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Postmodern Self Reflexivity in Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49*

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Letter of Recommendation

Indra Datta Kandel has completed his thesis entitled “Postmodern Self Reflexivity in Pynchon's novel *The Crying of Lot 49*” under my supervision. He carried out his research from May 2016 to February 2017. I hereby recommend his thesis to be submitted for viva.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “Postmodern Self Reflexivity in Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Indra Datta Kandel has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of the Research Committee:

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Abstract

This research paper deals with the self-reflexivity in Pynchon's novel *The Crying of Lot 49* which represents the characters face alienation, degradation, decay and confusion. Oedipa, who starts to investigate the death of her ex-boyfriend becomes confused, alienated and revolves around mysteries rather than getting the final truth. How the protagonist in the modern American society does face the problem. She enters in the society where everyone is busy in their own work. She does not find any help from any one in city. She faces different troubles when she searches Varierity's death. She sees that everyone likes the urban life. She is surrounded in difficult condition. The people whom she meet makes her more confuse, put her in trouble and make her realize that it is difficult to find the truth. The paper explores the consumer culture, materialistic American society, communal bonding, alienated life style, confused people and their sufferings.

Postmodern Self Reflexivity in Pynchon's novel *The Crying of Lot 49*

This research paper deals with the self-reflexivity in Pynchon's novel *The Crying of Lot 49* which represents the characters who face alienation, degradation, decay, confusion, illusion and instability. The protagonist of the novel Oedipa Maas receives a letter from law firm telling her that her ex-boyfriend Pierce Inverarity, has died and named her the executor of his state and tries to find reason of death of her ex-boyfriend and faces different difficulties but cannot find the actual reason behind her ex-boyfriend's death. However, the postmodernist protagonist does not find the actual truth and failure to meet the goal. The protagonist becomes the victim of transitory moment in cities. The present research work deals with the modernity, consumer culture, in which the protagonist attends the tupperware gathering which signifies superficial consumer culture in materialistic American society more than any type of sincere communal bonding as the hostess failed the need to get her attendees drunk in order to entertain them. Oedipa's search for information and cohesion within at large is symbolized by her entrapment by commercial society. The green bubble glasses that Oedipa wears when crying as she views the painting in Mexico City and the lone green eyes that is metaphor for the television screen. In the novel, Pierce can only satisfy Maas when he uses a credit card. Maas faces alienation and becomes confused when she tries to reveal the truth.

The American protagonist in the novel receives a letter from the lawyer telling her that she is the executor of her ex-boyfriend's estate. She starts to investigate the death of her ex-boyfriend. She becomes chaotic, estranged and revolves around mysteries rather than getting the final truth. How the protagonist in the modern American society does face the problem. How does she get alienated, isolated and confused in that society. Can she live without using the credit card of Pierce? How

does the modern American society treat money in their relationship? The following features of postmodernism shown through the medium of protagonist. The protagonist's life leads to the suffering and always splits from the actual truth. She cannot get the goal or answer which she tries to get. Rather at the end she has to be disappointed, alienated and confused.

The Crying of Lot 49 has linear narrative structure, and does not inundate the reader with obscure words or information. *The Crying of Lot 49* manages to give the best overview of Pynchon's major ideas through the story of Oedipa Mass, an innocent woman who lives behind a comfortable and undisturbed existence in order to seek out the origins of a mysterious underground postal network known as Tristero. The novel also provides a good introduction to Pynchon's unique writing style, which involves detailed literary treatment of complex concepts borrowed from science and philosophy, quickly moving narrative and huge ensembles of strangely named characters. Of the many issues and themes explored in *The Crying of Lot 49*. The psychotic disorder characterized by delusions of persecution, with or without grandeur, often strenuously defended with apparent logic and reason influences the most events, actions and thoughts of the characters in the novel.

Reflexivity means the relationship between the cause and effect. Therefore reflexivity refers to the effects investigating the action of self. Reflexivity depends on the environment. Self-reflexivity can be divided into two types. A low level of reflexivity would result in an individual shaped largely by their environment. A high level of social reflexivity would be defined by individuals shaping their own norms, tastes, values, politics, desires, and so on.

When analyzing the uses of types of metafiction, in novels we must have a clear standpoint in the issue of "real". Scholes takes language as a system of arbitrary

signs. He claims any linguistic system is both referent and different. Unlike Saussure and his followers, Scholes presents a synthesis of Saussure and Derrida's concept. Post structural criticism describes a work of art as a system of differences. If the language does not refer to the external world, one gets out of from the world completely. He says:

I want to challenge the notion that language is the system of "pure difference", for it is this notion upon which attack on reference is presently based. I will not deny that language is based in difference: rather, I will argue that it is also based on reference, a dimension of the human use of language that has been systematically represented or ignored by structuralism and hermeneutic theory. (87)

Postmodern fiction takes the being as an artifact. They self-consciously open the relationship between "reality" and fiction to question. It cannot say that the fictional world is completely cut from the reality. Therefore, Scholes notes that there is both "different" and "referent" in postmodern fiction.

