

1 POSTMODERNISM AND ARTS

Postmodernism is a complex term that started to be used more systematically in the 1970s and that refers to socio-historical condition, arts and the vision of the world. Some critics use the term **postmodernity** to refer to this socio-historical condition and the change in people's perception of the world influenced by a rapid growth of media (television, video, personal computers, internet), popular culture (popular literary genres such as thrillers, sci-fiction, pornography, horror stories and others, popular music and TV soap operas and others), information and communication technologies, consumerism, globalization, and post-industrial service economy. They understand the term **postmodernism** as the term expressing the practice of different kinds of arts reflecting this socio-historical condition and nature of postmodernity. With a considerable degree of simplification and reduction, postmodernism may be understood as the arts and theories that reflect and represent the condition of postmodernity (Fokkema 1998: 14). The term **postmodernism** started to be used in different periods and contexts with different meaning. For the first time, it started to be used in 1870 when the English salon painter Chapman and his friends wanted to launch a postmodern painting which was meant as the reaction to and a progressive, not reactionary critique of contemporary French Impressionism. In this period, the term was not used further systematically. One of the first who used the term postmodernism was a sociologist and historian **Rudolf Panwitz** who, in his work *Die Krisis der Europaischen Kultur* (The Crisis of the European Culture) published in 1917, tried to define "a postmodern man" that was, in his view, a self-conscious, militarily trained, religiously committed and nationally aware man hovering between barbarian and the decadent (Hubík 1991: 4). This man, in Panwitz's understanding, was supposed to overcome the crisis of the modern. This understanding of the term was a kind of neological version of the Friedrich Nietzsche's "Übermensch", an Over-Man who was supposed to overcome the crisis of the modern (Welsch, in Sandbothe 77). Also this use of the term was not used further systematically. In 1934, **Frederico de Onis** published his anthology *Antología de la poesía española e hispanoamericana* in which he used the term postmodernism to refer to a new tendency in Latin American Hispanic literature at the beginning of the 20th century. In his periodization of the phases of Spanish and Hispanic American poetry, he calls one of the phases in the development of this poetry

“postmodernismo” (1905-1914) which followed, in his view, after “modernismo” (1896-1905) and was followed by “ultramodernismo” (1914-1932). This term was referring to a kind of literature which was understood as a reaction to modernist literature, but the term was still not used to express the meaning it expresses at present.

American poet **Randall Jarrett** used the term “postmodern” in his review of American poet, Robert Lowell’s *Lord Weary’s Castle* in 1946 in which he understood Lowell to represent new movement in poetry (Bertens 12). Later, **Charles Olson**, a leading representative of the Black Mountain School of Poets and of a new tendency in poetry known as “Projective Verse” started as one of the first to use the term that is close to its contemporary understanding (Bertens 12).

A British historian and philosopher **Arnold Toynbee** published his *A Study of History* in 1947. In this work, he used the term post-modern to refer to the period after 1875 marked by a transition from nation-state to global relationships thinking and by a crisis. In this work, he predicted the end of the dominance of Western Judeo-Christian culture and anticipated a syncretization and mixing of different cultures, values and meanings that he understood as postmodern (Hubík 1991: 5). Thus he foresaw one of the most important aspects of the newly forming postmodern societies— their cultural hybridity, multiculturalism, but also globalization. A term postmodernism started to be more systematically used in architecture to refer to a new architectural design and style. In 1949 a British architect **Joseph Hudnut** published his work *The Post-Modern House*, and, later other architects **N. Pevsner** and Robert **Venturi** popularized the term with their debate on a nature of new architecture and such works as *Architecture in Our Time*.

