as J. F. Lyotard and J. Baudrillard are linked with it. Lyotard asserted that "the truth claims and assumed consensus" which have till now provided the fix and static base for human history and its grand narratives are unreal, for there is no single objective truth, "The grand narratives are untenable and repressive. They lack credibility. They impose restrictive boundaries on as otherwise pluralist cultural formation. They delimit discourse and exclude or marginalize voice that do not suit the dominant group". While Baudrillard maintains that, today, media determines for us what is realistic and authentic. It is seen that there is a difference between the real and the imagined, the fact and the fiction, the surface and the depth, the actual and the fantastic.

Habermas laments over the unfinished project of Modernism. J. F. Lyotard rejoices in the collapse of the Grand Narrative. In his *The Post-modern Condition-A Report on Knowledge* his main theme is to desuetude of "great narratives" and "meta narratives" which once were rate a great source of reassurance to society. The radical crisis, then, is one of "legitimation" in every cognitive and social field where a multitude of languages now reign. Ihab Hassan's free translation of Lyotard runs thus.

The postmodern condition is a

stranger to disenchantment as to the blind positivity of delegitimation. Where can legitimacy reside after the dissolution of metanarratives?...The consensus obtained by discussion, as Habermas think? That criterion violates the heterogeneity of language games.... "Postmodern knowledge is not only the instrument of power. It refines our sensibilities, awakens them to differences and strengthens our capacities to bear the incommensurable.

With this Lyotard usher us into the postmodern era of "les petites histoires" or micronarratives. No matter how much liberating this introduction might be for some, it has two built-in problems. Firstly to say that no single explanation is sufficient to bring out the total complexity and mystery of human existence is nothing new. For example, the ancient Indian philosophy acknowledges so many pathways to reach the destination; it admits of the mutually contradictory ways of Shankara as well as Charvaka. This is why the Rig-veda says that as many rivers and streams following their different paths finally merge into the sea so do all paths of devotion meet in the same God. In his famous Chicago address at the Parliament of World Religions, the super-star of Indian marks Swami Vivekanand said that Hinduism not only believed in universal toleration but that all religions were true.

Post-modernism has had serious impact on literature and literary criticism. Ihab Hassan's book *Para-criticism* points out that post-modernism is essentially anti-elitist and anti-authoritarian, while Stephen Spender says that literature today is trying to revitalize itself through rebarbarization. Most of the post-modernist fictions deliberately cultivate hybridity of styles, magic realism, parody and self-reflexivity. Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* emphasize that logic, rationality and scientific thought, the major cornerstones of 'modernity' have suffered erosion. In some of the fiction the novelists want to participate in the aesthetic or philosophical problem that the writing poses. We see this in novels such as Barthes's *The End of the Road* and Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*.

Post-modernism finds a simple solution to this modernist dilemma by admitting the consumerist values as they are .Art is a commodity ,accept it ! The struggle between the aesthetic side and the material side is resolved in favor of the economic theory .So a work of art sits alongside a market item like tooth-paste or bathsoap ,the aura of aesthetic magic is thrown aside .If high modernism lodges at the top ,post-modernism culture will sneer and live at the base .It fails to distinguish between good and bad ,proclaiming 'bad is good' – neither affirmed nor denounced ,but simply accept .Above all ,it can be said that post-modernism is hostile to hermeneutics .

The element of post-modernism is seen in some of the Indian poetry .In A.K Ramanujan's poem "Highway Stripper" ,modernity and nudity is clearly visible. In some of his love poems he declares that in the modern environment of the West ,love is no more than sexuality .In his poem "Looking for a Cousin on a Swing" "love is nothing but satisfaction of sexual relationship .It is merely a love song and possesses the modernity of an Eliotean poem .In the same poem there is another reference of 'village ' which is a symbol of purity ,innocence ,love and peacefulness and stands for restlessness of post-modernism .In this poem the poet tried to analyse the contrast between the village and the town life .The villagers in this poem lives a very happy life where city life is ironically portrayed ,where Western lifestyle is sketched .The poet has given a reference of the swing .Like a swing the poet's mind seems to move between the past and the present ,between tradition and modernity .