According to Linda Hutcheon, post modernism is a phenomenon where we find contradiction and politics. Post modernism is reflected in many fields of cultural factors like architecture, literature, photography, film, dance, music and elsewhere. Post modernism takes the form of self-conscious, self-contradictory and self-undermining statement. Hutcheon states, "the contradictory nature of postmodernism involves offering of multiple commas, provisional alternative to traditional, fixed unitary concept in full knowledge of the continuing appeal of these very concept"(122-24).

Linda Hutcheon's subverts the modernist's concept of single and alienated otherness which is challenged by postmodern questions of binaries that conceal

hierarchies. It is complete rejection of met-narratives, the presupposition that human history follows a particular line of development. In other words, it can be said that history has no pattern and can be interpreted from multiple perspectives. The notion of truth has no relevance and it is, at its best, only relative. By focusing on narrative, the post modernists regard words as having no fixed-meaning.

Postmodern literature is a kind of art in which there is description about the self, modern life and terror of war. The term postmodern literature is used to describe certain tendencies in post-world war second literature. It is both a continuation of the experiments championed by writer of the modernist period (relying heavily on fragmentation, paradox, and questionable narrators and so on) and a reaction against enlightenment ideas implicit in modernist literature. Postmodern fiction, like post-modernist as a whole, is hard to define and there is little agreement on the exact characteristics, scope and importance of postmodern fiction. However, unifying feature often coincide with J. F. Lyotard's concept the meta-narrative and 'little narrative'. Jacques Derrida's concept of 'play' and Jean Baudrillard's 'simulacra'.

Interrupting the gap between the text and the world, between art and life, a gap which postmodernist writing characteristically tries to short circuit in order to administer a shock to reader. Instead of post modernists' quest for meaning in chaotic world, the postmodern author eschews, often playfully, the possibility of meaning and the postmodern novel is often a parody of this quest. This destruction of totalizing mechanism extends events to the author; these postmodern writers often celebrate chance to over-craft an employ Meta fiction to undetermined the author's "univocal" control.

Similarly, Linda Hutcheon claims that postmodern fiction as a whole could be characterized by ironic code marks that much of it can be taken as tongue-in-check.

This irony along with black humor and general concept of “play” (related to Derrida’s concept of the ideas) advocated by Roland Barthes in *The Pleasure of the Text* are among the most recognizable aspects of post modernism. Though the idea of employing these are in literature did not start with the post-modernist (the modernist were often playful and ironic), they become central features in many postmodern works. Linda Hutcheon in her essay, “de-centering the postmodern: the ex-centric” argues about the nature of modern novel: like much contemporary literary theory, the post-modernist novel puts into question that entire series of interconnected concept that have come to be associate with what we conventionally level as liberal humanism: autonomy, transcendence, certainty, teleology, closure, hierarchy, homogeneity, uniqueness and origin. As I have tried to argue, however, to put those concept into question is not deny them but only to interrogate their relation to experience.(qtd. In. Hutcheon, *On Poetics* 57).

Linda Hutcheon who shares the same views with many others critics on the self-obsession of the postmodern fiction, with her classification of metafiction in *Narcissistic Narrative: The Metaphysical Paradox* had provided a guideline to this research. Hutcheon calls post-modernist fiction “Narcissistic”, “Self-reflective”, “Self-informing”, “Self-reflexive”, “Auto referential” and “Auto-representation” (1). All these terms point to the fact that postmodernist fiction is self-obsessed. There is an inward looking, “an introverted literary level of mimesis” (12).

As modernist writer Williams defines modernism:

Modernism is variously argued to be a period a style or genre or the combination of the above. But it is first of all the word. The one that exist alongside cognate words. Its stem, 'modern', is a term that, from the Latin modo means 'current', and so have a far wider currency and a

range of meanings then 'modernism'. In the late 5th century, for example, the Latin *modernus* referred to the Christian present in opposition to the Roman past, modern English is ... 20th century writing. More generally, 'modern' has been frequently used to refer the avant-garde, though since the second world war this sense has been embarrassed by the term contemporary while modern has shifted from meaning now to just now. (13)

According to William, modernism is the philosophical movement along with cultural. Modernism is the change in style, genre or the combination of both. It is the change than the previous condition. In the 5th century the Christians were regarded as the modern than the Romans. Modernism in general includes activates and creation of those who felt the traditional forms of art, philosophy, social organization, political environmental of a fully industrial world. Generally, the modern were regarded to the avant-garde. The meaning of modern has shifted from now to just now.