The term postmodernism started to be used to refer to both socio-cultural changes and new artistic practice more systematically in the 1960’s. Shortly before, however, in his study *Mass Society and Post-modern Fiction*, **Irving Howe** characterized both a new mass society and a new kind of literature reflecting its nature that he called postmodern. Although his social and cultural observations on the changing nature of a new society are valuable, new American authors he understood as postmodern (Bernard Malamud, Norman Mailer, and Saul Bellow) were rather modernist authors and the works Howe mentions could hardly be understood as postmodern if understood from the contemporary perspective of the understanding of the term. In this article, Howe wanted to suggest a change in the

development of the American novel reflecting a new condition of the mass and urban society and alienated existentialist individual living in it. The term thus started to be used more systematically from this period, although still not as clearly and as a unified concept. In his treatment of a new period in literature, in his article **Harry Levin** asked the question *What Was Modernism?* (1960). Harry Levin and H. Kramer understood postmodernism as associated with the protest literature of the Beat Generation and J. D. Salinger (although his work can hardly be understood as postmodernist now). At the same time, these authors emphasized the idea of nihilism as a significant feature of both this period and these authors. They rejected traditional linearity in the narrative, modernist aesthetics and expressed an interest in intercultural communication with other cultures represented by different races and ethnic groups (Hubík 1991: 6). In his article *The New Mutants* in 1965, **Leslie Fiedler** started to discuss a vitality of popular literature and culture and its importance for the contemporary period. In his article *Cross the Border—Close That Gap* published in 1969, Leslie Fiedler was already openly speaking about post-modern literature by which he meant a new literature different from the works of modernist such as T. S. Eliot, Paul Valery, Marcel Proust, but also Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner. This literature, in his view, reflected a new condition and the growing importance of popular literary genres of which the western, pornography and sci-fiction he found the most valuable. Fiedler understood modernist authors such as T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, Marcel Proust, Thomas Mann and others as too difficult, academic, overcome and unsuitable for a new period. He, on the other hand, emphasized the vitality of popular culture and media along with the work of the French author Boris Vian and others. The new works such as, in his view, John Barth's *The Sotweed Factor*, Ken Kesey's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Leonard Cohen's *Beautiful Losers* and others would thus represent a spirit of a new society marked by the use of advanced technology, media and popular culture. This literature should also "Cross the Border and Close That Gap" between formerly high and low art, between serious and popular literature, and between critic and a reader. In the 1960's, the term was also used by such prominent authors and critics as **John Barth** in his essay *Literature of Exhaustion* and Susan Sontag in several of her works. Several critics suggest, however, that the term started to be used more systematically in architecture. In architecture, however, the term started to be used more systematically in 1975, especially with the work of Robert Stern and Charles Jencks. In his work *What is Post-Modernism?*, Charles Jencks defines postmodernism in the following way:

Post-Modernism is fundamentally the eclectic mixture of any tradition with that of the immediate past; it is both the continuation of Modernism and its transcendence. Its best works are characteristically doubly-coded and ironic, making a feature of the wide choice, conflict and discontinuity of traditions, because the heterogeneity most clearly captures our pluralism (Jencks 1989:7).

What Jencks thus emphasizes is a plurality and diversity of styles, eclecticism, irony and double-coding meant as the use of old styles in a new context. He considers these features to be typical features of postmodern architecture, but also of postmodernism. His definition is thus close to Leslie Fiedler's understanding of postmodernism.

But the term postmodernism started to be used more systematically as a literary concept in the work of **Ihab Hassan**, especially in his work *POSTmodernISM: A Paracritical Bibliography* (1971) in which he tried to define the features of postmodern literature and its difference from modernist literature. A new literary journal **Boundary 2** subtitled *The Journal of Postmodern literature* which started to be published in the USA in 1972 has significantly contributed to further systematization of the term.

The term postmodernism was treated as a **philosophical concept** especially by a French philosopher **François Lyotard** in his work *The Postmodern Condition* (1979) in which he tried to theorize the nature of science and knowledge and their legitimacy in the period of modernism and postmodernism. **Deconstructionist philosophy** represented by another French philosopher, **Jacques Derrida**, is understood as **postmodern version of philosophy** which started to spread in the USA with the translation of his works in English in the 1970's. **The Yale School** of literary theorists represented by Joseph Hillis Miller, Harold Bloom, Paul de Man and others is often understood as a School applying deconstructionist philosophy in their analysis of literary works and their method is often referred to as **deconstructionist criticism**. Deconstructive criticism holds that that there is **no transcendental meaning** beyond any text since the interpretation of texts depends on each reader and context, and that there is no "center," that is any stable and reliable basis from which meaning should derived, any stable linguistic structure with transcendental meaning (Derrida).