Critics of the post-modernism point out that this is nothing but another dominant wave sweeping from the West, this time from the USA to overwhelm the 'others' the Third World countries Frederic Jameson calls it 'cultural logic of late capitalism' when it entered a new phase of critics. The great communicational networks encompassing the world have caught us as mere subjects while the so called 'popular culture' is just a celebration of the Western Consumerism and 'commodity fetishism'. It creates a cult of superficiality and emptiness. Dissolution of art and literature in popular culture is resented by many scholars

regarding it as trivializing and barbarization of art. The Black critics, especially the feminist critics feel that Post-modernism is something primarily for and by comfortable white intellectuals.

It can be said that post-modernism has released us from the 'restrictive assumptions and elitist hierarchies ' and encouraged us to take notice of several 'marginalized 'points of view and realities . This has promoted such branches in cultural studies and literature as 'sub-altern studies ' , multiculturalism, feminism, diaspora etc.

Post-modernism critics discover themes , tendencies and attitudes within literary works of 20th century and explore their implications .They challenge the distinctions between high and low culture ,and highlight texts which work as hybrid blends of the two .

Post-modernism aims to present art work as commodity ,and privileges commodity as artifact .Eagleton finds in this vision not only a reversal of the avant-gardeist revolution ,but a monstrous caricature of that revolution ,''whose utopian desire for a fusion of art and social praxis is seized ,distorted and seeringly turned back upon them as dystopian reality '' .It also seeks to dissociate art from history ,context and humanistic memory ,thus denying the past .For it past is fraught with metanarrative ,the complex and vast metaphysical reality which it with great force denies .It is thus a grisly parody of socialist utopia ,having vanished all alienation at a stroke .As Donal Kuspit writes in The Contradictory Character of Post-modernism absolutizes a bankrupt vision of the critical as parody irony .Culture is supposed to be a parody of society .This is critically unacceptable bourgeois form..."It is critically without teeth .

Post-structuralists undertake to subvert the foundations of language in order to show that its seeming meaningfulness dissipates into a play of conflicting interminancies .It is as that all forms of cultural discourse are manifestations of the ideology or of the relations and constructions of power , in contemporary society .Post-modernism lives on a 'demand and supply side 'that reflects a yuppie outlook. Money, constant displacement, virtual

reality and a some how win' attitude as a part of what has come to be termed 'social engineering marks postmodern life.

A major stage in post-modernism is Jurgen Habermas's utterance in 1980. Lyotard defined Post-modernism as incredulity towards metanarratives. He thought that the age of grand narratives was going and the age of mini narratives was beginning. These were provisional temporary. The French writer Jean Baudrillard felt that post-modernism has led to a loss of the real or reality because of the influence of film, T.V and advertising and in place of representation in literature. There exists 'stimulation' that is, counterfeiting or pretence.

Post-modernist believed that the West's claims of freedom and prosperity continue to be nothing more than empty promises and have not met the needs of humanity. They believe that truth is relative and truth is up to each individual to determine or himself. Most believe nationalism builds walls, makes enemies and destroys Mother Earth' while capitalism creates a 'have and have not' society and religion causes modern fiction and division among people. It is a philosophical movement evolved in reaction to modernism, the tendency in contemporary culture to accept only objective truth and to be inherently suspicious towards a global cultural narrative or meta-narrative.

J. Habermas is one of the eminent German theorist , who has written the paper entitled 'Modernity-an Incomplete Project' regarding Post-modernism. According to him mid-seventeenth to mid-eighteenth century is the modern period. According to him a new faith arouse in the power of reason to improve human society. Such ideas are also expressed in the philosophy of Kant in Germany, Voltaire and Diderot in France and Locke and Hume in Britain. For J. Habermas faith in reason and the possibility of progress existed in 20th century, and even survives the catalogue of disasters which make up this century's history. This project constituted a lament for a lost sense of purpose, a lost coherence, a lost system of values.

