

Postmodern study: Analysis of Themes and Techniques in *The Crying of Lot 49, Slaughterhouse-Five* and *Disgrace*.

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Abstract

Postmodernism is one of the most discussed topics in contemporary world. This term has influenced authors so that they choose it as their subject of writing. Mainly this paper aims to discuss themes and techniques, of the texts, Slaughterhouse Five by Kurt Vonnegut, The Crying of Lot 49 by Thomas Pynchon and Disgrace by John Maxwell Coetzee, in the light of postmodernism. This paper will also discuss postmodernism, features and postmodern effect in human life in contemporary time. It will further look at science, technologies, paranoid society and social context of the texts. Thus this paper will present a thematic analysis of the novels.

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Chapter 1

Introduction:

Postmodernism is very notable term in contemporary novels. It is a very significant term which is not only used in the field of study but also in art, culture, literature and many other fields, particularly in contemporary literature.

In 1947, the term 'postmodernism' was used by Arnold Toynbee in western history but critics said that it was continuity of modernism. After this in 1950, Charles Olson made use of this term and declare that this is a movement and that it is against modernism. After the Second World War, postmodernism has been used as a wide spread form in literature. It welcomes mass culture, pop music, pop art, mixer of high and low culture, de-universalization, decentralization and heterogeneity whereas modernism is limited within universality, homogeneity and so on.

Postmodernism is not an organized way for understanding any subject. It is not a field of study in ontology rather it is uncertain. Critics say postmodern is skeptical. It shows a care-free attitude. It does not have right or wrong judgments because it does not believe in value judgment. Theorist Solomon says-

“Postmodernism is the resentful projection of too many self-important smart people feeling slighted by the Zeitgeist.” (Solomon 268).

After the introduction of postmodernism, my paper is going to introduce three postmodern texts which is relevant to the paper. They are *The Crying of Lot 49*, *Slaughterhouse-Five* and *Disgrace*.

Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49*, is a conventional postmodern text. It is the second novel of the author, published in 1966. It is a complex text because plots are difficult to follow and the names are not

easy to understand. The names are fragmented as well as meaningless. Society is not in order and communication is distorted. These are the major discussed topics regarding this text. Pynchon shows contemporary American's life through this text.

Slaughterhouse-Five is one of the most celebrated novels of Kurt Vonnegut. The author writes this text more intimately because he writes from his knowledge. In this text he writes about human mind. This text is self reflexive and sometimes we find the author as narrator. Vonnegut's literary style of this novel evident that he uses both autobiography and time frame from humans perceive to show memory.

John Maxwell Coetzee's *Disgrace* is a famous novel. He is known for writing in a postmodern mode. Though his text, *Disgrace*, known as a post-colonial text but it reveal postmodern features to readers. Many critics say that *Disgrace* has postmodern element, such as – alienation, frustration, individualism, irony, fragmentation and so on. This text depicts the struggle and isolation of characters and shows fragmented identity in social context of South Africa.

In the light of postmodernism this thesis aims to analyze these postmodern texts in terms of their themes and techniques. This paper contains five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction, the second chapter deals with the postmodernism in brief way, the third chapter will try to show the thematic analysis of the three postmodern texts, the forth chapter discusses contemporary postmodernism and future possibilities and the last chapter is the conclusion of the paper.

Chapter 2

Postmodernism:

It is not easy to define postmodernism because 'postmodernism', the word itself, is paradoxical. It is both nothing and everything, meaning with no meaning. It is still an ongoing movement. Though it seems like that 'postmodernism' means 'after modernism' because 'post' means after but it's not like that.

According to theorist, Ihab Hassan, there is no clear-cut difference between modernism and postmodernism. In his text, in one chapter entitled "*Towards a Concept of Postmodernism*", he says- modernism is a large part of postmodernism. He presents the following table of distinct differences between modernist and postmodernist literature –

“Postmodernism Pataphysics/Dadaism Antiform (disjunctive, open) Play Chance Anarchy Exhaustion/Silence Process/Performance/Happening Participation Decreation/Deconstruction Antithesis Absence Dispersal Text/Intertext Rhetoric Syntagm Parataxis Metonymy Combination Rhizome/Surface Against Interpretation/Misreading Signifier Scriptible (Writerly) Anti-narrative/Petite Histoire Idiolect Desire Mutant Polymorphous/Androgynous Schizophrenia Difference-Differance/Trace The Holy Ghost Irony Indeterminacy Immanence” (Hassan 6).

The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary defines postmodernism as:

“a style and movement in art, architecture, literature, etc. in the late 20th century that reacts against modern styles, for example by mixing features from traditional and modern styles.”

This definition evident that postmodernism is not only a concept of literature but also it encompasses many different areas, like, study, including art, architecture, music, film, literature, sociology, communications, fashion, and technology.

Though it seems like postmodernism is somehow like modernism but the key ideas are different. Postmodern celebrates anarchy, disorder, indeterminacy and multicultural ideas. It believes in diversity, equality, irony, mini-narratives. Postmodern does not support grand narratives. French theorist, Jean François Lyotard states, the definition of postmodernism, in the introduction of his most famous work, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on knowledge*. He says-

“We no longer have recourse to grand narratives ... But as we have seen, the little narrative remains the quintessential form of imaginative invention ... In addition, the principle of consensus as a criterion of validation seems to be inadequate”. (*The Postmodern Condition* 60).

This definition makes the concept clear that postmodernism does not support grand narratives. In postmodern literature we clearly notice mini narrative technique. It is one of the major techniques used in postmodern literature. In postmodern literature no strict form is found because the term itself is an anti-foundationalism. Postmodern authors choose any subject matter, structure, any form of writing. Even they can create new form, new perspective new ideas and so on for writing. In postmodern literature these techniques often used –

1. Self-reflexivity
2. Historiographic meta-fiction
3. Meta-fiction
4. Parody
5. Fragmentation
6. Non-linear narration
7. Deconstructive reading of text
8. Pastiche

9. Satire.

These are the common features of postmodern texts.

Postmodernism is a late 20th century style and idea in art, architecture and criticism, which is contrary to modernism. It is a cultural term, begins in 1960's. Older histories are supposed to be structured and unchanged. But as a cultural term it came to 1960s. It was an age of anti-war, wish, ideology, morality, emptiness. People started rethinking about economic condition, capitalism, expansion of territory. People become habituated about everyday ritual. In postmodern time's going to shopping malls, face booking, going to food shop become everyday ritual.

I am raising few key points just to understand easily what postmodern is –

- It is a new cultural form
- Postmodernism goes parallel with modernism
- It denies modernism.

Postmodern has no value judgment, and no constant truth. Postmodernism has no depth, no root. It is like Rhizome. Social and cultural pluralism, unclear bases for social unity is seen in postmodern society. Visual culture is the dominator of postmodern society. Hyper-reality, image saturation, simulacra seem more powerful than the "real". What TV shows, that is more original than real life. Not only visual culture but also consumerism, cyber culture, pop culture dominates our everyday life. The line between high culture and low culture has been blurred. Pop culture, hybrid culture, living double standard life, mixing pop music with classical music makes music fusion. All these become trend in contemporary world as well as in postmodern literature.

2.1 Features:

Postmodernism contains a number of features. Among them, use of language, pastiche, intertextuality, metafiction, equality, technoculture and hyperreality, temporal distortion, paranoia, magic realism maximalism and minimalism, these are the major features which are described in below.

Among all the aspects, use of language, are the most recognizable aspects of postmodernism. This becomes the central feature of postmodern text. A postmodern writer often treats a serious subject in a playful and humorous manner. Vonnegut treats World War II in a humorous way. In the text *The Crying of Lot 49*, contains characters named Mike Fallopian and Dr. Hilarious and a disco called KCUF, in ironic and humorous way while the novel as a whole has a serious subject and a complex structure.

Pastiche is one of the most significant features used in postmodern text. Pastiche means combining different ideas together and ‘pastes’ them to make new style. The ideas are generally taken from past literary work then combine them as a new form of literature. Thomas Pynchon blends many ideas together in his text *The Crying of lot 49*. Such as – science fiction, mythical name, songs and pop songs, high standard and low standard. By mixing all ideas he creates his own ideas.