Concerning philosophy but also other sciences, a difference between modernism and postmodernism as well as a nature of new culture and period started to be discussed in such journals as *New German Critique* and *Praxis International*, especially by leading

philosophers of the period, **Jürgen Habermas** and **François Lyotard**, later especially by **Michel Foucault**, **Jean Baudrillard** and **Richard Rorty**. **Michael Foucault**, for example, speaks about “a death of the subject” and understands an interpretation of reality/literary works as a means of executing of interpreter’s power. This manifests especially itself in his works such as *The Order of Things* (1966), *The Archeology of Knowledge* (1969), *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975), and *The History of Sexuality* (1984).

Richard Rorty does not understand truth as thinking or the reflection of nature (Grenz 1991: 16). In his view, it is difficult to achieve truth, there can be only interpretation. Rorty speaks about it in his *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (1979).

Other aspects of postmodern period, as some critics understood the period starting approximately in the 1960’s, and their manifestation especially in science (F. Ferré, S. Toulmin), theology (H. Cox, H. Küng- Hubík 1991:8), economy, sociology and arts (Daniel Bell, Frederic Jameson, David Harvey) were discussed intensively since the 1980’s.

As can be seen from the above, the development of the term postmodernism also shows the formation of the concept of postmodernity and postmodernism in various fields of artistic and sociological spheres. It seems it is difficult to find many critics who would agree on the exact definition and beginning of the period of postmodernity and its manifestation in arts. The concept of postmodernism, however, rejects unifying definitions and unitary vision of the world. Some critics, however, have tried to trace its beginnings. For example, **Charles Jencks** who is understood to be one of the most significant representative of postmodernism in architecture and architectural thinking, postmodernism started exactly on **July 15th, 1972 at 3:32 p.m. in St. Louis, Missouri, USA**, when a residential quarter Pruitt-Igoe in St. Louis, a typical symbol of modernism, was blown up. This residential quarter was built in keeping with rationalist and pragmatic thinking of modernism and modernist architecture meant to provide a universalist and rationalist approach to reality (the architectural work should be understood as having universal meaning and the typization of residential areas meant a pragmatic approach to reality – to provide accommodation to as many people as possible to secure their welfare and good living conditions). The main purpose of the demolition of these blocks of flats was stimulated by the constant damage of these blocks by their tenants despite they had not contributed much to its creation. Since this project of securing good living conditions to

many people did not seem to work, the authorities have decided to demolish it which also meant, according to Jencks, a symbolic end of modernist architecture and the era based on universalism and rationality which was to be replaced by postmodern plurality, diversity, and the preference for the marginal, individual, and regional and the vision of the world emphasizing them. In literature, the elements of postmodernism appeared as early as in **Laurence Sterne's** novel *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1759) in the 18th century, but we can hardly consider it to be a typical postmodern work if we take it as a whole and if understood in the socio-historical context since it represents an exception in the the development of the 18th century English realistic novel. This novel, with some exceptions (Jacques Diderot's *Jacques le Fataliste*), did not have its followers until the 20th century and it did not form a more systematic movement or tendency as the works of American and other postmodernists in the 1960's. If we speak about postmodern literature and culture, perhaps it should be understood as a vision of the world (influenced by socio-historical condition of the post-World War II period and marked by a rapid growth of advanced technology, mass society, media, popular culture influencing individual's vision of the world) as manifested in arts and culture especially of the post 1950s period. Thus it would be useful to characterize a role of culture and arts which was expressed in postmodern literature and culture. According to Stanley S. Grenz,

Postmodernism refers to an intellectual mood and an array of cultural expressions that call into question the ideals, principles, and values that lay at the heart of the modern mind-set. Postmodernity, in turn, refers to an emerging epoch, the era in which we are living, the time when the postmodern outlook increasingly shapes our society. Postmodernity is the era in which postmodern ideas, attitudes, and values reign—when postmodernism molds culture. It is the era of postmodern society (Grenz 1996:12).