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Wings of Fire: The Indian Post-Modern Autobiographical Document

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Every text participates in one or several genres; there is no genre less text; there is always a genre and genres: yet such participation never amounts to belonging. And not because of an abundant overflowing or a free, anarchic, and unclassifiable productivity, but because of the trait of participation itself.-- Jacques Derrida.

It's big challenge to the Indian English literary scholars to evaluate the Post-modern Indian English Literature. It raises the number of questions and controversies regarding the date and nature of the genres of Indian literature. As Dr B K Das says, "That is the nomenclature; Indian English Literature has come to stay – thanks to Sahitya Academy for accepting it and publishing M.K. Naik's seminal book, *A History of Indian English Literature* in 1982. It means the literature originally written in English by India nationals including the expatriate Indian writers. The earlier nomenclatures – *Indo-Anglian Literature, Indian Writing in English, Indo-English Literature and Indian Literature in English*—were dispensed with because of their inadequacies." It means that the early period of Indian Writing in English is devoted to the Anglo Indian Literature. The Indian Post-Colonial Literature, "We can divide Indian English Literature from 1930s to the end of the 20th century into two phases: Modernist and Post-modernist, the former beginning with Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* (1938), and later beginning with Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981), and Nissim Ezekiel's *Latter-Day Psalms* (1982). In the post 1980 era Indian English Literature is marked by postmodernism and can be profitably analyzed in terms of Post-colonial so assiduously built up by Gareth Griffiths, Bill Ashcroft and Helen Tiffin basing upon Edward Said's *Orientalism and Culture and Imperialism*." It shows that, the Post-modern Indian Literature generally starts from 1980. The writers like Nissim Ezekiel, A.K. Ramanujan, Jayant

Mahapatra, Kamla Das, Shiv K. Kumar, Keki N. Daruwala, Arundhati Roy, Manjoo Kapoor, Ruskin Bond and others are considered as the contributors to the Post-modern Indian English Literature.

The Post-modern Indian English Literature owes to various genres of literature. The poetry, drama, novel, essay and non-fictional writings such as biography and autobiographies are contributions by various scholars in India.

In comparison to the different genres of Indian English Literature, the Indian English Autobiography is not developed as Indian English poetry or fiction. The Indian autobiography is neglected as Indian Drama. "That's because a good number of autobiographies are lacking in literary styles." Nonetheless, the autobiographies of M.K.Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Nirad C. Choudhary, Dom Moraes, C.D. Narsimhaih and Dr.APJ Abdul Kalam are good works among the Post-modern Indian English autobiography.

The first phase of autobiography such as the autobiographies of M.K.Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Abul Kalam Azad and others has devoted to the Indian freedom struggle.

But the autobiographies after 1980's are devoted to the self and social analysis of the Indian history and its various aspects. The autobiographies of C.D.Narsimhaiah's *N for Nobody : The autobiography of an English teacher* (1991), P.S.Sundaram's *Simple Simon*(1998), Ruskin Bond's *Scenes from a writer's life : A Memoir* (1997), R.K.Laxman's *The Tunnel of Time* (1998), P.Lal's *Lessons* (1991), Karan Singh's *Heir Apparent : An Autobiography* (1982), T.N.Kaul's *Ambassador's need not lie* (1989), K.P.S.Menon's *Thousands full moons* (1987),

P.N.Haskar's *One More Life* (1990) and Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam's *Wings of Fire* (1999) are the important documents of the post modern Indian English Literature. The present paper studies the autobiography of Dr.Kalam – *Wings of Fire* as the post modern Indian English Literature.