Intertextuality means one text referencing other texts. It is a creative transformation which represents the idea of another text based on different language and different social context as well. This term is coined by a Bulgarian/French theorist Julia Kristeva. In her view,

“[A]ny text is constructed of a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another” (Kristeva 1980:66).

Postmodern authors features metafiction in their writing. Metafiction means writing about writing where author makes understand his readers why he is writing or the purpose of writing of this text. Here author shows self reflexivity. In the first chapter of *Slaughter house- Five*, Vonnegut writes the purpose or

intention of writing this book. He uses this feature in his writing.

Postmodernism believes in equality. According to Postmodernists “high and low culture are of equal worth”. There is no distinction between high culture and low culture. In postmodern text author presents, opera and pop music, rich people living in a cheap hotel - these ideas in same line.

Postmodern is an age of Technoculture and hyperreality. Technology is everywhere in our life. Postmodern author use this aspect frequently in their texts. Science fiction, TV shows, films, internet - the elements of technoculture and hyperreality. Using technology becomes everydayness in our life. Life and Images of any celebrity shows in TV creates a ‘larger than life image’ to the viewer’s mind.

Postmodern literature often follows temporal distortion technique. Non-linear narratives, timelines and using of fragmentation are called temporal distortion. Through this technique author controls the plot in his text. Vonnegut uses this technique in his novel *Slaughter house- Five*. In this text he uses time travel, flash back, reversed narrative and fragmentation.

Postmodernism considers paranoia as a fluctuation of our life. In postmodern text there are chaos and no order system exist. It is an absurd idea. In postmodern text author shows paranoia in different ways, such as- searching for identities, in social system etc. Thomas Pynchon’s *Crying of lot 49* is perfect example of paranoia. Protagonist character Oedipa Mass searching for social order but it fails. Even it makes paranoia to the readers mind.

Magic realism is one of most important postmodern technique. Magical realism means introducing something unrealistic or impossible idea into a narrative and seems like very normal. Through skillful time shifts, miscellaneous use of dreams, myths and fairy stories author use this technique.

Maximalism means writing in a disorganized way which gives much detail and is a lengthy text. Many

critics say this type of text filled with language play and empty in emotion.

Minimalism is just opposite to maximalism. Generally postmodern short stories are written using this technique. Authors do not provide much detail or create meaningless point. Instead of providing every single detail they just reveals the context of the story and non-exceptional character. Then author allows the reader's imagination to shape the story.

2.2 Postmodernism in everyday life:

We are living in a postmodern time. Now-a-days postmodernism is one of the most discussed topics around the world. In the late 20th century or after the World War II, literature faces a remarkable change. Postmodern elements start adding in literature. Postmodern ideas are not restricted in literature rather than it enrolls in our everyday life. A lot of our everyday actions might be considered as postmodern. Visual culture, going to McDonalds(having ham burger, pizza), consumerism, face booking, tweeting, comment on blogs, uploading picture, going for movie, following trend – these are everyday ritual in postmodern society.

In our country going to Jamuna Future Park and Bashundhara City has become an everyday ritual. People going there for shopping, having food or for watching movies in theater. Under the one roof they can get what they want. So shopping mall idea is getting popular in postmodern times. The idea of consumerism is getting even bigger with the idea of shopping mall. From one store people are buying things that they need. By the influence of advertisements, sometimes they buy things what they don't need actually. In the TV, in newspaper, in magazine advertisement published and people influenced by that. Media presents products in such a way that people need it. People don't even know why they are buying this. *White Noise* is a postmodern text which shows consumer culture.

Media dominates our society. TV programs, music,



films, daily soap operas become popular culture. People are addicted to these programs now. TV is showing hyperreal images. Umberto Eco (1987) an Italian most modernist philosopher and literary figure, define hyperreal as that which is more real than real.

Audience lives their real lives through simulations of reality given by the media. TV- soap operas and serials such as X-Files, Star Trek, Baywatch, Quantico and other TV programs have become televised all over the world. The soccer players (David Beckham, Cristiano Ronaldo), pop singers (Eminem, Madonna, Tylor Swift), sportsmen become not only celebrities, but also commercial products promoting a distribution and sale of clothes, perfumes, and even hair and life styles which leads to a worshipping of the cult of the brand names highly commercially advertised and thus evoking the illusion of their value. Players, singers, dancers become the models of products and people are biased of these products.

Technology and cyber world are new way of living our life. In contemporary time we cannot live without our cell phone or laptop or internet. Technology is



The Facebook logo makes sense now...



everywhere in our life. Social media has become our new everydayness. Facebooking, tweeting, comment on blogs, sending e-mails, uploading pictures, sharing information has become trend in our life. Postmodern authors features science and technology in literature.

Digital technology, electronic world influenced contemporary novels. Postmodern text *Slaughterhouse Five* is a science fiction.

Postmodern film is another element of postmodernism in everyday life. It reflects the ideas of postmodernism. By bringing significant changes postmodern film breaks the concept of conventional cinema. It presents the new world and gives a new view of it. Postmodern film separates the idea of using techniques in regular way from traditional film, such as the use of pastiche of many styles. It also collapses the distinction between high and low art styles. Ridley Scott's 'Blade runner' (1982) is the best known postmodern film. The film is about future dystopia where replicates have been

invented. There is tremendous effacement of boundaries between genres and styles with the fusion of disparate styles and time. It is common feature in postmodern cinema. Here is a mixing of clothes, cultures and styles. The film is playing with time with various types of clothes, culture and mixing them all together to create the world of the film. The fusion of science fiction is another example of the postmodern representation of time and everyday reality.



Chapter 3

Postmodern fiction : Three novels

This paper aims to show the thematic analyses of the texts, *The crying of lot49* by Thomas pynchon, *Slaughterhouse-Five* by Kurt Vonnegut and *Disgrace* by John Maxwell Coetzee. These texts are postmodern in feature. From the view of postmodernism my paper will show analysis in this chapter. First the paper will present a general introduction of the following texts then the themes and techniques.

3.1 Themes, Techniques and Fragmentation in *The Crying of lot 49*

The Crying of lot 49 is a postmodern text by Thomas Pynchon, published in 1965. The protagonist character is Oedipa Maas, is a typical house-wife who lives with her husband, Mucho Maas in Kinneret. Oedipa receives a will, there she finds out that her ex-lover, Pierce Inverarity, is dead and now all property belongs to Oedipa. So she has to go to San Narciso. Then she meets with Metzger who is a lawyer and co-executor of Pierce Inverarity's state. To execute the property Oedipa needs help and Metzger promises to help her. After having an affair he ran away with another girl. Then Oedipa start her quest and finds out a mysterious courier system called 'Tristero'. It is an underground courier service. Through her quest she meets a lot of people. Their names are fragmented and meaningless, such as, Dr.Hilarius, her psychotherapist, John Nefastis who claims that he has created a working version of Maxwell's Demon the band group 'Paranoid' who sings songs by coping. Later we see that Oedipa comes to know that Pierce collected stamps. At the end of the story, Oedipa attends an auction and waiting to bidding to begin. This is how the story ends.

In this text Pynchon presents the life and culture of contemporary American's.

Themes:

The text, *The Crying of lot 49*, Thomas Pynchon introduces many themes. The major themes are explained in this paper. The themes are – drug culture, isolation, pop culture and entropy.

Drug culture is one of the prominent themes of this novel. Drug culture is first introduced by Dr. Hilarius who is a psychologist. Protagonist character Oedipa used to go to him to have mental support. He uses a drug, named LSD, for treatment which he calls “the bridge” (Pynchon 7). Even he experiments with this drug to housewives who use to go to him like Oedipa. He says using this drug creates bridge between individual and others. Hilarius explains, “with the LSD...the distinction begins to vanish” (Pynchon 111). Use of drug creates a sense of isolation, alienation, loss of identity and Oedipa feels these feelings. She starts feeling hallucinating. Author says –

“There are many evidences in this text that Oedipa is hallucinating. She is not in her normal mental state.” (Pynchon 91).