As can be seen from Grenz's definition, he distinguishes between postmodernity and postmodernism. He understands the former as a new epoch different from modernist period and the latter as the expression of the sensibility of the postmodernity in culture including literary and artistic works. As early as in the late 1950's, a cultural and literary critic **Irving Howe** characterized an emergence of the mass society in his important essay *Mass Society and Post-Modern Fiction*. What he means by a mass society is

... a relatively comfortable, half welfare and half garrison society in which the population grows passive, indifferent and atomized; in which traditional loyalties, ties, and associations become lax or dissolve entirely; in which coherent publics based on definite interests and opinions gradually fall apart;

and in which man becomes a consumer, himself mass-produced like the products, diversions, and values he absorbs (Howe 1969: 130).

As can be seen from the above, according to Howe, **relative comfort, passivity, loss of traditional values and loyalties, a sense of fragmentation and consumerism** become the most significant aspects of the new society. It is a new society which a sociologist **Daniel Bell** characterized as a **post-industrial society** (Bell) in which he understands not only as a society typical of industrial production but rather of **service economy**. In Stanley Grenz's view,

Many historians label the modern era 'the industrial age,' because the period was dominated by manufacturing. Focusing as it did on the production of goods, modernity produced the industrial society, the symbol of which was the factory. The postmodern era, in contrast, focuses on the production of information. We are witnessing a transition from an industrial society to an information society, the symbol of which is the computer (Grenz 1996: 17).

As suggested by Grenz, in addition to consumerism, fragmentation, comfort, and passivity as suggested by Howe, a new society uses the possibilities of new and advanced technologies and, in difference from modernist period, now the information generated by these advanced technologies and media becomes one of the most important products of it. Some critics thus speak about the **information age**, or **the computer age**, **post-industrial society** (sociologist Daniel Bell) or the **information society**. **Frederic Jameson**, an American critic, characterizes a new society and a type of social life as "*postindustrial or consumer society, the society of the media...or multinational capitalism*" (Jameson 1983:112-113). In difference from industrial society typical of the modernist period and heavy machinery and industrial production, post-industrial society is understood as a society in which information dominates and becomes a commercial product. In this society, heavy industrial production is reduced and is replaced by information, commercialism, and service economy. The character of a new society marked by the above features causes a change in the people's perception of the world, behavior, relationships and in the sensibility and many artists try to use the forms, materials, and methods of writing that would express this changing perception of the world. In her "Notes on Camp", **Susan Sontag**, an important American art critic and author, wrote about a new sensibility and "camp" aesthetics arguing that

Camp is a certain mode of aestheticism. It is one way of seeing the world as an aesthetic phenomenon. That is way, the way of Camp, is not in terms of beauty but in terms of the degree of artifice, of stylization...Camp sensibility is disengaged, depoliticized—or at least apolitical." (Sontag 106).

Sontag further emphasizes the importance of pleasure and enjoyment rendered especially through mediation of sexuality and popular artistic forms as well as the emphasis on form rather than on content. In this respect, she also speaks about the kitsch which reflects the artificiality of a new sensibility and which many artists use and parody. She also connects a new sensibility with the speed and different perception of reality stimulated by speed in life, film and popular culture.

In his famous essay *Cross the Border—Close That Gap*, an American critic **Leslie Fiedler** characterizes a new society and its sensibility in the following way:

We have...entered quite another time, apocalyptic, antirational, blatantly romantic and sentimental; an age dedicated to joyous misogyny and prophetic irresponsibility; one, at any rate, distrustful of self-protective irony and too great self-awareness (Fiedler 271 – 272).