Dr Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam is a notable scientist an engineer of India. He is referred as 'The Missile Man' of India. He played key role in developing the first and indigenously made ballistic missile of India. Dr Kalam has major contribution to Nuclear-strike development and guides the Missile Development Program and various ISRO projects of the nation. During his presidential period, Dr Kalam became a popular president due to his active participation in the various cultural and national programs of India. He is a famous President, who has special appearance with children as well as the youths of India. Dr Kalam is the ideal and hard working Scientist-President. Dr Kalam is the first Chancellor of the Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology, Thiruvananthapuram(IIST). As a President of India, Dr Kalam was awarded the *Bharat Ratna*, India's highest civilian honor in 1997. Apart from this, he received numerous awards including *Padma Bhushan* (1981), *Padma Vibhushan* (1990). Dr Kalam is well known Aerospace Engineer, Missile Man, active President, rocket scientist, sincere academician, and religious man as well as a great aspiratory author. As a writer, he is the twentieth century philosopher-writer of India. Now days, his books are popular among youths, teacher-professors, world citizens and professional men of every field. As a philosopher writer, he writes, "Great dreams and great dreamers are always rewarded with victory. As a young citizen of India armed with technology, knowledge and love for my nation! Realize small aim a crime."

Dr Kalam is a versatile figure of the 3G India. He is known as an aspiratory writer, poet and autobiographer. Most of his books are about the future and the youth of the nation. Dr Kalam works for 18 hours a day, also write books & articles on various issues of the nation. His books such as *Scientist to*

President, Ignited Minds: Unleashing the Power Within India, India 2020: A Vision for New Millennium, India-my dream, Evincing an Empowered Nation: Technology for Societal Transformation, Guiding Souls: Dialogues on the Purpose of Life, Children ask Kalam, Indomitable Spirit, My Journey are great contributions to Indian English Literature and philosophy.

Among his writing contribution, his autobiography-*Wings of Fire: An Autobiography of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam* (1999) is well known, highly intellectual and Supra aspiratory autobiography. The autobiography is written by Dr Kalam (the 11th President of India-2002-2007) with the help of the writer Mr. Arun Tiwari. The autobuography first published in English and later on translated & published in 13 languages of India. The autobiography also translated in Chinese by Ji Ping. Arun Tiwari, the writer of the book writes in the Preface of the book, "For myself, writing this book has been like a pilgrimage. Through Dr Kalam, I was blessed with the revelation that the real joy of living can be found in only one way-in one's communion with an eternal source of hidden knowledge within oneself-which each individual is bidden to seek and find for himself or herself. Many of you may never meet Dr Kalam in person, but I hope you will enjoy his company through this book, and that he will become your spiritual friend." It shows that, the life of Dr Kalam is open for us like a book or the autobiography of Mahatma Gandhi (*My Experiments with Truth*).

The autobiography *Wings of Fire* is unfolds in eight sections. The book contains with *Preface, Acknowledgement, Introduction, Orientation, Creation, Propitiation and Contemplation*. These are the autobiographical sketches of Dr Kalam.

The section '**Orientation**' opens with the quote from the *Atharva Veda*-
*"This earth is His, to Him belong those vast and bundles skies;
 Both seas within Him rest, and yet in that small pool He lies."*

This *Shlok* from the *Athrva Veda* implies the Almighty (God, Allah, Eshoo, Buddha etc.). The section covers Dr Kalam's birth (15 Oct.

1931), childhood, school and high-school education, from middle class Tamil Muslim family of Ramnayhpuram in Rameshwaram (Tamil Nadu). He writes about his childhood and family, *“I inherited honesty and self-discipline from my father; from my mother, I inherited faith in goodness and deep kindness and so did my three brothers and sister. But it was the time I spent with Jallaluddin and Samsuddin that perhaps contributed most to the uniqueness of my childhood and made all the difference in my later life. The unschooled wisdom of Jallaluddin and Samsuddin was so intuitive and responsive to non-verbal messages, that I can unhesitatingly attribute my subsequently manifested creativity to their company in my childhood.”* Dr Kalam writes about his under-graduate education as degree course in aeronautic engineering from Madras Institute of Technology. This section ends with his moving to United States for training program at NASA. He writes about his struggling journey from small town Rameshwaram to Mega-city like Bombay (Mumbai) and New York City (USA-NASA). The ‘Orientation’ contains the aspiratory life and writings of Dr Kalam, which is the lesson to all lower-middle class students, hard working for the success. The section became the source of energy to the readers of the book.