Due to drug she stated hallucination. Dr. Shildrick says - “Hallucinogens like LSD are known to lead to the lost of identity” (Shildrick, 37). Mucho Maas, Oedipa’s husband, uses a ton of LSD drug given by Dr. Hilarius and he becomes insane as a result their marriage destroyed. Even the drug effects on Dr. Hilarius also as a consequence he lost his identity and unable to communicate. Losing her husband and Doctor, Oedipa become isolated at the end of the story.

Isolation or alienation is the major problem which Oedipa suffers throughout the text. In fact, contemporary American’s suffer from this. They feel isolated, especially, after the World War II, people started questioning themselves. They started losing their faith in religion. So they involve themselves into many illegitimate acts, drinking alcohol, using drugs. They feel emptiness, lack of communication, losing their identity, deprived from love, suffocation – all these, make them feel isolated. As an effect of these,

people are haunted by nightmares. In this text Oedipa, including her psychotherapist, Dr. Hilarius, Roseman (Oedipa's family lawyer) haunted by nightmares.

In this text Pynchon included pop culture as it was one of the major cultures in contemporary American society. San Narcisco is a place where author shows cultural chaos and diversity, to the readers of the text. Author says-

“San Narcisco, a place less an identifiable city than a grouping of concepts,” (Pynchon: 13).

Through Mucho Mass, Oedipa's Husband, we see pop culture here first. He is a disc jockey in a disco. Then Oedipa meet with a young hotel manager while checking into a hotel in San Narcisco , he is a member of a music band, "The Paranoids." This band group sings English songs with an English accent like “The Beatles” band group, which is the most successful music group during that time. This "The Paranoids' music group also share them hair styles, they try to look like them. Through this group Pynchon represents pop as well as hippie culture of 1960's. Gay bar and regular using of drug like LSD also represents the pop culture. Oedipa's lawyer, Roseman, is a fan of defense lawyer Perry Mason who is a fictional popular lawyer. A television show telecast everyday based on crime and Perry Mason solves the case in single episode. Roseman everyday watches the show and appreciates it. This show is long running popular TV show. Pynchon represents this to mock south Californian culture of mid 1960s.

Entropy is one of the vital themes of this text. Pynchon presents this theme through a machine, called ‘Maxwell's demon’, invented by a mad scientist, John Nefastis. Physicist James Clark Maxwell came up with the thought. Basically ‘Maxwell's demon’ is a "machine" that violates the second law of thermodynamics. The second law of thermodynamics says that entropy always increases with time but by inventing this machine he claims that it can violate the second law. In this case he shows how the ‘Maxwell's demon, a machine, works. According to Nefastis, this machine can only be operated by a

"Sensitive," who would be able to separate the heat molecules with his or her ability to move the molecules with the help of their mind and concentration. Nefastis goes on –

“‘Entropy is a figure of speech, then?’ Sighed Nefastis, “a metaphore. It connects the world of thermodynamics to the world of information flow.” (Pynchon: 85)

The actual concept of Maxwell's demon' is a demon and two small chambers of gas. Between the two chambers there is a door which the demon controls. When gas molecules get close to the door, the demon rapidly opens and shuts the door so that the faster molecules move into one chamber, and the slower ones move into the other. Since faster molecules are by their nature warmer, when the demon opens and closes the door it is in essence creating one hot and one cold chamber. Maxwell's theory was that this experiment shows how the second law of thermodynamics could possibly be violated and entropy avoided. Entropy means disorder of a system. Among The themes, presents in this novel, entropy is the strangest theme. Pynchon presents this theme to make reader understand that Oedipa has to function as the 'Demon' for the Tristero, what she chases.

Techniques:

As a postmodern writer, Pynchon uses numerous postmodern techniques in this writing *The Crying of lot 49*. With the postmodern techniques he has adopted a scholarly technique, that is, he is not directly giving the information in the novel but he involves the readers to search for the meaning from the text. Through these techniques the author organizes his story. In this part I am trying to find out the postmodern techniques, such as - use of language, parody, irony, intertextuality, satire, dark humor and open ended, uses in this text.

Pynchon's use of language, undoubtedly, is one of the best techniques used in the text, *The Crying of lot 49*. Names that used in this text are the best example of word play. Pynchon provides the character names to satire the society because the names do not imply any meaning. As Richard Poirier states in his essay, *The Importance of Thomas Pynchon*, the writer does not use language to only parody cultures and characters but also to mock at the notions of self, importance of an emphasis on one's own works as well as the concepts of history, theories and systems:

“Pynchon extends parodic perception from literature not only to science, to pop culture, to the traditions of analysis, but even to the orderings of the unconscious, to dreams themselves. (...) It is as if human life in all of its recorded manifestations is bent towards rigidification, reification and death. (...) Pynchon seems to say not only that history is in itself a form of repression, but so, too, is the human impulse to make or write history.” (Poirier 155)

Pynchon's use of language in this text is very complex because the author makes use of advance scientific and technical language to express the feeling of various characters especially Oedipa Maas.

Parody is one of the main features of postmodernism. Pynchon uses this technique through narration of the text. In this text the music group, "The Paranoids", is a group of young Americans. They sing songs in a fake English accent which is not original but copied from popular band group. Then we learn that

Oedipa finds the underground postal courier service. Its name is 'WASTE'. Actually through the word 'WASTE' author, makes us understand people's life in America during that time. The way of use this word is parodic. Thus the novelist himself parodies the culture of contemporary America. Theorist Abrams argues -

“A parody imitates the serious manner and characteristic features of a particular literary work, or the distinctive style of a particular author, or the typical stylistic and other features of a serious literary genre, and deflates the original by applying the imitation to a lowly or comically inappropriate subject.”
(A Glossary of Literary Terms 40)

In this text Pynchon uses irony that is one of the major postmodern techniques. The use of words to express something other than and especially the opposite of the literal meaning – is called irony. In this text we find that Dr. Hillarius is sort of an insane doctor who treats patients having any kind of mental stress or disorder. It is ironic. The doctor calls Oedipa at 3am and asks her to take a part in the experiment involving LSD drug. The ironic part involves the fact that it ends up that Dr. Hillarius is the one hallucinating when he thinks everyone is out to kill him at the end of the novel.

In the text, *The Crying of Lot 49*, Pynchon uses postmodern techniques. Intertextuality is one of them. It means one text referencing other texts. Referencing the Jacobean play is the best example of intertextuality. In this text a Jacobean play featured, Oedipa went to the theater to watch the play and to talk to the director of the play. When Oedipa discusses the Jacobean play with the director Randolph Driblette, he answers that the original writer of the play, Wharfinger:

"It isn't literature, it doesn't mean anything. Wharfinger was no Shakespeare.' 'Who was he?' she said. 'Who was Shakespeare. It was a long time ago" (Pynchon 60).

This is a phenomenon of intertextuality, as the tragedy is a story within a story.

Satire is widely used technique in this text. Being a satire, it must first have a comic element or ridiculous element. We find serious events that are expressed in a kidological sense. This type of events we find in this writing. Postal courier service, WASTE, is the example of these techniques. Oedipa finds the underground postal courier service that service is termed out with 'WASTE'. That use of word shows satire. Though the author names the courier service, WASTE, but he shows the people's life in California in America in contemporary time. Besides this, we see that during the quest Oedipa encounters with different men. Through the encounter she feels different kinds of feelings. Tension or potential for romantic involvement – provide a postmodern context for the parody of romance.

In *The Crying of Lot 49* dark humor technique is found. When a serious event is expressed in a simple and cool manner is called dark humor. In this text we see that human bones serve as a source from which ink is produced – is an example of dark humor. Pynchon says -

"Later on, their bones were fished up again and made into charcoal, and the charcoal into ink, which Angelo, having a dark sense of humor, used in all his subsequent communications with Faggio, the present document included" (Pynchon 50).

The novel has a structure called self-explanatory. Self-explanation can also be called in one sense metafiction. Metafiction is also one of the techniques in the postmodern literature.

