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Semnan University

Faculty of Humanities

Oscillation between Modernism and Postmodernism in Julian Barnes'
Flaubert's Parrot

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WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THIS THESIS

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JULIAN BARNES' *FLAUBERT'S PARROT*

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

Allah, my Creator and my Master,

My homeland Iran, the warmest womb;

The great martyrs and prisoners, the symbol of sacrifice;

Semnan University; my second magnificent home;

My dearest wife, who leads me through the valley of darkness

with light of hope and support,

My beloved son, whom I can't force myself

to stop loving. To all my family, the symbol of love and giving,

My great parents, who never stop giving of themselves in countless ways,

My friends who encourage and support me,

All the people in my life who touches my heart,

I dedicate this research.

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Oscillation Between Modernism and Postmodernism in Julian Barnes'

Flaubert's Parrot

ABSTRACT

There were a lot of changes in fiction, particularly novel, at the turn of century from the nineteenth to the twentieth. Just before World War I, the allure of modernism separated avant-gardes from bourgeois values by practicing new complex forms and styles. Authors shifted away from apparent objectivity that had become possible through clear-cut moral positions, omniscient third-person narrators, and fixed narrative points of view. Together with the fragmented form of the genre, there was a general tendency towards discontinuous narratives, and seemingly random collages of various materials.

While affected by modernism, midcentury artists were both disillusioned by World War II and frustrated by modernist extremities. Many post-modernist authors tried to distance from modernist complexity and fragmentation of style which was soon followed by rather complex and fragmented content. Postmodernism is now known with features like plurality, intertextuality, self-reflexivity, and metafiction.

Julian Barnes who tried his hand at both movements wrote the unconventional *Flaubert's Parrot* (1984) after two conventional modernist novels. Despite numerous criticisms on postmodernist aspects of *Flaubert's Parrot*, the novel has rarely been studied for its modernist preferences. The present study focuses on the controversies over the techniques applied in the novel and traces both modernist and postmodernist elements. By studying the oscillation between modernism and postmodernism, this study emphasizes how *Flaubert's Parrot* goes beyond such labelling as modernism or postmodernism as early as 1984.

Keywords: Modernism, Postmodernism, Julian Barnes, Twentieth Century British Fiction, *Flaubert's Parrot*, Künstlerroman, metafiction, stream of consciousness, truth, Gustave Flaubert



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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Julian Patrick Barnes is an English writer who most notably won the Man Booker Prize for his book *The Sense of an Ending* (2011). Of course, it must also be mentioned that three of his books had been nominated for the Booker Prize before 2011: *Flaubert's Parrot* (1984), *England, England* (1998), and *Arthur & George* (2005). He has totally written thirteen novels up to now. In addition to novels, he has also published collections of essays and short stories. Barnes was mentioned in the list of "Best Twenty Young British Novelists" in 1983 by Book Marketing Council.

Barnes has the experience of being a lexicographer for the Oxford English Dictionary. He also worked as a literary editor and reviewer for the *New Statesman* and the *New Review*. It is noteworthy that he also worked as a television critic for the *New Statesman* and *The Observer*. It is with this rich background that it does not take him long to become prominent and well-received. It is exactly because of this rich career that when he arrives at the idea of writing *Flaubert's Parrot*, he chooses a fiction (novel) rather than non-fiction. Barnes believes journalism as a better tool for talking about facts and truths but needs vastness of novel to pay attention to all aspects of Flaubert's life and work. Barnes chooses novel but practically it is not a novel like other novels as fiction. Indeed, *Flaubert's Parrot* is a collection of stories, biography, literary criticisms, essays, etc. For instance, chapter two is Flaubert's timeline chronologies, or chapter 14 is in fact literary criticism.

Flaubert's Parrot, Barnes' third novel, won Geoffrey Faber Memorial Award in 1985 and the Prix Medicis in non-fiction category in France in 1986. This novel has been widely studied with postmodernity lens and only a few studies have propounded modernist elements. In the following, the prominent criticisms with postmodernist views are provided at first hand

and then those two limited modernist views toward the novel are stated to provide a thorough view of the attitudes toward *Flaubert's Parrot*.