The section ‘**Creation**’ covers seven chapters. It covers the life of Kalam from 1963 until 1980. He writes about the days from NASA and Langley Research Centre (LRC), Goddard Flight Centre (GFC) and WFFW Island in Virginia. In NASA, Kalam was influenced by the rocket scene paintings on walls of NASA. The paintings got the eyesight of Kalam, where he found the army fighting of Tipu Sultan (Indian King) with British army. He was happy to see Indian Hero on the walls of NASA and glorified with the rocketry by Indian hero. He writes about the rocketry efforts done by Dr Vikram Sarabhai and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who rejuvenated rocket in India, after the eighteenth century Tipu Sultan. The death of Dr Vikram Sarabhai (31 Dec.1971) shocked Kalam and it was huge loss of Indian science. Then meet to Prof.Satish Dhawan, the head of ISRO. He writes about Dhawan in the book, *“He could*

hold the listener enthralled because of the logical, intellectual acumen he could bring to bear on his analysis of any subject. I found him full of optimism and compassion. Although he often judged himself harshly, with no allowances or excuses, he was generous to a fault when it came to others.” Another scientist Dr Brahm Prakash played very crucial role in career of Dr Kalam, who developed leadership skills in Kalam. He writes about Dr Brahm Prakash, *“He was an intellectual giant with a frail constitution; he had a childlike innocence and I always considered him a saint among scientists.”* He concludes the section with the launching of SLV-3, the first Satellite Launch Vehicle (SLV) of India.

The ‘**Propitiation**’ covers the life span of Kalam from 1981 to 1991. The five chapters from this section depict the scientist Kalam’s journey towards becoming the ‘Missile Man of India.’ This section is important among the other sections, because he got the major achievement in his life. In this period, he successfully launched five missiles-Prithvi, Trishul, Akash, Nag and most awaited one Agni. In this way he proved his dreams to be cherished for his nation. He was jubilant among his colleagues, because India became the fifth country to achieve satellite launch capability. In the next year Dr Kalam received Padma Bhushan (1981) and appointed as the Director of DRDL. After launching five missiles, in 1984, the PM Indira Gandhi, too, took notice of his contribution to the new missile development of India. In 1990, Dr Kalam was honored with Padma Vibhushan.

The fourth section ‘**Contemplation**’, describes the devotion of Dr Kalam to the nation. He writes about the launch of Agni, the Pride of India. It was the great achievement of Dr Kalam, who successfully launched rockets for the nation. In 1997, he was honored with Bharat Ratna -the pick honor of India, for the appreciation and the excellent efforts of the scientist. Dr Kalam is the name, which enriched the annals of Indian science in the World. The great scientist, Missile Man of India concludes the book with the words, *“I will not be presumptuous enough to say that my life can be a role model for anybody; but*

some poor child living in an obscure place, in an underprivileged social setting may find a little solace in the way my destiny has been shaped. It could perhaps help such children liberate themselves from the bondage of their illusory backwardness and hopelessness. Irrespective of where they are right now, they should be aware that God is with them and when He is with them, who can be against them?...Let the latent fire in the heart of every Indian acquire wings, and the glory of this great country light up the sky."

The autobiography '*Wings of Fire*' is firing the next generation of India as well as the world. The every word and quotation from the book aspire the reader. In the last section he writes, "We are all born with a divine fire in us. Our efforts should be to give wings to this fire and fill the world with glow of its goodness." The book is full with the powerful, energetic quotations about courage, beauty of human life, achievement, struggle and shaping the future of India. In the end Dr Kalam writes, "At the end I would just say that I strongly recommend this book for every son of India- JAI HIND AND VANDE MATRAM!"