Open ended technique, undoubtedly, major technique in postmodern fiction. This text is not exceptional than other postmodern text. From the beginning we find Oedipa, as a detective character rather than a typical house-wife. She did adventure throughout the whole novel but at the end her adventure was not fulfilled. She leaves the reader with an open ended action of the story. At the end of the story we see, Oedipa waiting for the oction of lot 49. Pynchon says –

“Oedipa sat alone, toward the back of the room, looking at the napes of necks, trying to guess which

one was her target, her enemy, perhaps her proof.(...) She heard a lock snap shut; the sound echoed a moment.(...) The auctioneer cleared his throat. Oedipa settled back, to await the crying of lot 49.” (Pynchon152).

This is how the novel ends. The author makes the story open ended to readers.

Fragmentation:

Fragmentation is a vital aspect of postmodernism. *The Crying of lot 49* is a parodic and fragmented postmodern text. Thomas Pynchon uses fragmentation in his text in various ways. In this paper, first, I will interpret social context which is fragmented. Then I will try to evaluate names which are best examples of fragmentation. In this text names are fragmented as well as identities. In the light of postmodernism my paper will show fragmentation of this text.

In this text Pynchon shows paranoid society and characters. Paranoia is an ongoing process of this text. It is a mental disorder which is characterized by delusions of persecution, unwarranted jealous or fear of unknown or exaggerated self-importance. It blurs the line between reality and imagination. In this text characters are suffering from it especially, Oedipa, Mucho and Dr. Hilarius.

After the Beginning of the novel we see that our protagonist character, Oedipa comes to San Narcisco to execute the state of execute Pierce Inverarity who was her ex-boyfriend. For executing Pierce's state she meets lot of people and through the process later she finds out that a mysterious postal service runs by a group, name Tristero. Then she starts investigation of the system. After starting her journey Oedipa herself seems very unsure what she exactly wants. She does not seem to know whether she wants a definite answer from this quest or it's all her imagination due to mental state or she is not that what she really thinks. Does she really want to expose the mystery? Does she able to do that? Oedipa herself does not know the answers at all. This kind of uncertainty makes people paranoid. Another point is noticeable, that is, from the beginning of this text we find that Oedipa lives a loveless life. Her husband, Mucho Mass, is not a promising husband. A real husband ought to support his wife and should help her when she is in need of help but Mucho fails in playing the role of a good husband. She is always deprived of love from her husband. So, having no option left, Oedipa seeks help from other men. She starts find love in them. But no one proves real love for her rather she is treated as an object of enjoyment. This kind of

frustration also leads to the path of paranoia. Paranoia makes fragmentation of self and identity. As a result society becomes fragmented at the end.

Using of drug makes social system fragmented also. In this text, drug culture is first introduced by Dr. Hilarius who is a psychologist. He experiments with LSD drug. Oedipa, Mucho Mass, even Dr. Hilarius, himself is the victim of drug. The use of drugs creates the border between reality and hallucination. Throughout the novel, Oedipa gives a sense of confusion between hallucinations. She is not sure of anything that is it real or hallucination. We learn that Oedipa hallucinates. Her husband becomes insane as well as Dr. Hilarius, due to drug effect. When Oedipa tries to talk him he says,

“Do you think anyone can protect me from these fanatics? They walk through walls. They replicate: you flee them, turn a corner, and there they are, coming for you again" (Pynchon 110).

Using of drug not only makes people insane but also makes them feel depressed towards life, make them isolated, feel alienated. They lose their identity. These all happens with the characters of this text. by presenting the drug effects in this text Pynchon clearly criticizes paranoid and fragmented society of contemporary America.

Names are the central aspect of *Lot 49*. In this text Pynchon uses these characters names either to evoke comical response to his reader or to deliver confusion. At the beginning of the novel we find our protagonist character, Oedipa Maas. Oedipa is the female version of “Oedipus”, who was the King of Thebes. “King Oedipus” is a play by Greek play writer, Sophocles. “Maas” means ‘my ass’ – referred by *Oxford English Dictionary*. Some critic says “Maas” means more, some says ‘uncertain’, some says “Maas” means something that resists change.

Then another noticeable name, Pierce Inverarity, we discover. The first name, “Pierce”, which could mean so many things – homophobic, intelligent or violent. The second name shows –

Inverarity = Rarity, Varsity, Invert

INVERITY = (In) verarity = (Un) Truth.

After Oedipa's name, Pynchon comes up with this name. Pierce Inverarity, is Oedipa's ex-lover. He is a super-rich California real estate mogul. He is an amoral businessman. At the beginning of the story, Oedipa receives a letter and she come to know that Pierce Inverarity is dead and all his property belongs to Oedipa. As the story progress we start doubting on the presence of Pierce Inverarity. Actually it seems that he is not dead at all. He is playing a cruel joke with Oedipa. Pynchon shows him as a mystery man. He has no direct presence but somehow he is present or involve with the mystery. the co-executor of Pierce Inverarity's sate is Layer Metzger.

Metzger (German word) —> brutcher.

Through this name Pynchon refers common view of layer in U.S.A. He basically functions as a tag-along, throughout the novel. He only concerns about love affair. First he develops an affair with Oedipa then suddenly ran away, with a very young girl who was a girlfriend of Serge who is a member of band "Paranoia", without informing Oedipa.

Then we find Oedipa's husband, Mucho Maas. It means-

Mucho Maas —> mucho mas (Spanish) —> much more .

He is a background character of this book. He was a former car-salesman. But he leaves that job and become disk jockey in a disco. Due to taking drug, LSD given by Dr. Hilarius, he becomes insane at the end of the book.

Dr. Hilarius is Oedipa's psychotherapist.

Hilarius = extremely funny.

He was a Nazi doctor at once worked in Buchenwald concentration camp. He believes in telepathy. He

gives LSD to Oedipa and other house-wives. He experiments with the house-wives by giving them high dose of the drug, LSD. He asks Oedipa to take a part of the experiment but Oedipa denies becoming the part of the experiment. So she saves herself by denying taking that high dose of drug. At the end the doctor, himself uses the drug and loose his mental state and hallucinate.

John Nefastis plays a role of mad scientist in this story. Nefastis is a Latin word.

Nefastis is a plural of 'Nefastus' = unholy, forbidden, wicked, irreligious, impious. He is obsessed with perpetual motion. He tried to invent a type of Maxwell's Demon .

In this text Pynchon blends a lot of social elements. All the elements make a chaos of this story. This chaos makes fragmentation on the story. Pynchon intentionally does this.

3.2 Themes, Techniques and science fiction in *SlaughterHouse-Five*

Kurt Vonnegut's novel *SlaughterHouse-Five* is a postmodern novel (1969). In this text Vonnegut shows war of Dresden though it is an anti-war book. In the first chapter the author talks about the difficulties what he faces during the time of writing about World War II. After this autobiographical introduction he starts writing about the story and the protagonist, Billy Pilgrim. He is a non-heroic character who was captured by German's and kept in a slaughterhouse during firebombing of Dresden. There he meets with Roland Weary, a soldier captured by Germans. Later he dies due to foot injuries. There Billy also meets Edger Derby, a middle aged soldier who cares for him in POW camp and he also died.

Billy travels through time. He can go back and forth of his life. He can experience any moment of his life though he has no control over it. He never knows what he will experience next. In 1960s Billy nearly died due to plane crash. No one survives but him. He was admitted to hospital, his wife was coming to see him but she died of carbon monoxide poisoning from car in front of the hospital. Billy has two children. At the night of the wedding of his daughter he was kidnapped by aliens. They keep him in their planet Tralfamadore . There he comes to know that they experience time as 'fourth dimension'. There is no past, no present, and no future. They are able to see events at the same time. They do not believe in free will rather they believe in predestination. Whatever happens is happen, nothing can stop that. Later the aliens send him back to earth.

This text is written without maintaining time chronology. Evens jumps from here and there. Through this text Vonnegut shows the horrors of war.

In this paper first I will try to interpret, themes then postmodern techniques used in this text then the most significant factor 'science fiction'. In this way I have organized my paper for analyzing this text.

Themes:

Slaughterhouse-Five is a postmodern fiction by Kurt Vonnegut. It contains many themes. Among them war is the major theme of this text. Besides this theme death, 'so it goes', predestination and freewill, narrative style and structure – presents as major themes in this text.