This new sensibility, in Fiedler's view, thus requires the modes of writing which would be closer to this new sensibility, which are, in his view, the genres of popular literature such as the western (romantic nostalgia), science-fiction (technology, apocalypse), and pornography (enjoyment). And, last but not least, François Lyotard, a French philosopher, exhaustingly characterizes the basic features of contemporary postmodern society and its sensibility. In his view,

Eclecticism is the degree zero of contemporary general culture: one listens to reggae, watches a western, eats McDonald's food for lunch and local cuisine for dinner, wear Paris perfume in Tokyo and 'retro' clothes in Hong Kong; knowledge is a matter of TV games. It is easy to find a public for eclectic works. By becoming kitsch, art panders to the confusion which reigns in the 'taste' of the patrons. Artists, gallery owners, critics and public wallow together in the 'anything goes,' and the epoch is one of slackening. But this realism of 'anything goes' is in fact that of money; in the absence of aesthetic criteria, it remains possible and useful to assess the value of works of art according to profits they yield. Such realism accommodates all tendencies... (Lyotard 1983 : 334 – 335, in *Approaching* 33).

As can be seen from the above, Lyotard identifies not only the forms of **contemporary popular culture** (music, film, fashion), but also its mediation through **media** that results in **globalization**. This globalization is closely connected with consumerism since various forms of popular culture, but also arts are globalized with the aim to gain a profit by company and media owners. In this context then, the aesthetic criteria are influenced by commercial and profit criteria and are adapted to the tastes of the broad masses of people. In

Lyotard's view, one of the products of this process is **eclecticism**, i.e. a random mixture of different elements creating unorganized whole. What most significantly contributes to globalization and consumerism are the media (television, newspapers, radio) and advanced media and communication technologies such as computers, DVDs, internet, cell phones and others. In addition, Lyotard has expressed a skeptical view on "grand narratives", that is large projects and theories such as Marxism, communism, capitalism, and realism (in literature, for example). Instead, he emphasized what is specific, local, and marginal. It has to do with his philosophical attitudes, namely and especially a distrust in reason providing seemingly objective picture of reality generalized by unifying theories. In his view, unified vision of the world reduces what is specific, local and marginal and thus it cannot provide the objective picture of reality. From this stems Lyotard's emphasis on the "**little narratives**", that is a vision of the world given from the perspective of the marginalized ethnic, social or cultural groups. In literature, Realism is considered to be one of the examples of grand narratives since it dominated, for example, 19th century fiction and pretended to give a unifying, truthful and objective picture of the world. In literature, they would be not only marginalized ethnic and sexual voices which would represent a counterforce to the grand narratives, but also formerly suppressed "low art" and popular culture which can be understood as equally important for understanding particular cultural reality as the forms of high art. Lyotard has also borrowed a concept of "language games" from the early 20th century philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. By language games he means a creative play with words, sentences, metaphors and language put in untraditional and unexpected context and thus producing unexpected, playful meaning as can be seen, for example, in Richard Brautigan's novel *Troutfishing in America* (1967) in which the expression "troutfishing" is not only troutfishing, but it also refers to different objects and phenomena such as a hotel room, a school gang, the title of a literary work, etc.

One of the first critics who theorized the media and pointed out their globalizing effect was a Canadian critic **Marshall McLuhan** with his *Understanding Media* (1964). Media and new information and communication technologies have an immense impact on people's perception of reality and the world. The flow of information presented in media and almost an unlimited access of people to any information on internet does not only make the communication easier, but also evokes an impression that all information presented in media

is truthful and reliable. Stanley Grenz considers television to be one of the most significant means of spreading the postmodern culture. In his view,

This ability to provide the viewer with a live picture of an event leads many people to believe that television presents actual events in themselves—without interpretation, editing, or commentary. For this reason, television has quickly become the ‘real world’ of postmodern culture, and television reporting has emerged as the new test for being real. Many viewers don’t think something is really important unless it shows up on CNN, Sixty Minutes, or a made-for-TV miniseries...commercial television broadcasting presents the viewer with an ongoing variety of incompatible images. A typical evening newscast, for example, will bombard the viewer with a series of unrelated images in quick succession—a war scene in a remote country, a murder closer to home, a sound bite from a political speech, the latest on a sex scandal, a new scientific discovery, highlights from a sporting event. This collage is interspersed with advertisements for better batteries, better soap, better cereal, and better vacations. By giving all these varied images— new stories and commercials alike— roughly equal treatment, the broadcast leaves the impression that they are all of roughly equal importance (Grenz 1991 :34).