Aspiratory Quotes from '*Wings of Fire*':

01. "I wonder why some people tend to see science as something which takes man away from God. As I look at it, the path of science can always wind through the heart. For me, science has always been the path to spiritual enrichment and self-realization."
02. "Total commitment is the common denominator among all successful men and women. Are you able to manage the stresses you encounter in your life? The difference between an energetic and a confused person is the difference in the way their minds handle their experiences. Man needs his difficulties because they are necessary to enjoy success. All of us carry some sort of super-intelligence within us. Let it be stimulated to enable us examine our deepest thoughts, desires, and beliefs."

03. "Life is a difficult game. You can win it only by retaining your birthright to be a person. And to retain this right, you will have to be willing to take the social or external risks involved in ignoring pressures to do things the way others say they should be done."
04. "When you pray, you transcend your body and become a part of the cosmos, which knows no division of wealth, age, caste, or creed"
05. "To succeed in life and achieve results, you must understand and master three mighty forces – desire, belief, and expectation."
06. "We are all born with a divine fire in us. Our efforts should be to give wings to this fire and fill the world with the glow of its goodness."
07. "Conscience is a great ledger where our offences are booked and registered."

Postmodernism

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Introduction: -

The term "Postmodernism" is often applied to the Literature and Art after World War II (1939-45), when the effects on Western Morale of the World War I were greatly exacerbated by the experiences of Nazi Totalitarianism and Mass extermination, the threat of total destruction by the Atomic bomb, the progressive devastation of the natural environment and the ominous, sometimes carried to an extreme, of the counter traditional experiments of Modernism but also diverse attempts to break away from Modernist forms which had, inevitably become in their turn conventional, as well as to overthrow the Elitism of Modernist 'High Art' by recourse to the models of 'Mass-culture' in Film, Television, Newspaper, Cartoons and Popular music.

Postmodernism: -

The term 'Postmodernism' was probably first used by Arnold Toynbee, the well-known historian of the 20th century in his 'Study of History' (Vol- I), he says, postmodernism begins to take shape between the two World Wars (1918-39). The term postmodernism refers to two things at the same time; a historical period and a name for a state of mind, series of social and cultural tendencies. In the postmodern understanding, interpretation is everything; reality only comes into being through our interpretations of what the world means to us individually. Postmodernism relies on concrete experience over abstract principles, knowing always that the outcome of one's own experience will necessarily be fallible and relative, rather than certain and universal. J.A. Cudden describes postmodernism as characterized by 'an eclectic approach, aleatory writing, parody and pastiche'. The eclectic suggests the use of the fragmented forms, which are characteristic of modernism. Aleatory forms means those which incorporate an element of

randomness or chance which were important to Dadaism of 1917. The use of parody and pastiche, finally is clearly related to the abandonment of the divine pretensions of authorship, which is again vital element in modernism.

Postmodernism is "post" because it denies the existence of any ultimate principles and it lacks the optimism of there being a scientific, philosophical or religious truth which will explain everything for everybody - a characteristic of the so-called "modern" mind. The paradox of the postmodern position is that, in placing all principles under the scrutiny of its skepticism, it must realize that even its own principles are not beyond questioning. As the philosopher Richard Tarnas states, postmodernism "cannot on its own principles ultimately justify itself any more than can the various metaphysical overviews against which the postmodern mind has defined itself."

Postmodern Critics: -

Many of the works of postmodern literature by Jorge Luis Borges, Samuel Beckett Vladimir Nabokov, Thomas Pynchon, Roland Barthes and many others blend literary genre Culture and Stylistic levels, the serious and the playful, that they resist classification according to traditional literary rubrics. And these literary anomalies are paralleled in other arts by phenomena like Pop art, Op art the Musical composition of John Cage and the Films of Jean LucGodart and other directors.