The main theme of *Slaughterhouse-Five* is war. War shows us cruelty, hatred and violence of man against man. The whole novel tells the story of Vietnam War. According to Vonnegut's view war is messy and disturbing. It is not noble or valiant. War is meaningless. So in that sense we can call it an anti war book. Even the author makes a statement by saying this –

“...he raised his eyebrows and inquired, ‘Is it an anti-war book?’

‘Yes,’ I said.” (Vonnegut 3)

Author shows us the catastrophic firebombing of Dresden in World War II. This bombing structure shows the other random events in the story for readers. Actually Billy Pilgrim, the novel's protagonist, is a chaplain's assistance and sends to battle in 1944. There he was taken as prisoner by the Germans. During that time he observes and experiences the cruelty of war very closely. He says –

“ The devastation of Dresden was boundless. When Goethe as a young student visited the city, he will found sad ruins”. (Vonnegut 13).

This quotation Vonnegut uses in this book from another book entitled, *Dresden* published in 1908. He uses this quotation just to show the destructive manner of war.

We know that this is a war novel. So it's very obvious that death will be a prominent theme of this novel. In war countless number of people loses their lives. Not only the people who joints battle but also the people who has never involve in it. Billy experiences the war and sees many innocent people dies. In

Dresden where Billy and others takes shelter, they are protected but at the same time other shelters are collapsed and people get killed inside. In this text characters dies not only by war but also dies in different ways. Billy's wife, Valencia, dies due to carbon monoxide inhalation while driving a car to see Billy who is admitted to the hospital. Billy is admitted to the hospital due to a plane crash. The plane crash in Vermont, every passenger dies in the plane crash but Billy survived. Death is something that no one could change it. The author shows this idea through the lens of Tralfamadorians, because they experience time as four dimensions. There is no present, no future, no past. If anyone dies in one moment, he is alive in other moment. Author says-

“When a Tralfamadorian sees a corpse, all he thinks is that the dead person is in bad condition in the particular moment, but that the same person is just fine in plenty of other moments.” (Vonnegut 27).

"So it goes"- is the most repeated and noted line of this text. This line is used one hundred and six times in this novel. It appears when anyone dies. We find Billy a very calm and tranquil kind of person. He wants to accept everything what he experiences. Actually he believes in destiny, what has to happen, happens. So when anything goes wrong he says- so it goes. It enables the book and thus Vonnegut's narrations go on. Even at the end of the book we see that a bird is making a comment, may be, by saying this line in its language.

In this text, Vonnegut expresses his idea on predestination and free will. In the first chapter when he introduces the expression 'so it goes' there he express this idea as well. According to Vonnegut, there is no such thing like freewill for human. Mankind has no control over his destiny. According to the author, what is written in fate that will exactly happen like that. Man does what fate dictates. No one can change it because it was preordained long before he was born. Billy learns this idea when he experiences another planet Tralfamador. The Tralfamadorians discusses this idea with Billy. Billy believes this idea. The

author says-

“Among the things Billy Pilgrim could not change were the past, the present, and the future.” (Vonnegut 44)

This quote suggests that Billy is subject to fate. He cannot change what has already happened to him, what is happening to him or what will happen to him. Tralfamadorians says free will is not reality, only people in earth believe in it. Billy believes that idea. Vonnegut uses this idea to show that he could not change anything. He is just a puppet in the hand of destiny.

Vonnegut’s narrative style in this text is different than any other postmodern text. We find first person narration along with third person narration. Vonnegut, himself was present in this text last tenth chapter. He argues- “That was I. That was me. That was the author of this book,” (Vonnegut 125). The author uses non-narrative style, such as, meaningless question asked by the bird at the end. He also shows anti-narrative style, such as, out-of-order leaping while discussing Billy’s life.

Structure is a significant theme for this novel, because this novel has no traditional structure. It has totally uncustomary structure and has no clear beginning, middle and end. Usually story start with a beginning but in terms of this story, the author starts the story from middle part. Besides this, the text has no time and place unity, because it does not maintain chronological time. There is no sequence maintained in this story. The protagonist, Billy, has a problem of time travelling. Due to time travel and flashbacks, Billy frequently goes past as well as future. Even, the narrator, Billy has no control over it. The setting jumps rapidly and repeatedly and sometimes shows flashbacks. If we go through the book we will notice that Vonnegut himself appears and reveals what the starting and ending will be end of the novel, in the first chapter. He state that –

“Listen:

Billy Pilgrim has come unstuck in time.

It ends like this:

Poo-tee-weet?" (Vonnegut 16).

This quotation is the last line of first chapter. After finishing the first chapter, from the second chapter till tenth chapter Vonnegut shows us war in Germany, the Trafaladorian planet, and Ilium, New York, Billy's daughter's wedding through flashbacks and without maintaining time chronology. This example shows that how Vonnegut structures his writing.

Techniques:

As a postmodern writer Vonnegut uses postmodern techniques in his writing. Through the techniques he constructs this story. For developing the story he uses these techniques, such as, irony, satire, Parody, metafiction and fragmentation.

In postmodern novel, use of irony is a common technique. Using words to express something other than especially the opposite of the literal meaning – is called irony. Vonnegut shows a number of ironies in this text. For example: He is a chaplain's assistant, it means neither he can help his friends nor can harm the enemies. It seems ironic because he is in war so normally he needs to help his friends and as a doctor he has to help injured soldiers. But he forced to do nothing. Vonnegut says –

“Billy was chaplain's assistant in the war. A chaplain's assistant is customarily a figure of fun in the American Army. Billy was no exception. He was powerless to harm the enemy or to help his friends. In fact, he had no friends.” (Vonnegut 22).

Another irony is Billy, Weary and two regimental scouts lost in the snow forest. Then the two scouts leaves Billy and Weary behind because they think Billy and Weary would put them in danger. But ironically they both were shot and killed though they had much military knowledge than Billy and Weary. It seems most ironic scene in this text that after a plane crash Billy admitted in hospital. The irony is his wife was anxious for his life but breaking exhaust in car, she dies of Carbon Monoxide poisoning in front of the hospital. Vonnegut states that –

“...an airplane to fly them from Ilium to an international convention to optometrists in Montreal. The plane crashed on top of Sugarbush Mountain, in Vermont. Everybody was killed but Billy. So it goes.

While Billy was recuperating in a hospital in Vermont, his wife died accidentally of carbon-monoxide poisoning of Carbon Monoxide poisoning. So it goes.” (Vonnegut 18).

In postmodern novel satire is used frequently. The first subtitle of this text is satirical. The full title of this novel is- *Slaughterhouse Five*, or '*The Children's Crusade: A Duty-Dance with Death*'. The title, *The Children's Crusade*', used as satirical because the soldiers shows here as 'children'. Roland Weary is a good example. He imagines himself as a hero of the war. With the two scouts they are 'Three Musketeers'. Vonnegut states that –

“Weary’s version of the true war story went like this: There was a big German attack, and Weary and his antitank buddies fought like hell until everybody was killed but Weary” (Vonnegut 30).

Another example of satire, shows in the text, is when the Tralfamadorian says to Billy that he has visited some planet and studied but only in earth people believe in freewill. There is nothing like that, indeed. The things are going to happen, that cannot be stopped or changed. It is almost laughing at us that human believes such things. May be Vonnegut tried to show us that the war and the destruction is unavoidable.

Parody is often used technique in postmodern texts. Here we find this technique. In the text, Roland Weary and the other two scouts called themselves, 'Three Musketeers'. It is a parody of “Three musketeers candy Bar” which is an example of “high literature” the three musketeers was written by Alexander Duma.

Slaughterhouse Five is a self-reflexive text. All through the book we observe the presence of the author. Though the character, Billy, narrates the story but we find the author's presence as 'I' in this book. The author tries to show himself present in the text. In the text, self-reflexivity is clearly manifested through the author's perspective in his text:

“That was me. That was the author of this book” (Vonnegut 125).

In this way the author shows self- reflexivity. Self- reflexivity can be called metafiction.

Fragmentation is the most used weapon of postmodern writer. Vonnegut, as a postmodern writer, uses this weapon very usefully. Through this postmodern technique Vonnegut shows his anti-war feeling. As a war effect, the author shows Billy as a fragmented character. Time has been shown as fragmented. The structure and narrative technique is also fragmented of this novel.