In addition, a simplified mediated version of reality as presented in **commercial programs, films, computer games, and virtual realities** seem to **replace the reality** that seems to be less convincing than real life experience and a direct contact with reality. As can be seen from the above, during postmodernism especially the notions of **objectivity, truth** and **reality** are challenged. In his philosophical and theoretical works, **Jean Baudrillard**, a French philosopher, speaks about the “**simulation**” of reality by media and he has coined the term **simulacra**. In his *The Evil Demon of Images and the Precession of Simulacra*, Jean Baudrillard distinguishes between **representation** and **simulation**. In his view, **representation** is a belief that a sign can stand for the object, or a stable entity implying a deeper meaning. On the other hand, simulation undermines this principle of representation. By **reflecting the reality, its masking and perverting**, and, finally, further **masking the absence of reality** (as in media) it becomes a pure simulacrum which bears no relation to any reality (Baudrillard 1993 :194-196 in Docherty).

In literary theory and criticism, it was Leslie Fiedler, John Barth, but later especially **Ihab Hassan, William Spanos, Alan Wilde, Andreas Huyssen, Gerald Graff, Frederic Jameson**, and later **Brian McHale, Linda Hutcheon, Hans Bertens and Deuwe Fokkema** who have theorized literary postmodernism more systematically. In his above mentioned essay *Cross the Border-Close that Gap* (196..), **Leslie Fiedler** emphasizes the energy of the

popular literary genres such as the western, the sci-fiction, and the pornography which, in his view, do not represent only a sensibility of a new period, but can help new authors to overcome a traditional distinction between the high and low arts by their creative re-writing. In his famous essay *The Literature of Exhaustion* (1969), **John Barth** points out the exhaustion of the formal possibilities of literary works and instead of a modernist call for novelty, he emphasizes the idea of creative play with existing, especially popular literary genres which would create new forms of writing.

In his book *The Literature of Silence* (1968), **Ihab Hassan** defines a new, postmodern literature a literature of silence. By silence he means a disruption of traditional links between language and reality represented by it. In his view, postmodern writers have undermined the traditional devices of fiction such as character, plot, metaphor and meaning and thus their fiction shows a tendency towards a final silence (Woods 1999:52). In his next book, *The Dismemberment of Orpheus* (1971), Ihab Hassan tried to define the features of modernist and postmodernist literature and, in his *The Postmodern Turn* (1987), he has emphasized especially the idea of **indeterminacy** (which can lead to mysticism, transcendentalism, apocalypticism and other magical forms) and **immanence** working on the level of a language and consciousness to be the central features of postmodern literature. By immanence Hassan means “the capacity of mind to generalize itself in the world, to act upon both self and world, and so become more and more, immediately, its own environment”(Hassan 1963 :29). In his view, indeterminacy leads to fragmentation, tribalization, immanence leads to globalization, through the more and more uniform language of the media (Bertens 1986: 29). Hassan sees the roots and early beginnings of postmodernism in Nietzsche’s philosophy, Einstein’s theory of relativity, and the beginning of the postmodern age around 1939 (Suleiman 260), with such works as James Joyce’s *Finnegan’s Wake*, Samuel Beckett’s *Molloy*, and *The Counterfeiters* by André Gide, Hassan further emphasizes the principle of **uncertainty, doubt, fragmentation and radical pluralism** to be the most important features of postmodern literature. By pluralism he means not only a plurality of different forms and genres juxtaposed and used within a single literary work, equality of meaning each of these forms creates, formal and thematic diversity, but also the plurality of meaning secured by the openness of a literary work which leaves a space for a reader to be involved in the completion of the literary work. **Self-reflexive, or metafictional novel**, that is a novel which, through the use of various techniques, tropes and intertextuality

questions its own fictiousness, is a typical example of a postmodern novel in Hassan's understanding.