As Baudelaire says:

Modernity is a word first used by Baudelaire in the mid-19th century. In his essay "The Painter of Modern Life", Baudelaire describes modernity as the fashionable, fleeting and contingent in art, in opposition to the eternal and immutable. In relation to the modernism, modernity is considered to describe way of living and of experiencing life which has arisen with the changes wrought by industrialization, urbanization and secularization; its characteristics are disintegration and reformation, fragmentation and rapid change. (16)

It reflects self-reflexivity in modern world because people are alienated, confused and suffers in the modern world. People are alienated from each other. They are confused

and suffer living in the society. Baudelaire says that modernity is a fashionable, fleeting and contingent in art, in opposition to the eternal and immutable. The art was regarded to the eternal and immutable but Baudelaire doesn't agree with the notion of eternal and immutable art rather he supports on the fleeting and contingent art. He says that in modern times, the art fleets. There is not the fixed or eternal art. He describes about the city life, industrialization and modern world. He thinks that a disaffected and alienated society undergoing the pressure of transition. He does not believe in transitory fugitive element. He views modernity on the basis of how people live the life. In the modern time, the way of living a life is different due to the urbanization, industrialization, and secularization. In such society, the life and activities are disintegrated and fragmented.

Said claims that the concept of modernism is viewed from the European perspective. The civilization and development of the non-west is not taken as the civilization rather taken as uncivilized and undeveloped.

Edward Said says that:

The modernist form was necessary to deal with a new sense of Europe vulnerability occasionalized by text and artifacts from the Empire. The familiar symbol of this is the shock not of the new but of the African mask with all that it signified to Europe of primitivism and transgression, marking a primal moment of modernism. (27)

It is significant that Said considered his social implication of modernism' ironic dissimulation to be antipathetic to anticolonial thought. Modernism as inherently worldly, political and critical of European norms. He says that modernism is viewed from the European perspective. The civilization and development of the non-west is not taken as the civilization rather taken as uncivilized and undeveloped. European

think that the non-west as the primitive so they have to uncover such mask to regard other as uncivilized and primitive.

Modern literature is often challenging startling; it may be written in a fractured or peculiar style, or it may advocate the overturning of traditional value. It was a set of artistic practice which shared commitment to make it new. Modernity is fundamentally about order: about rationality, rationalization, creating order out of chaos. The assumption is that creating more rationality is conducive to creating more order and that are more ordered is society is the better it will function. Because modernity is about the pursuit of ever increasing levels of orders, modern societies constantly are on guard on against anything. And everything labeled as "disordered", which might disrupt order. Thus, modern societies rely on continually stabilizing a binary opposition between "order" or "disorder" so that they can assert the superiority of order. But to do this they have to have things that represent disorder. Modern societies thus continually have to create/construct disorder. In western culture, this disorder becomes "the other"—defined in relation to other binary oppositions. Thus disordered has to be eliminated from the ordered, rational modern society. The ways that modern societies go about creating categories labeled as ordered or disordered.

Lyotard uses the word postmodern to describe "the condition of knowledge in most highly developed societies" and to designate "the state of our culture following the transformations which, since the end of the 19th century, have altered the game rules for science, literature, and the arts." (206)

Postmodernism is the condition where the people living style becomes different than the old and slow life. The knowledge in the undeveloped societies is not postmodern. For the postmodern society, the society should be highly developed as well as there

should be difference in various things like science, literature and the art. If the science is not developed and literature is same as before then we cannot refer the condition or the state as the postmodern period. The postmodern period should be different than the traditional period.

The post-modernists critique the grand narratives. Lyotard argues that:

In modern societies through the means of "grand narratives" or "master narrative", which are stories a culture tells itself about its practices and beliefs. A grand narrative in American culture might be the story that democracy is almost enlighten (rational) form of government, and that democracy can and will lead to universal human happiness. Every belief system or ideology has its grand narratives. (138)

All aspects of modern societies including science as the primary form of knowledge depend on these grand narratives. Postmodernism is critique of grand narratives, the awareness that such narrative serve to mask the contradictions and instabilities that are inherent in any social organization or practice. In other words, every attempt to create order always demands the creating of an equal amount of disorder but a grand narrative mask the constructedness of these categories by explaining that disorder really is bad and that order really is rational or good. Postmodernism practices, local events, global concepts, truth, alienation, confusion, reason, temporary and always situational.