Vonnegut shows the fragmented nature of time through his text, *Slaughterhouse Five*. Due to the fragmentation of time there is no past, present or future. This view to time existing becomes a lesson learned by Billy from an alien group. They live in other planet called "Trafalmore". According to Billy, the alien kidnapped him. He says –

"He said he had been kidnapped by the Trafalmadorians on the night of his daughter's wedding."
(Vonnegut 19).

After the kidnap Billy was taken to their planet. From the planet he came to know the time concept. The Trafalmadorians could see all the moments altogether. They have nothing like past, present and future. Billy explain that –

" the most important thing I learned on Trafalmore was that...always will exist." (Vonnegut 19).

Trafalmadorians shows this concept from their own perspective. By showing this concept Vonnegut tried to show the mental state of Billy.

In this text style of narration is also fragmented. Nonlinear narratives used in this text to narrate the story. It means there are no beginning, no middle and no end. The narrative starts in the middle of the story, transition back to the beginning of the tale and then flashes forward to the end. Flash back and flash forward are used as narrative technique. Flash back is a technique through which the author shows us past event of Billy's life. We see that the author is showing present situation suddenly he start showing past

event which sometime is relevant, sometime is not to present situation. Flash forward is a technique through which the author shows us future condition. Through time travel the author shows us back and forward.

The protagonist character, Billy is a fragmented character. He has no control over this time travel. Though it is says that he can see past and future through time travel but the truth s he is just hallucinating all the events. The idea of 'Trafalmadorians' is also hallucination. During the World war II Billy was in Dresden. He saw the destruction, death and bloodshed due to war. As a consequence he loses his mental state and hallucinates.

Science fiction:

Slaughterhouse-Five is a science fiction. Vonnegut presents science fiction by referring – aliens (Tralfamadorians) and time travel. These two elements have been shown in this text through the protagonist, Billy. Billy is the one who visits the aliens as well as their planet Tralfamador and experiences time travel. Through the time travel he experiences his past, present even future. He frequently goes any part of his life. But he has no control over it. It naturally happens to him.

In this text Vonnegut reveals the idea of the planet Tralfamadore and the aliens who lives in that planet. It is not the first time when Vonnegut shows us these aliens; in fact he has already showed this in his book *The Sirens of Titan* in 1959. These little weird creatures are unlike aliens in the other science fiction books. The author describes them in the book through Billy. Billy says -

“two feet high, and green and shaped like plumber's friends. Their suction cups were on the ground, and their shafts, which were extremely flexible, usually pointed to the sky. At the top of each shaft was a little hand with a green eye in its palm.” (Vonnegut19). It seems mysterious creatures to me, though Billy says- “The creatures were friendly” (Vonnegut19).

The most shocking thing about the aliens is they experience time as four dimensions. They have the power to watch four dimensions. According to Billy –

“...and they could see in four dimensions. They pitied Earthlings for being able to see only three. They had many wonderful things to teach Earthlings, especially about time.” (Vonnegut19).

We know that Tralfamadorians experiences reality or time in fourth dimensions. Actually, the concept of four dimensions means space-time. It is a scientific term. In this book the concept of four dimensions used including space-time which has no past, no future, and no present. Past, present, future and space time moving altogether. The Tralfamadorians have total access to past, present and future; they are able to

perceive any point in time. They are able to see along the timeline of earth and know what is going to happen next. But they are unable to stop that incident because they believe in predestination or fate. They cannot change their fate. Indeed they do not believe in free will. They believe what is going to happen in their life that will happen nothing can stop it. So whatever happens they accept it easily. Even when anyone dies they simply utter 'so it goes' because they have no power to change it but to take it as normal. As they experiences time altogether that is past, present and future so the dead person is alive in any other moment of time. Billy explain it by saying –

“The most important thing I learned on Tralfamadore was that when a person dies he only appears to die. He is still very much alive in the past, so it is very silly for people to cry at his funeral. All moments, past, present and future, always have existed, always will exist. The Tralfamadorians can look at all the different moments just that way we can look at a stretch of the Rocky Mountains, for instance. They can see how permanent all the moments and they can look at any moment that interests them. It is just an illusion we have here on Earth that one moment follows another one, like beads on a string, and that once a moment is gone it is gone forever. When a Tralfamadorian sees a corpse, all he thinks is that the dead person is in a bad condition in that particular moment, but that the same person is just fine in plenty of other moments. Now, when I myself hear that somebody is dead, I simply shrug and say what the Tralfamadorians say about dead people, which is "so it goes." (Vonnegut 19-20)

Billy's time travel is similar as Tralfamadorians experiences time. They experience all of existence at any given time. Like them Billy can see any moment of his life no matter that the time is past or present or future. It naturally or frequently happens to him. He says–

“Billy is spastic in time, has no control over where he is going next and the trips aren't necessarily fun . he is in a constant state of stage fright, he says, because he never knows what part of his life he is going to have to act in next” (Vonnegut 17).

Through the time travel Billy is able to see any picture or moment of his life. Even he sees himself dying. But like Tralfamadorians's concept of predestination, he could not stop it.

The author presents this scientific concept through Billy's view. After publishing of the book it was a widely accepted concept of the scientific community that the three spacial dimensions and time are linked into what is called "space-time". The same concept, fourth dimensions, is used in the British television show 'Doctor' Who as well, since in the series, the Doctor travels with the help of his "time machine" called the TARDIS, a machine disguised as a blue police box that is bigger on the inside than the outside, and can travel to virtually anywhere in the whole of space and time. With the help of the machine he can go back and forward, then come back in present. I use this example to show that, Vonnegut's concept gain much popularity. As a contemporary theologian Vonnegut tried to show that the contemporary world will turn into a technology based world.

Science fiction is an integral part of postmodernism. Slaughterhouse-five is the glorification of science fiction. The presentation of science fiction through the alien planet, Tralfamadore, becomes a part of Billy's life. Through this process he starts thinking in an optimistic way.

3.3 Themes, techniques and social representation in *Disgrace*

Now come to another text *Disgrace*. This text is written by J.M. Coetzee. It is direct and a simple writing. This text is written based on South Africa. The protagonist character, David Lurie, white, lives in Cape Town in South Africa. He is fifty-two years, married twice and divorced twice. He is a professor of classics and modern languages in Cape Techniqueal University. He has a relationship with a prostitute. After finishing this relationship, he seduces one of his young students, Melanie Isaacs. They are having an affair. Although she does not resist sex with him but it is true that she is not mentally attached in the relation. She wants to make him understand but he never listens. Finally the affair dooms and David finds himself hauled up before the university committee of inquiry. Then he resigns and moves from here to his daughter's place, Salem on Eastern Cape. David's daughter, Lucy Lurie, a white woman, lives along, holding a small firm, raising and selling corps. Lucy's neighbor, Petrus, a black African, use to work in Lucy's farm as helping hand. Lucy and David are talking their dogs for a walk; they encounter three Africans who ask to use their phone. Lucy permits. Then they enter the house, take Lucy to the bed room, lock the door and rape her. They lock David in a bathroom, throw spirit on his eyes and take away valuable things. After this, Lucy become pregnant and gets married with Petrus as his third wife. Petrus become the owner of Lucy's farm and land. David stays there and works in an animal hospice with Bev Shaw. At the end he buys a truck for disposing of the corpses of dogs.

After finishing the summary of this text, my paper will try to interpret, major themes then postmodern techniques used in this text then the most significant factor 'social representation'. In this way I organized my paper for analyzing this text.

Themes :

In this text, *Disgrace*, writer, Coetzee, shows many themes. Among them rape of two female figures, Melanie and Lucy, is the main theme, because due to rapes the whole story develop. Besides this, violence and changing identities – are the major themes of this text.

Rape is the most prominent theme of *Disgrace*. Rape is an unwanted, manipulative or coerced form of sexual activity. In this text, the two female characters, Melanie and Lucy, are the victims of rape. First I am describing Melanie's rape. There is a so-called relationship between David and his young student, Melanie Isaacs. The relationship was developed just to fulfill the lust of David because he could not control his temptation. He started manipulating her, by saying -

“a woman's beauty does not belong to her alone. It is a part of the bounty she brings into the world. She has a duty to share it.” (Coetzee 16).