Borges lived through most of the 20th century, and was rooted in the Modernism predominant in its early years. He was especially influenced by Symbolism. Like contemporary novelists Vladimir Nabokov and the older James Joyce, he combined an interest in his native culture with broader perspectives. He also

shared their multilingualism and their inventiveness with language. However, while Nabokov and Joyce tended toward progressively larger works as they grew older, Borges remained a miniaturist. Borges's work progressed *away* from what he referred to as "the baroque", while Joyce's and Nabokov's moved towards it: his later style is far more transparent and naturalistic than his earlier works. Borges represented the humanist view of media that stressed the social aspect of art driven by emotion. If art represented the tool, then Borges was more interested in how the tool could be used to relate to people.

Beckett is widely regarded as among the most influential writers of the 20th century. Strongly influenced by James Joyce, he is considered one of the last modernists. As an inspiration to many later writers, he is also sometimes considered one of the first postmodernists. He is one of the key writers in what Martin Esslin called the "Theatre of the Absurd". His work became increasingly minimalist in his later career.

Pynchon has revealed himself in his fiction and non-fiction as an aficionado of popular music. Song lyrics and mock musical numbers appear in each of his novels. Along with its emphasis on sociopolitical themes such as racism and imperialism, its awareness and appropriation of many elements of traditional high culture and literary form, Pynchon's work explores philosophical, theological, and sociological ideas exhaustively, though in quirky and approachable ways. His writings demonstrate a strong affinity with the practitioners and artifacts of low culture, including comic books and cartoons, pulp fiction, popular films, television programs, cookery, urban myths, conspiracy theories, and folk art. This blurring of the conventional boundary between "High" and "low" culture, sometimes interpreted as a "deconstruction", is seen as one of the defining characteristics of postmodernism (Mead 1989; Krafft 2008).

An undertaking in some Postmodernist writing in Samuel Beckett and other authors of the literature of the Absurd is subvert the

foundations of our accepted modes of thought and experience so as to reveal the meaninglessness of existence and the underlying 'Abyss' or 'Void' or 'Nothingness' on which any supposed security is conceived to be precariously suspended. Postmodernism in Literature and Art has paralleled with the movements known as Post-structuralism in Linguistic and Literary theory.

Modernism and Postmodernism: -

The term Modernism is widely used to identify new and distinctive features in the subjects, forms, concepts and styles of literature and other arts of the early decades of the present century. Important intellectual precursors of Modernism are the thinkers who had questioned the traditional modes of social organization, religion, morality and also traditional ways of conceiving the human self thinkers like Sigmund Freud, Karl Marks, Freidrich Nietzsche, Charles Darwin, James Frazer etc.

Postmodernism is a philosophical movement away from the viewpoint of Modernism. More specifically it is a tendency in contemporary culture characterized by the problem of objective truth and inherent suspicion towards global cultural narrative or meta-narrative. It involves the belief that many, if not all, apparent realities are only social constructs, as they are subject to change inherent to time and place. It emphasizes the role of language, power relations, and motivations; in particular it attacks the use of sharp classifications such as male versus female, straight versus gay, white versus black, and imperial versus colonial. Rather, it holds realities to be plural and relative, and dependent on who the interested parties are and what their interests consist of. It attempts to problematise modernist overconfidence, by drawing into sharp contrast the difference between how confident speakers are of their positions versus how confident they need to be to serve their supposed purposes. Postmodernism has influenced many cultural fields, including religion, literary criticism, sociology, linguistics, architecture, anthropology, visual arts, and music.

Postmodernist thought is an intentional departure from modernist approaches that had previously been dominant. The term "postmodernism" comes from its critique of the "modernist" scientific mentality of objectivity and progress associated with the Enlightenment.