According to Lyotard for Marxism:

For instance, the "grand narrative" is the idea that capitalism will collapse in own itself and a utopian socialist world will evolve. You might think of grand narratives as a kind of meta-theory or meta ideology, that is, an ideology that explains an ideology (as with

Marxism); a story that is told to explain the belief that system that exist. (138)

Lyotard evokes about the philosophy, politics and aesthetic experiment with a wide variety of style. He says that the modern way of capitalism destroy the utopian society. The above paragraph describes that due to the capitalistic development in the modern society which gave rise to the consumer culture has destroy the utopian society. Lyotard claim that accurate representation of reality will collapse and vanish due to the capitalistic development in modern society. His thought remains critical in contemporary debates about the philosophy, politics, social theory, cultural studies and art and aesthetic.

According to Jean Baudrillard,

In postmodern society there are no originals, only copies or what he calls "simulacra". We can take example about painting or sculpture where there is an original work and there might be also thousands of copies but original is one with the highest value. Contrast with the cds or music recordings, where there is no "original" as in painting—no recording that is hung on wall or kept in a vault. Rather, there are only copies by the millions that are all the same, and all sold for the same amount of money. Another version of Baudrillard's "simulacrum" would be the concept of virtual reality, a reality created by simulation, for which there is no original. This is particularly evident in computer games/simulations—think of Sim City, SimAnt, etc.

Baudrillard evokes that the changing time of modern industrial and urban life bring loss in the originality. The true eternal beauty will collapse due to the constantly changing modern society. The value of the original art has decreased. In the previous

time, the original piece had the great importance but now the same art can be produced thousands of copies so the value of the original has decreased which Baudrillard says as simulacra. Same thing is produced from the original one. We can take the example of cds or the music recordings. The cds are produced in the millions of copies where there is same thing in every cds and are sold for the same amount of money. In the modern time, the value of the originality has decreased. For the loss of originality, he gives the notion of virtual reality. When the originality has no value there is no reality, but he virtual reality.

Finally postmodernism is concerned with questions of organization of knowledge. In modern societies, knowledge was equated with science, and was contrasted to narrative; science was good knowledge and narrative was bad, primitive, and irrational. Knowledge, however, was good for its own sakes; one gained knowledge via education, in order to be knowledgeable in general to be an educated person. This deal of liberal art of education in the postmodern society, however knowledge becomes functional—you learn things, not to know them, but to use that knowledge. As Sarup points out:

Educational policy today puts emphasis on skills and training, rather than on a vague humanist ideal of education in general". This is particularly acute for English majors "What will you do with your degree?" Not only is knowledge in postmodern societies characterize by its utility, but knowledge is also distributed, stored, and arranged differently in postmodern societies than in modern ones. (138)

The development of technologies revolutionizes the modes of knowledge production, distribution, and consumption in our society. Some might argue that postmodernism is best described and correlated with the emergence of computer technology as the

dominant force in all social aspects.

To know about post modernism, first, we have to understand the concept of modernism. Lyotard claims:

The important question of postmodern societies is who decides that is and who knows what needs to be decided. Such decisions about knowledge don't involve the old modern/humanist qualification: for example, to assess knowledge as truth or as goodness or justice or as beauty. Rather Lyotard argues knowledge follows the paradigm of a language game. (229)

The easiest way to start thinking about postmodernism is thinking about modernism. The movement from which the post modernism seems to grow or emerge. Modernism is probably known as the movement in visual arts, music, literature and drama which rejected the old standards of how art should be made. Modernist literature helped to redefine poetry and fiction and how they should be. It emphasis on impressionism and subjectivity of writing. It emphasis on fragmented forms, discontinuous narrative and tendency towards reflexivity, or self-consciousness. A rejection between high or low or popular culture, both in choice of materials used to produce art and in methods of displaying, distributing and consuming art. Postmodernism, like modernism follows most of these same ideas, rejecting boundaries between high and low forms of art, playfulness, favors self-reflexivity and self-consciousness, fragmentation and discontinuity, ambiguity and an emphasis on restructured, decentered, dehumanize subject.

There are lot of questions regarding postmodernism one of the most important is about the politics involved or movement toward fragmentation, performance something good or bad, instability, confusion, alienation and self-reflexivity.

Postmodernism declares fragmentation; multiplicity tends to attract liberal and radical changes. Postmodernism seems to offer some alternatives to join the global consumer culture. Commodity and forms of knowledge are offered by forces far beyond any individual's control. These alternatives focus on thinking of social struggle.

Modernism has witnessed scientific development and mass killing. Both are even now possible. If post modernism has given freedom to the people and liberty to write for maintaining the human wishes, the text also should be given liberty to the reader to understand.

Odeipa had been named executor, or she supposed executrix, of the estate of one Pierce Inverarity, a California real estate mogul who had once lost 2 million dollar in his spare timeout still had assets numerous and tangled enough to make the job of sorting it all out more than honorary. Odeipa stood in the living room, stared at by the greenish dead eye of the TV tube, spoke the name of god, tried to feel as drunk as possible, this did not work.