James B. Scott notes that the reader is frequently stocked “between the poles of true and not true” such that the established patterns do not function any longer. He studied the “deconstruction of prose genre taxonomies” that demolishes any settled meaning (65). In line with Scott, William Bell believes that juxtaposing the story of Geoffrey Braithwaite-the main character of *Flaubert's Parrot*-and Flaubert leads into the confusion of the reader and obliges him or her to reassess what he or she “believes historiography” (160).

Vanessa Guignery suggests that the narrator’s “fragmented” and “discontinuous” approach cannot tailor a totalized and coherent knowledge of Flaubert and suggests that the synechdochal passage from the part to the whole in postmodernist aesthetics brings fragmentation, multiplicity, and the refusal of totalization (41).

Cornelia Stott allocates part of her book, *The Sound of Truth* (2010), to postmodernist elements such as plurality, intertextuality, historiographic metafiction, and multiplicity of form in *Flaubert's Parrot*. Drawing from the French critic, Roland Barthes, she delves into the format of the novel as a biography and highlights importance of the absence of author for both Braithwaite and Barnes.

Alison Lee states how in the novel “there is no single truth any more than there is a single parrot”. She makes some examples such as the end of the book and plurality of meaning for the word ‘parrot’ and categorizes this work as “historical metafiction”. In order to focus on some examples regarding the issues prominently figured in discussions of postmodernism “the irretrievability of the past, the inaccessibility of truth, and the indeterminacy of signs” are propounded (Guignery 43).

In a poststructuralist reading of the novel, Neil Brooks in “Interred Textuality” places *Flaubert’s Parrot* in a postmodernist discourse that situates the elusiveness of truth and “indeterminacy of meaning” (46). Brooks has argued that “*Flaubert’s Parrot* demonstrates that the relationship that modernist texts posited between themselves and their audiences can no longer be accepted innocently” (Brooks 50). This reading does not entail the rejection of modernist literary values, but demands a more critically open approach to them, hence, I believe we can read *Flaubert’s Parrot* as a modernist text which includes within itself a strong sense of the postmodern condition.

There are two critics who view the novel with modernist lens. Neil Brooks is the first critic who examines the possible modernist elements in the novel. He points out that Braithwaite adopts a modernist approach to texts as he looks for “stable hierarchies and master-narratives” that can bring “order and intelligibility” to his life and result in “the consummate modernist fulfillment, an epiphany of ‘pure’ understanding” (Brooks “The Silence of the Parrots” 161). Erica Hatley is the second critic trying to view the novel with possible modernist tendencies. She explores the work with respect to kunstlerroman and narrator authority as well as voice of women in the novel. She mentions that there are no active female voices in this text, and it is Braithwaite who regain the entire authority of the narrative.

There are also a number of other criticisms that are not placed under the labels of modernism or postmodernism. A group of them are related to the discussion of genre; for instance, John Irving, John Fowles, and Graham Greene refer to *Flaubert’s Parrot* as a novel but Schabert finds it a biography.

In this study, despite a large number of criticisms with post-modernist masks and a few modernists studies, sides with modernists and highlights modernist elements while putting those postmodernist elements as controversial.

1.2. General Statement of the Problem

Barnes has his literary formation midcentury context, when modernism had glided to late modernism and was evolved to postmodernism. Although the literary techniques, forms, and styles are more or less never dying and could be found in work of any time, they flourish in a period. In spite of Barnes' first two novels that were quite conventional and modernist, he is categorized as a postmodernist author. The same categorization is applied for his third novel, *Flaubert's Parrot*, mainly because he tried to be unconventional and enter into the market of late twentieth century. He is undoubtedly considered as a postmodernist author with respect to his recent works.

Postmodernism appeared as a reaction to modernism and the widespread disillusionment which was the aftermath of World War II. For a long time, postmodernism was considered as a chaos and lacked a clear terminology or an agreed definition (Yeganeh 654-657). The artists of the mid twentieth century began to look at modernism as being a bit shady. This attitude reflected upheavals in society: feminism, equal rights, and protests. Postmodernism is now known with features like plurality, intertextuality, self-reflexivity, and metafiction (Stott 25-28).