In his *The Detective and the Boundary: Some Notes on the Postmodern Literary Imagination*, **William Spanos** relates postmodernism to the energy of the counterculture and the skepticism about the possibility of reason to provide a man with a total knowledge. Spanos identifies atomization (fragmentation) of the text, subversion of the plot, performativeness associated with experience, and playfulness as the central features of postmodern fiction. In his view, the anti-detective story, that is a story undermining all rational expectations about the character, plot, and the narrative, would be a typical example of postmodern literature. In his short preface *De-Struction and the Question of Postmodernist Literature* (1979), Wiliam Spanos denounced modernism as supporting closure thus leaving less space for a reader to be involved in the construction of meaning of the text. On the other hand, he praised postmodernism for eradicating this closure and for supporting openness leaving a space for a reader to be involved in a construction of a meaning of the text. In his view, the literary works of T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, a French novelist Robbe-Grillet and the representatives of a New Novel in France are rather modernist, and Jean Paul Sartre, a British novelist Iris Murdoch, but especially an Argentinean author Jose Louis Borges and US authors of the 1960's such as John Barth, Donald Barthelme and Thomas Pynchon are postmodern authors.

Frederic Jameson sees postmodernism as a broader concept within which literature is closely connected to culture, society, economy and media. As it was mentioned above, in Jameson's understanding, literature reflects the post-industrial society, the influence of media, consumerism and multinational capitalism. In his view, the central features of postmodern art are "the transformation of reality into images" (Suleiman 262) and fragmentation that are closely connected to the social system in which fragmentation results in schizophrenic discourse and in the creation of the schizophrenic discourse (Suleiman 262). Jameson further criticizes a negative role of fragmentation in the suppression of historical memory and identifies a postmodern pastiche that he calls "a blank parody", or

"the imitation of a peculiar or unique style, the wearing of a stylistic mask, speech in a dead language: but it is a neutral practice of such mimicry, without parody's ulterior motive, without the satirical impulse, without laughter, without that still latent feeling that there exists something normal

compared to which what is being imitated is rather comic. Pastiche is blank parody, parody that has lost its sense of humor : pastiche is to parody what that curious thing, the modern practice of a kind of blank irony, is to what Wayne Booth calls the stable and comic ironies of, say, the 18th century” (Jameson 1998:657).

In addition, the other effects of postmodernism are skepticism associated with the belief in the capacity of reason to identify truth, with traditional humanism, prosperity resulting in consumerism, plurality of ethics and lifestyles. In his book *Postmodernist Fiction* (London: Routledge, 1987), **Brian McHale** gives a summary and comprehensive analysis of various narrative devices, tropes and techniques of the postmodern literature. In addition, he comments on a distinction between modernist and postmodernist literature. Drawing on Roman Jakobson’s linguistic concept of dominants, he finds the **ontological dominant** to be the central feature of postmodernist and **epistemological dominant** of modernist literature. In other words, postmodern literary text questions and emphasizes the ontology (being) of both the world and the text and asks such questions as

What is a world? What kinds of world are there, how are they constituted, and how do they differ? What happens when different kinds of world are placed in confrontation, or when boundaries between worlds are violated? (Mc Hale 1987: 10)

Although **Linda Hutcheon’s** later work emphasizes political and ideological aspects of postmodern literature (see Hutcheon, 1988), she has significantly contributed to the identification and theorization of postmodern parody and metafiction. In her theoretical articles and the book *The Theory of Parody*, her concept of postmodern parody is close to Frederic Jameson’s understanding of pastiche. In her view, postmodern parody (which she often calls modern) expresses an ironic distance and difference from the past literary forms, lacks a mocking intent of traditional parody (to mock the particular author or style as its main aim) and is rather neutral and playfully critical rather than directly attacking the parodied author or style. As one of the first theorists, Linda Hutcheon has theorized on self-reflexivity and metafiction as dominant genres and characteristics of postmodern fiction in her *Narcissistic Narrative: the Metafictional Paradox* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1980; rpt. Routledge, 1984) which was later explored especially by **Patricia Waugh’s** seminal study *Metafiction : Theory and Practise of the Self-Conscious Fiction* (1984)