According to Rosemary Jackson, "a fantastic mode, structured upon contradiction upon and 'impossibility becomes, disturbingly appropriate medium in Pynchon's texts to represent the fullness and emptiness of secularized culture". (93) Pynchon's says that the state of confusion whether event happens in real world or in an imaginary world. Pynchon portrays a utopian world where Oedipa begins her quest and finally ends up without unveiling the mysterious things which she comes across and without finding out the properties of her ex-lover. But it is not altogether an imaginary world. There is slight touch of contemporary America, because Tristero is a symbol seen among the minority culture. In this text, there is a symbolic religious element.

As author in the text says:

Yet at least he had believed in the cars, may be to excess: how could he not seeing people poorer than him come in, Negro Mexican, cracker, a parade seven days of week, bringing the most god awful of trade – ins: motorized, metal extensions of themselves, of their family and what their whole life must be like, out there so naked for anybody, a stranger like himself to look at, frame cockeyed, rusty underneath, fender repainted in a shade just off enough to depress the value. (8)

The above extract describe about the modern people are depressed, alienated and addicted. It shows the condition of the postmodern people and how they are depressed. It shows how the people of postmodern society are mentally disturbed. It explore the unvarying sickness had somehow managed to immunize and accept the consumer culture, malfunctioning of moral cultural values.

As Pynchon says:

An infact, as Odeipa's Uncle Sam hallucination faded, it was this Fu Manchu face that came the solving into replace it and stay with her for what was left of the hours before dawn. It put her in hardly in shape to see Roseman. But Roseman had also spent a sleepless night brooding over the Perry Mason television programe the evening before his wife as fond off but towards which Roseman cherished a fierce ambivalence, wanting at once to be successful trail lawyer like Perry Mason and, this was impossible, to destroy Perry Mason by understanding him. (17)

In the above lines, Pynchon shows the people's inclination towards consumer culture. The people are fascinated toward Television and try to copy the attitude and habits of characters in the real life. The modern society is not in the right track.

Odeipa refilled her wine glass. They lay now, staring at the screen, flanks just lightly touching. There come from the TV set a terrific explosion. 'Mines!' cried Metzger, covering his head and rolling away from her. 'Daddy, ' blubbered the Metzger in the tube, 'I am scared.' The inside of the Midget space sub was chaotic, the dog galloping to and fro scattering saliva that mingle with the spray from a lick in the bulk head. (20)

Above given extract describe about the modern world and the background to connect the consumer culture. Metzger, who is the major character was scared and crying because of the terrific expression which reflects the modern society. There is the description of the wine and the wine is not used by the male but a female character. In the modern period even female are free as the male. And after they lay staring at the screen they see TV which is also an element of the consumer culture. And the character thinks the virtual world as the real. The people in the modern period have regarded the virtual world as the real. The beginning of the modern or post modernism shows the completion of the psychological mechanism that removes society from moral and cultural values, alienated its character and made it a private act.

'Fair enough,' drawled Metzger, taking her hand as if to shake on the bet and kissing its palm instead, sending the dry and of his tongue to graze briefly among her fate's furrows, the changeless salt hatchings of her identity. She wonders then if this were really happening in the same way as, say, her first time in bed with Pierce, the dead man. But then the movie came back. (22)

Above given extracts evokes the situation of the postmodern society. It shows how the

postmodern society is being degraded. The loss of moral values and beliefs is being shown in the given extract. The ethical aspect of the society is being damaged in the postmodern societies. Above given extract represents alienation, confusion and it shows to exist the separate, silent, unsuspected world. The postmodernism culture generates loss of ethics and values and hospitality and the possibility of annihilation and the threat of loss of historical values. It evokes the loss of reality and virtue. Due to the development of technologies and media communication certain things and events have been easier. People are getting entertainment and getting facilities. Due to the easy access of the media and television people are getting entertainment. It represents the loss of the moral and ethical value in the postmodern society. There need to be control over communication, in the postmodern society. By appealing to the human desire for control over the unknown technologies.(22)

'The above paragraph describes about the postmodern society in which there will be insecurity of property and life. Due to the modern beliefs and values, there is no faith in truth and goodness. People are being alienated, confused, insecure due to the postmodern culture.

She looked up passed his eyelids, into the staring ceiling light her field of vision cut across by wild, flashing over fights of the can, whose pressure seemed inexhaustible. She was scared but nowhere near sober. The can knew where it was going, she sensed, or something fast enough God or a digital machine might have computed in advance the complex web of the travel. But she was not fast enough, and knew only that it might hit them at any moment, at which ever clip it was doing, a husband, miles an hour. (24)

Above given extract describe about the postmodern society. It evokes that they came in among earth-moving machines, a total absence of trees, the usual hieratic geometry, and eventually, shimmeringly for the sand roads, down in a helix to a sculpture body of water named Lake Inveririty. Out in it, on a round island of fill among blue wavelets, squatted the social hall, a chunky, ogived and verdigrises, Art, Nouveau reconstruction of some European pleasure-casino. Oedipa fell in love with it. The paranoid element piled out of the car, carrying musical instruments and looking around as if for outlets under the trucked in white sand to plug into. (37)

The above lines evoke the consumer culture of the people in the postmodern period. The people in the postmodern period find the happiness in the materialistic things. Oedipa becomes happy when she sees the casino.