After the scene, David and Melanie built a physical and sexual relationship. Melanie does not appreciate this kind of activity with David. She tried to stop him. She says –

“Is something the matter? Do you want to tell me?”

She shakes her head.

Are you worried about the two of us?’

‘Maybe,’ she says

‘No need. I'll take care. I won't let it go too far.’

Too far. What is far, what is too far, in a matter like this? Is her too far the same as his too far?” (Coetzee19).

We see that Melanie is aggressive to David for doing this kind of illegitimate activity with her. In the starting of the relationship being seduced by David, she does this. But after she realizes and she has a

boyfriend may be she does not want to cheat on him. So she always tries to stop David from doing this. But he never listens to her. She tries to make him understand and keep it as a secret. But having no other option finally she files a complaint against him. This is how their relationship ends. Then David goes to live with his daughter, Lucy. Lucy Lurie, lives alone in countryside and establishes a farm, where she works. She is an independent and lively girl. She is raped by three blacks. Due to anger and for showing power the blacks rape Lucy. As Lucy is white so they do it intentionally and in a violent way. In this text Lucy's rape shows through David's narration. He narrates –

“ ‘Lucy!’ he shouts. ‘Are you here?’

A vision comes to him of Lucy struggling with the two in the blue overalls, struggling against them. He writhes, trying to blank it out.

‘Lucy!’ he shouts, over and over, till he can hear an edge of craziness in his voice.

...by the time he has the door open, Lucy has turned her back on him. She is wearing a bathrobe, her feet are bare, her hair wet.” (Coetzee 97)

Through the mentioned line we easily understand that Lucy is going through what kind of situation. She is raped by three blacks, among them one is young teenage boy, in a violent and aggressive way. This was the horrifying moment that no one even wants to imagine it in their own life.

Violence is one of the central themes of *Disgrace*. Violence is presented in this text through the rapes of two female characters, words and the way they robbers. Protagonist character, David Lurie, abuses, physically and sexually, his student Melanie Isaacs. They had a so-called affair because in that relation Melanie and David both are not involve mentally. Due to lust and impulse, David builds this kind of relationship with her. David seduces her but realizing this she argues with him and expresses disagreement with him. But David does not feel any anger towards her because he wants her as bed partner only. David secretly keeps this sexual relation with her. It was a silent violence. Now we can

come to Lucy Lurie, only daughter of David Lurie. She also faces this struggle. She is also raped by three blacks but it was more violent way than Melanie. This rape scene shows much violence because it is a gang rape, set her house on fire, David locks David in a bathroom, David says –

“The door opens knocking him off balance. Before him stands the second man, the shorter one, holding an empty one-litre bottle by the neck. 'The key,' says the man.

'No.'

The man gives him a push. He stumbles back, sits down heavily”. (Coetzee 94)

They shoot all the dogs, steal valuable things, throws spirit in David’s eyes and leaves the house in a total mess. Coetzee states that –

“As he lies sprawled he is splashed from head to foot with liquid. His eyes burn, he tries to wipe them. He recognizes the smell: methylated spirits.” (Coetzee 96)

This rape is a physically aggressive form of gender- based on violence and anger because Lucy is independent white woman who lives in a patriarchal society. In that society people does this just to show manhood or racial priority.

Linguistic violence is also presents in this text. After the rape of Lucy, David sees Pollux, who is one among the three rapists, and shouts –

“*You swine!*” he shouts, and strikes him a second time, so that he staggers. “*You filthy swine!*” The word still rings in the air: *Swine!*” (Coetzee 206).

Through the slang Coetzee shows linguistic violence and aggression towards the rapist.

Changing identity – is shown in this novel as one of the major themes. Major characters face the crisis. Protagonist character, David Lurie, feels this crisis first. Due to the being exploit by Professor David, his student, Melanie complaint against him to University Authority. The calls him and says -

“Very well. We are talking about a complaint laid by Ms Melanie Isaacs.” (Coetzee 40)

David loses his job. Then he leaves Cape Town and goes to his daughter. Now he is living with his daughter, Lucy. There he does nothing like teaching but works with a lady named, Bev Shaw who is the owner of the animal hospice. Now he loves animals especially dogs. After rapes by three blacks, Lucy becomes pregnant. It breaks her but she does not want to share it. After this incident, Petrus, Lucy's neighbor who works with her in her farm, proposes her for marriage. Having no other option Lucy also agrees and becomes his third wife. After the marriage Petrus becomes more powerful than before. He becomes co-proprietor of the land and firm of Lucy, gains more property and becomes a powerful land owner. In spite of being an educated person, David starts working in an animal clinic situated in countryside of South Africa. He loses his university job as a Professor, also loses dignity, power, position, his peace of mind and his dreams of success. On the other hand, Petrus who use to work with Lucy in her farm, an uneducated black person, becomes successful, rich, powerful and has a white woman as his wife. Basically, this text shows Paradoxical life between David and Petrus.

Techniques:

In the text *Disgrace*, written by J.M. Coetzee, author presents postmodern features. The features help to construct the story. The features are narrative technique, narrator, using present tense and open ended.

The narration in the novel's discourse is important. Here, the novel's discourse means the narrative technique which is significant because through 'first-person narration' technique we learn that what the author is trying to focus and how the text is written and communicated. This text uses first-person narration. The author makes the story narrates by the protagonist, David Lurie. In this respect critic says that realist fiction is mostly written in the 'first person mode', but in this text narrator speaks in the third person which is less realistic to many critics.

In the text we find third-person narrator. Sarvan argues that it is 'first person narration but third person narrator is present as well' (Sarvan 2). Many critics have suggested that the narrator acts according to the characteristics of a 'limited omniscient narration' which in contrast to the omniscient authorial narrator. And an omniscient authorial narrator knows and control narrative. Here the author uses another technique that is 'stream of consciousness' technique. It means the readers are continuously aware of the protagonist's thoughts. We are aware about David Lurie's thoughts because he narrates the story using 'stream of consciousness' technique. We constantly read what he is thinking and focusing. We can only enter in David's mind but not in any other character's mind. *The narrative communication model*, as defined by Roman Jakobson in his seminal article from 1960, illustrates how Lurie's perspective and reflections are the dominant forces of information provided to the reader. In certain passages, the reader may be uncertain whether it is the voice of the author or the narrator we are reading. In other way, much of the analytical work behind the written word depends on the reader's rethinking of various assumptions.

The discourse of this text is written in present tense. Using third person narration and present tense,

makes the text alive and communicative. Because of the use of present tense discourse becomes more immediate. It seems like that the narrator narrates the events after it occurs and after he lives on those events. In this case, DelConte argues that -

‘the narrating is (also) the experiencing. This gives a sense of immediacy to the story, because the narrator is describing the events while he/she is living them. Moreover, this mode brings the reader close to the events and lets the audience in one minute details’ (DelConte 428-429).

It is clear that, using present tense seems like that the narrator is experiencing the moment because the narrator describes this after living the moment. It brings the reader close to the moments.

Open ending is a typical postmodern technique of ending any story. When the story has no finish line it's called open ended. It means u can easily create a new story where the author makes an end for his story. In this text we learn that it is open ended. After the rape Lucy becomes pregnant with her child. Her father David Lurie started living with her and took care of her. He started working in an animal clinic with Bev Shaw who is the owner of that hospice. Coetzee finished here. He does not explain what is happening next with Lucy and her father, David. The author ends this story in a symbolic manner, because David has to reach a state of personal absolution. Author makes him as if he needs empathy. At the end David will have to learn to set his egoistic manner aside and try to establish relation with other and Lucy is waiting to give birth to her child.

Social Context:

Social condition is one of the most significant topics of this novel. J.M. Coetzee's novel *Disgrace* (1999) explores many controversial topics. It is set in South Africa. Social injustice, patriarchal society, violence against woman, prejudice, changing identities has seen as major problem in South Africa. South Africa has racial problem due to that they have a dark history. In this novel Coetzee shows us the detrimental social condition and change at the same time, especially in this patriarchal society.