These movements, modernism and postmodernism are understood as cultural projects or as a set of perspectives. "Postmodernism" is used in critical theory to refer to a point of departure for works of literature, drama, architecture, cinema, journalism, and design, as well as in marketing and business and in the interpretation of law, culture, and religion in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Indeed, postmodernism, particularly as an academic movement, can be understood as a reaction to modernism in the Humanities. Whereas modernism was primarily concerned with principles such as identity, unity, authority, and certainty, postmodernism is often associated with difference, plurality, textuality, and skepticism.

Literary critic Fredric Jameson describes postmodernism as the "dominant cultural logic of late capitalism." "Late capitalism" refers to the phase of capitalism after World War II, as described by the Marxist theorist Ernest Mandel; the term refers to the same period sometimes described by "globalization", "multinational capitalism", or "consumer capitalism". Jameson's work studies the postmodern in contexts of aesthetics, politics, philosophy, and economics.

The term was then applied to a whole host of movements, many in art, music, and literature, that reacted against a range of tendencies in the imperialist phase of capitalism called "modernism," and are typically marked by revival of historical elements and techniques. Walter Truett Anderson identifies Postmodernism as one of four typological world views. These four worldviews are the

Postmodern-ironist, which sees truth as socially constructed; the scientific-rational, in which truth is found through methodical, disciplined inquiry; the social-traditional, in which truth is found in the heritage of American and Western civilization; and the neo-romantic, in which truth is found through attaining harmony with nature and/or spiritual exploration of the inner self.

Literary Postmodernism: -

Literary postmodernism was officially inaugurated in the United States with the first issue of *Boundary 2*, subtitled "Journal of Postmodern Literature and Culture", which appeared in 1972. David Antin, Charles Olson, John Cage, and the Black Mountain College school of poetry and the arts were integral figures in the intellectual and artistic exposition of postmodernism at the time. *Boundary 2* remains an influential journal in postmodernist circles today.

Although Jorge Luis Borges and Samuel Beckett are sometimes seen as important influences, novelists who are commonly counted to postmodern literature include Vladimir Nabokov, William Gaddis, John Hawkes, William Burroughs, Giannina Braschi, Kurt Vonnegut, John Barth, Donald Barthelme, E.L. Doctorow, Jerzy Kosinski, Don DeLillo, Thomas Pynchon, Ishmael Reed, Kathy Acker, Ana Lydia Vega, and Paul Auster.

In 1971, the Arab-American scholar Ihab Hassan published *The Dismemberment of Orpheus: Toward a Postmodern Literature*, an early work of literary criticism from a postmodern perspective, in which the author traces the development of what he calls "literature of silence" through Marquis de Sade, Franz Kafka, Ernest Hemingway, Beckett, and many others, including developments such as the Theatre of the Absurd and the *nouveau roman*. In 'Postmodernist Fiction' (1987), Brian McHale details the shift from modernism to postmodernism, arguing that the former is characterized by an epistemological dominant,

and that postmodern works have developed out of modernism and are primarily concerned with questions of ontology. In *Constructing Postmodernism* (1992), McHale's second book, he provides readings of postmodern fiction and of some of the contemporary writers who go under the label of cyberpunk. McHale's "What Was Postmodernism?" (2007) , follows Raymond Federman's lead in now using the past tense when discussing postmodernism.

Conclusion: -

Postmodernism is a general and wide-ranging term which is applied to literature, art, philosophy, architecture, fiction, cultural and literary criticism. Postmodernism is largely a reaction to the assumed certainty of scientific or objective efforts to explain reality. In essence, it stems from a recognition that reality is not simply mirrored in human understanding of it, but rather, is constructed as the mind tries to understand its own particular and personal reality. For this reason, postmodernism is highly skeptical of explanations which claim to be valid for all groups, cultures, traditions, or races, and instead focuses on the relative truths of each person. In the postmodern understanding, interpretation is everything; reality only comes into being through our interpretations of what the world means to us individually.

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