Outside the universe, of the cyber-elite is another one which speaks to more energetic techno-culture. This is the world of innovation and non-legality, of ad hoc discovery and electronic survival strategy. But before I talk about this, a story of my own some years ago, ... from the late 1980s, India witnessed a unique communicative transformation.

Jacques Derrida uses a metaphysical world... "event" – to describe historical change one which determines metaphysics and thus metaphysical words. The "event" in question is thinking "the structurality of structure ", or the semiological notion that structure are decentered network to signs. To clarify, Derrida argues that all of western philosophy (metaphysics relies on notion of origin, central presence transcendence and so on, to explain how structures are formed, maintained and how they develop or progress to a higher state. (94)

The above extract shows that according to Derrida there will not be fixed meaning or fixed center. The concept or structure of the sentence make change in meaning.

Derrida state to add his deconstructive caveat: if metaphysical structures depend upon binary oppositions such as center versus structure or nature versus culture- a hierarchy of binary opposition that creates value- then after the "event" of semiology, one cannot simply say that there is nothing but a chain of empty signifiers, thereby appearing to break free of metaphysics, because the critique has to use terms which still carry metaphysical association.

Levy-strauss observes key concepts that escape the previous ways of thinking, such as the universal incest provision, one that exceeds the binary opposition of nature/culture in other words, the incest prohibition should occupy one side or the other of this opposition, but Levy-strauss discovers it is both natural and cultural, which means that the prohibition appears "outside" of the opposition, and yet also, paradoxically, founds the opposition in the first place. (95)

The above paragraph depicts about the binary opposition of nature and culture in the modern world. Both nature and culture, which prohibits appears outside of the binary opposition of the culture. . It shows the confused culture of the modern people. Levy-strauss describes that the people of the modern society are confused and alienated by the individual life style.

The history of metaphysics like the history of the West is the history of the metaforce and Metonymies. each matrix- if you will pardon me for demonstrating so little and for being so elliptical in order to come more quickly to my principle theme- is the determination of Being as presence in all senses of the world. It could be shown that all the

names related to fundamentals, to principles, or to the center have always designated and invariable presence-eidos, arche, telos, energeia, ousia(essence, existence, substance, and subject) alethia, transcendentality, consciousness, God, man and so forth. (96)

The above paragraph shows that the people of the modern society are not focusing on God and religious beliefs. The modern society is transcendental. Modern people do not believe more about the essence of the God. Modern society is human centered rather than God centered.

Jacques Lacan's "mirror stage, a key process to grasp is that of identity formation occurring by identification with a mirror stage, one which is permanently exterior to the child. In other words, this image precedes the social development of the ego as a "fiction" which "will be forever remain irreducible for any individual behavior." (268)

Here, Lacan depicts that the mirror stage is the most significant stage for the child in the formation of identification. In this stage, the child starts identifying himself. The child knows about the existence of himself and realize that he is a individual person or not related to his mother. The child realize about the self and the other. The child used to think that the whole world is single and related to him but in this stage he realizes that the world is exterior to him.

Freud had famously observed that he can gain excess to the unconscious thought mistakes, such as slips-of-the-tongue, when we accidentally reveal what we desire or are secretly thinking about. (274)

In the above paragraph, Freud gives the concept of the unconscious desire and feeling in the people who may lead to the wrong path or way. Due to the unconscious desire people are obsessed to do the wrong things. Unconscious mind which may lead to the

danger. We all have the unconscious desire but all the people hide such desires. We can only know such desires and feeling from the secret outcome such as slips of tongue and what we accidentally say something. We all repress the desire in the unconscious mind.

"The truth pursued by science", writes Geroges Batille, "is true only on condition that it be devoid of meaning and nothing can have meaning except in so far as it is fiction." This proposition could define at once the doctrine and difficulty of psychoanalysis, as a practice-and a science-of the fiction of the subject". "What is truth, if not a complaint?" says Lacan. (275)

Does psychoanalysis aspire to meaning or truth or not? What is the meaning of psychoanalysis to know that the question, whose urgency has become evident in the current field of theory but we know from psychoanalysis that evidence is exactly that which is seen sometime, this is now unavoidable question of the meaning of psychoanalysis, therefore meaning is in contradiction. Psychoanalysis is related to contradiction without reducing illusion or dialectical synthesis. Psychoanalysis introduces into the field of theory nothing less than the necessity of a new kind of articulation of its own question. Psychoanalysis changes the status of the meaning. Culture and beliefs also subverts meaning.