For analyzing the social view we need to go through few events and then we will have the clear social picture of this novel. From the beginning of the text we meet the protagonist of this novel, David Lurie. He is a professor in Cape Techniquecal University. Being a Professor he uses to keep relation with a prostitute, named Soraya. She is a beautiful lady. Coetzee states that –

“Soraya is tall and slim, with long black hair and dark, liquid eyes. Technically he is old enough to be her father” (Coetzee 1)

He has been seeing per weekly for over a year. So he knows her well. The author says that –

“Soraya is not her real name, that he is sure of. There are signs she has born a child, or children. It may be that she is not a professional at all. She may work for the agency only one or two afternoons a week, and for the rest live a respectable life in the suburbs...” (Coetzee 3).

He builds this illegitimate relationship after having divorced. ‘He had been married twice and divorced twice’ (Coetzee 1) - this is the very first line of this text shows his marital status. David believes that he could solve his problem with having affair with women. Social conditions are highlighted more through the relationship between David and his young student, Melanie Isaacs. David translated her name as ‘the dark one’ (Coetzee 18). Though Melanie is not in the relationship mentally, it means she is not willing but has to do so. It is more like exploitation or like rape or harassment so she takes a step against her

Professor David. She complained against Professor David. He does this as an exercise of power authority. Because having this kind of relation was a symbol of power. In the text, *Reading the Unspeakable: Rape in J.M. Coetzee's Disgrace*, Graham says –

“Melanie was black and David was white so he did that to show power though he is abusing his power academia being as old as the profession of teaching itself” (Graham 438).

In this text we find David's ex-wife, Rosalind. She narrates as third person narrator to describe their marriage. She narrates, their marriage was passionate recriminator. David has inability to resist his temptation. David's attitude shows a clear picture of patriarchy as well as impudence towards woman.

After the rape of Melanie we need to come to Lucy. David's daughter, Lucy Lurie, lives in countryside and establishes a farm, where she works. She is also a rape victim. She has been raped by three black people due to aggression and racism. That time David is locked in a bathroom. He shouts -

“ ‘Lucy!’ he calls again, and now for the first time she turns her gaze on him. A frown appears on her face. ‘What on earth did they do to you?’” (Coetzee 97).

After that incident she becomes totally depress. She becomes pregnant. Helen Moffett states in her article *These Women, They Force Us to Rape Them: Rape as Narrative of Social Control in Post-Apartheid South Africa*,” that statistics reveals that -

“South Africa has higher levels of rape of women and children than anywhere else in the world not at war or embroiled in civil conflict. One third of South African women are raped in their lifetime” ” (Moffett 129).

South Africa's social context is so unsafe. Women and children are raped in a higher level. One third of

women in South Africa raped in their whole life.

Lucy was a lively girl but going through this incident she becomes silent even she does not complain to the police for this crime. Her silence tells us the broken self of Lucy. In the text, Lucy's silence makes David concern. After the rape incident when Lucy does not want to go to market on the first Saturday, David thinks-

“[l]ike a stain the story is spreading across the district. Not her story to spread but theirs: they are its owners. How they put her in her place, how they showed her what a woman was for”. (Coetzee115).

After the rape, Lucy becomes pregnant and gets married with Petrus. He is a black neighbor of Lucy. He uses to work with her in her farm. He likes Lucy. After the marriage Lucy becomes third wife of Petrus. This is because she knows that it is a matter of social judgment that a woman has a child but has no husband. What Petrus does by marrying Lucy, is just to protect her from any kind of danger that could happen to a woman who is not married. He becomes co-proprietor of the land and firm of Lucy. He becomes land owner. At the same time David who was a Professor of university but later we learn that he starts working with a lady named, Bev Shaw who is the owner of the animal hospice. David describes her, she is not a veterinarian but as guardian of dogs.

After the analysis we learn that linking the idea of authority with the body, explaining the patriarchal view. Social system is so wretched and have poor social values . Dominance is the most powerful weapon used against woman through rape or violence. This was the social context of South Africa during that time, described in *Disgrace*.

Chapter 4

Contemporary postmodern text and future probabilities:

It is already mentioned that the main theme of *Slaughterhouse-Five* is war. War shows us cruelty, hatred and violence of man against man. The whole novel tells the story of Vietnam War. America got involved in Vietnam War which was costly as well as unpopular. In that war U.S lost many but Vietnam lost countless number of people. Americans would eventually suffer fifty thousand dead, but the Vietnamese would pay a much heavier price. Millions of Vietnamese died, many of them from heavy bombing. That time U.S dropped atomic bombs in Dresden and Tokyo. In this novel Vonnegut writes about the bombing of Dresden which was one of the most brutal bombing campaigns in history. Over 130,000 people died, putting the death toll above the 84,000 people who died in the Tokyo bombing and the 71,000 people who died in Hiroshima. Vonnegut highlights these two issues - war and death.

Our protagonist character, Billy, survive the vicious attacks on Dresden in World War II. He survived one of the worst and more unnecessary human massacres in the history of the world. It seems that he is luckiest person because he is alive but the truth is he is most unlucky person. For him it is impossible to forget the memories of the destruction of war. As the impact of the war Billy loose his mental state. He starts hallucination. He creates his own reality because he could not handle the real world due the mental shock. He uses the alien planet idea as a tool to make life easier. This text shows the horrible effect of war and death at the same time.

The Crying of lot 49 is another postmodern text. In the text, Thomas Pynchon shows a fragmented and paranoid society. Our protagonist character, Oedipa Maas, searching for the meaning in a world flooded with multiplicity. She also is searching for order to bring order in society. The journey that she starts does not know the finishing line. She does not even know why she starts the quest. She wants to unfold the

mystery of Tristeo but she truly wants it or not, she is not sure. She is in a uncertain situation. These all make her feel paranoid. Not only Oedipa but also others characters are in paranoia. Pynchon states:

“Either Oedipa in the or biting ecstasy of a true paranoia, or a real Tristero. For there either was some Tristero beyond the appearance of the legacy America, or there was just America and if there was just America then it seemed the only way she could continue, and manage to be at all relevant to it, was an alien, unfurrowed, assumed full circle into some paranoia.” (Pynchon, 126)

Her husband, Mucho is on drug and lost his identity, destroyed their marriage and social life. Pynchon represents the incomplete self of people because the social system is not in order. People are living careless and uncertain life; they feel alienated and loveless which led them to the way of using drug. As the consequence of it people feel paranoia and get insane.

Now come to another text *Disgrace*. This text is written by J.M. Coetzee. It is direct, conventional and simple writing. The author shows these, violence, rape, changing identities, and fragmented identities – as the theme of this text. In this text violence shows in a wide extent. Violence is shown against women. The main female characters are raped in this text. The protagonist character, David Lurie, shows as a fragmented self. He does not know how to make order in life. Being a University Professor, he abuses his young student Melanie. This text reveal the truth of South African social system.

Going through all the three texts we find chaotic situation. War, death, paranoia, violence - are the major discussed topics of the texts. Authors choose these topics to write because these shows present world's picture. So, in future what theme they will chose, we cannot say anything for sure. As our present situation is worse so writers will found nothing except these. Now it's not necessary to say that there is a strong possibility to show this destructiveness in their text in near future.

Chapter 5

Conclusion:

Conclusion is the ending part of this paper. This paper tries to depict postmodern novels such as Slaughterhouse-Five, The Crying of lot 49 and Disgrace, by analyzing themes and techniques. These postmodern novels deal with science fiction, fragmentation of society and self, identity crisis, violence, destruction, death. Though these are the postmodern features but the authors use these to show today's contemporary world and its impact on human life and future of world literature.

Postmodern authors show the contemporary life through their writing. The authors often choose reality as their subject matter. Even they choose human mind and its thinking as their writing subject which is also a part of reality. Throughout these texts authors discuss the reality of life. Now-a-days people are disconnected from actual reality. They all are running after something but do not really know what they are running after. People are so much busy that they fail to manage time for themselves or for dearest ones. We are making our life so materialistic and running after a better future ultimately leads to lost identity, feel alienated and frustrated. This kind of mental state has shown in these three texts. These texts also show science and technology, how it can make our life comfortable and can destroy lives at the same time. It is true that technology gives us many things but in contrast it takes more from us.

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