To define a female identity in a postmodern world, literary and artistic texts, such female theorists as the French theorists of Bulgarian origin Julia Kristeva, Helen Cixous, and

especially American scholars and critics Judith Butler and Donna Haraway use post-Freudian, that is Lacanian psychological theories (Jacques Lacan is understood as a representative of a post-structuralist psychological theories), deconstruction (understood also as a variety of postmodern philosophy and critical theory), and the technological and media metaphors (a cyborg) in their works. In her works, Julia Kristeva who has coined the term intertextuality, tries to define a specificity of the female language as used in arts and she also deals with motherhood as the specific expression of female identity. Julia Kristeva along with other French postmodern feminists such as Lucy Irigaray, Helen Cixous and Annie Leclerc reject earlier socialist feminists' ideas for giving a unified and another "grand narrative" in Lyotard's sense, about women by which it becomes, in their view, another example of the exercise of male power (Woods 40). They reject single and unified truths also about the female identity which they consider to be an example of the resistance against the male patriarchal authority and power. Helen Cixous' essay "Sorties" is one of the most important texts of this postmodern feminist tendency in which its author discusses the relationship between sexuality and textuality. In this essay, Cixous criticizes a masculine logic in writing based on binary oppositions which, in her view, creates a masculine, patriarchal hierarchy (Woods 40). Another critic, Luce Irigaray, suggests that feminist writers should pick the metaphors and places of women the men use in their work and should transform, modify and change them into a position unthinkable for a male writer. In this way, the feminist writers would undermine not only patriarchal logics, but also their authoritarian power (Woods 40).

In her *Gender Trouble* (1990), for example, Judith Butler uses deconstruction theories to discuss a linguistic construction of gender by male writers, and along with such feminist thinkers as Julia Kristeva, Elizabeth Grosz, Donna Haraway, Jane Flax, Seyla Benhabib, Rosa Bandotti and others deal with both the male construction and female modification and deconstruction of "gender", one of the most important category in feminist thinking. In her *A Cyborg Manifesto : Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late 20th Century* (1991), Donna Haraway uses a metaphor of a cyborg, "a creature in a post-gender world [that] has no truck with bisexuality, pre-oedipal symbiosis, unalienated labor, or other seductions to organic wholeness through a final appropriation of all the powers of the parts into a higher unity" (Haraway 2001: 605) to point out an instability and hybrid character of female identity in a postmodern technological world. In her view, this hybrid character of cyborg rejects fixed

boundaries across race, gender, class, human and the machine boundaries and thus creates a symbolic resistance against a simplistic creation of female identity by both men and traditional feminists. This is also understood as a resistance to patriarchal definition and understanding of women. In her view, cyborg represents a postmodern body free floating without time, place and gender restrictions (Woods 39). Such construction of female identity resisting the clear definition and race, gender and class boundaries enables the female authors to provide a space not only with female, but also formerly marginalized female ethnic characters (Native-American, Black-American, Hispanic-American). **Bell Hooks**, another postmodern feminist critic, develops these ideas along the ethnic lines speaking about “postmodern blackness” in her *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black* (1979), *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* (1981), *Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics* (1990) and other works.

CONCLUSION – SUMMARY

As can be seen from the above, postmodern period is influenced by the rapid changes in the socio-economic structures especially of the technologically advanced societies producing a change in nature of culture, sensibility and the people's perception of the world. The societies become more uniform and massive that is influenced by the process of globalization stimulated by a rapid growth of media and information and communication technologies. These societies are marked by its consumerist character which form a suitable ground for the massive spread of popular culture, goods, fashion and information that also becomes a marketable product. One of the most important aspects of this society is its fragmentation, pluralism, eclecticism, relativism, uncertainty, but also a rejection of a unitary vision of the world. The society is characterized by the emphasis on speed (cars, rapid sequence of images, speed of information as described by Susan Sontag above) that can stimulate and is close to superficiality **the absence of depth** that would be rooted in deeper psychological experience or psychology. From this stems the challenge on the nature of reality and truth. Reality and truth are no longer understood as stable, clear and directly connected to the nature. In addition, reality seems to be masked, perverted, and even replaced or simulated by virtual realities (as in TV and computer games, TV news, commercial programs and films) or even replaced by its distorted image through its “simulation” (Baudrillard).