Misprison, for Lacan, is of course an outgrowth of " the trickiness of the unconsciousness," which in language "is revealed by the rhetorical overload Freud shows it utilizes to make its argument"; the symptoms functions like a metaphor, desire like a metonymy; the narcissistic mechanisms of defense and resistance all kinds of "tropes"and "figures of speech"- periphrasis, ellipsis, denial, digression, irony, litotes,

etc.(276)

Therefore given extracts shows that theory of misprision will thus be a theory of the rhetoric of the unconscious.

Sigmund Freud observes while in a general sense the uncanny relates to the frightening, there must be some "core of feeling" that has led people to use such a specialist term. While Freud suggest for not much literature on the topic was available to him, there is enough to as certain that paradoxically, the uncanny relates fear to the personally known. (255)

Freud shows that how strange and horror relates in personal meaning making. Particular feeling arises something to the people and makes people analysis. The factor of repetition of same thing will perhaps not appeal to everyone as a source of strange feeling. Different people have different feeling. People observe same phenomena from different objective. Strange feeling may also bring the sense of helplessness to some people. The feeling should be attached to the person. The unconscious desire may also bring emotional impulse which may also create frightening things would also leads to strange element which is something repressed. To fulfill unconscious desire people may be eager to do strange kinds of things which may arouses dread and horror. The strange things may also bring fear to the people. The strange feeling is aroused when the event is personally related to self.

As in the text:

In one of the Latrines was an advertisement by AC-DC standing for alameda County Death Cult, along with a box number and the post horn. Once a month there were to choose some victim from among the innocent, virtuous, the socially integrated and well-adjusted, using him

sexually, and then sacrificing him. Odeipa did not copy the number.

(84)

Here, the paragraph shows about the modern society is attracted toward the artificial things. They enjoy the singing of the rock singer. The above paragraph shows about the modern societies that there is no any humanity in the people. People are sexually abused and made victim. To be good is a sin. Good people are first chosen as the victim and abused. The innocent people are made the victim. The society is corrupted and degraded. The society has lost the value of humanity. The people are cruel to each other. There is no any rule and regulation as well as religious fear in them.

In prose, it is associated with attempts to render human subjectivity in ways more real than realism; to represent consciousness, perception, emotions, meaning and the individual's relation to society through interior monologue, stream of consciousness, tunneling, defamiliarisation, rhythm, irresolution and other terms that will be encounter later in the book. Modernist writers therefore struggled in Ezra Pound brief phrase to make it new ', to modify if not overturn existing modes and subjects to representation, partly by pushing them towards or the abstract or introspective, and to express the new sensibility of their time.(3)

The modernist writers put the reader into confusing and difficult. The reader cannot easily understand what the author means to say. The content of the writings cannot be immediately understood but which must be moved through and mapped in order to understand its limits and meanings. The modern writers de-familiarize so that everyone cannot understand them easily. Only the experts or the professionals can get them. The modernist prose writers make their works very difficult using different

tools and techniques like monologue and soliloquy.

In the novel, the author says about the modern people:

She gave it up presently, as if a cloud had approached the sun or smog thickened or so the broken 'religious instance' whatever it might've been : started up and proceeded and may be 70 mph along the singing black top, on to a highway she thought went towards Losangeles, into a neighborhood that was little more than the road's skinny right-of-way lined by auto lots, escrow services, drive, ins, small office buildings and factories whose number address were in 70 and then 80000s.(15)

The above lines show the modern world is being more dangerous due to the development of the science and technology. Due to the modern science and technology, the people are making gun powders and machine guns which can be used by the wrong hand. They are not also serous about their religious values and beliefs. The modern society is polluted. They use the machine. They are not using the machine but the machine is using the modern people because they cannot do anything without machines. They are fully dependent on the machine. People are almost a parasites toward the machine.

As in the text:

The Turks are up there with search lights, he said, pouring more tequila watching the little submarine feel up, 'patrol boards and machine-guns. You want to bet on what will happen? 'Of course not' said Oedipa, 'the movie's made '. He only smiled back. 'One of your endless reputations.'

(21)

The above lines show the modern world is being more dangerous due to the development of the science and technology. Due to the modern science and

technology, the people are making gun powders and machine guns which can be used by the wrong hand. They are not also serious about their religious values and beliefs. Due to the factories and industries which caused great impact on the nature environment and the people's life style. The people of the modern times spend their time enjoying the drinks.

As in the text:

Metzger told her his eyes squeezed shut, head away from the set. "For fifty yards out the sea was red with blood. They don't show that."

Oedipa skipped into the bathroom, which happened also to have a walk in closet, quickly, untroubled, and began putting on as much as she could off the clothing she'd brought with her: six pairs of panties in assorted colors, girdle, three pairs of nylons, three brassies, two pairs slacks, four half-slips, one black sheath, two summer dresses, half dozen A-line skirts, three sweaters, two blouses, quilted wrapper, baby blue peignoir and OrlanMuu-muu.(23)

The above paragraph evokes about the people of the modern society are confused.

The above paragraph shows the individual life style of the society. The lines show the private life of Oedipa. Here is the description of the clothes that Oedipa wears and has brought by her. In the modern society no one care about others. People have their own kind of feeling as well as dresses. They live their life from their own perspective and no one bothers about other in the modern society. The above line also shows the consumer culture of the modern society.

As in the text:

Metzger helped her stagger to her feet. 'Anyone for strip Botticelli?' In the other room the TV was blurring, a commercial Turkish bath in

down town Sannarciso, wherever downtown was, called Hogan's Seraglio. 'Inverarity owned that to', Metzger said 'did you know that' 'Saddist" Odeipa yelled 'say it once more, I will wrap the TV, YouTube.'"(25)

The paragraph shows the commercial modern world. It also shows that how people of the modern society are tending toward the mass media culture. They are addicted towards the mass media. It shows the effect of mass media in the modern society. It shows that the modern society is fully based on the mass media culture. The modern people rely on the mass culture. They are fully dependent on the mass culture. In every sector of their life, they need the social media to make their life easy and comfortable.

As writer in the text says that:

Riding among and exhausted bus full of Negros going on to graveyard shifts all over the city, she saw scratched on the back of the sheet, shining for her in the brilliant smoky interior, the post horn with the legend death. But unlike west, somebody had troubled to write in pencil: don't ever antagonize the horn. (84)

The above paragraph shows the depleted city life. People are usual in doing the harmful things for themselves. They smoke and drink and show the misbehavior. It is very difficult to know the interest and nature of the people in the city. Here in the text, Oedipa is exhausted by the people. She is troubled by everyone in the city. She tries to find out the meaning of the post horn but she cannot find the meaning. She is confused and alienated by everyone.

As in the text:

She busrode and walked on into the lightening morning, giving herself

up to a fatalism rare for her. Where was the Oedipa who'd driven so bravely up here from Sannarciso? That optimistic baby had come on so like the private eye in any long-ago radio drama, believing all you needed was glee, resourcefulness, and exemption from hidebound cops' rules, to solve any great mystery. (85)

The lines illustrate about the modern life style of the people. People of the modern society are living in the individually and they are influenced by mass media and mass culture. They are being trapped by the mass media. They try to do the mysterious things. The modern people try to change the natural world and they try to make and gain artificial things. They are driven by the mysteries of the society.

This research paper deals with the self-reflexivity in Pynchon's novel *The Crying of Lot 49* which represents the characters who face alienation, degradation, decay, confusion, illusion and instability. Oedipa, who starts to investigate the death of her ex-boyfriend becomes confused, alienated and revolves around mysteries rather than getting the final truth. How the protagonist in the modern American society does face the problem. She enters in the society where everyone is busy in their own work. She does not find any help from any one in city. She faces different troubles when she searches Varierity's death. She sees that everyone likes the urban life. Everyone is engaged in the party where all of them drink tequila. She suffers in the city. All the people are interested in living a luxurious life. Everyone is running after temporal things. The people are running toward money and house. She tries to find out the real truth of her ex-boyfriend. She has the faith on herself and seeks the truth. She tries to face the fears and be determined to find the reason behind her ex-boyfriend's death. Oedipa takes a journey in dilemma, untruth issues, which she wants to get but she seems twice apart from reality. At first she thinks she is doing good, running towards

achieving aims, but finally she knows, she is the victim of all things. When she knows she was running after unfruitful things, which brings her tear, crying, alienated. At last she becomes self-reflective.

Pynchon in the novel explores the modernity, consumer culture, materialistic American society, communal bonding, alienated life style, confused people and their sufferings. Pynchon expresses the life style of modern people and the difficulties which they face. Pynchon's novel *The Crying of Lot 49* which represents the characters who face alienation, degradation, decay, confusion and instability. The protagonist of the novel Oedipa Maas faces alienated life. She faces many difficulties and problems in her life. After her boyfriend dies, she goes to find the reason behind the death. But when Oedipa goes on searching her boyfriend's death, she enters into the world of confusion. She faces many troubles. She encounters different dangerous situations. She remains in dilemma. She cannot solve the mysteries which she tries to answer. She becomes the victim of the modern city. She becomes isolated, confused and remains in dilemma.

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