Modernists found themselves as the avant-garde separated from bourgeois values and disturbed readers by applying complex and even confusing new forms and styles (Yeganeh 224-7). The emphasis was put on impressionism and subjectivity. As a result, writers shifted away from the apparent objectivity that had become possible through clear-cut moral positions, omniscient third-person narrators, and fixed narrative points of view. Together with

the fragmenting of genre there was a general move towards an emphasis on discontinuous narratives, and seemingly random collages of various materials. (Stott 25-28).

A close attention to *Flaubert's Parrot* can reveal some facets of the novel that have not been studied or if ever studied, they have been very limited. The problem that naturally lies on a border work like *Flaubert's Parrot* is a controversy to see to what extent each form or style is modernist or postmodernist.

1.3. Objectives

As it was mentioned in the background, there are a variety of studies on *Flaubert's Parrot* most of which are made with postmodernist outlook toward the novel and only two with modernist outlook. This thesis focuses on the features of modernism and postmodernism in Julian Barnes' novel. While Barnes himself finds the matter of modernism or postmodernism the matter of form and idea, the researcher is eager to highlight the elements of modernist literature in the novel, and also to see how those controversial elements common between modernism and postmodernism may act to the benefits of both modernism or postmodernism so that the novel could be claimed as a transition moving from modernism to postmodernism.

1.4. Methodology

In this research, the library research method is used to investigate modernist features in Barnes' *Flaubert's Parrot* beside the fact that it is mostly acclaimed by many critics as a postmodern novel. To this end, particular modernist elements such as story narration, fragmented structure of the novel, self-consciousness, stream of conscious, kunstlerroman, reality, human faith, and language of the novel are directly or indirectly studied. Along with these modernist elements, some postmodernist elements of the novel are also noted like intertextuality, historiographic metafiction, plurality, and multiplicity of truth.

1.5. Scope and Limitations

Barnes has written thirteen novels and *Flaubert's Parrot* is the third one. The reason to choose *Flaubert's Parrot* for the present work is that among novels of Barnes this is the first novel that Barnes tries to write out of conventional modernist fashion. The best evidence for this is Barnes' own view:

“it was my third novel. My first two novels had been fairly conventional both in form and subject matter and I think I felt of that point that I was ready to go for something, more unexpected, less conventional that I was going to play with form as well as subject matter” (*Flaubert's Parrot* Author's View 00:00 – 00:40).

His first two novels, *Metroland* (1980) and *Before She Met Me* (1982), as Barnes himself declares here were conventional modernist form and style. Nevertheless, for *Flaubert's Parrot* he wanted to get close to the market, and pay his best possible tribute to Gustave Flaubert. To this end, he wished to write a biography but not in its conventional custom, so he arrived at an unconventional form with taste of postmodernist techniques. Due to the fact that Barnes' *Flaubert's Parrot* is his transition from modernist techniques to postmodernist ones, there is a layer of modernism everywhere, even though fairly most of criticisms are evolved around the novel's postmodernist aspects.

1.6. Definition of Terms

Here is a list of terms benefited from within the current study:

1.6.1. Historiographic metafiction:

Linda Hutcheon coined this term in the late 1980s. The term is applied where works of fiction mix the literary devices of historical fiction and metafiction. Historiographic metafiction is applied for works featured by frequent allusions to other historical, artistic, and literary texts

(or intertextuality) to represent how far works of both literature and historiography are dependent on the history of discourse. Historiographic metafiction is closely linked to postmodern literature, and particularly novels. Hutcheon believes that works of historiographic metafiction are "those well-known and popular novels which are both intensely self-reflexive and yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical events and personages" (5).

1.6.2. Künstlerroman:

In English, Künstlerroman means "artist's novel". It is a narrative about an artist's growth to maturity. It might be categorized as a distinct type of Bildungsroman. Characteristics of the genre is dependent on the formation of the artist to the level they attempt to create. The protagonist usually starts in a state of confinement that is mostly in childhood limited in their horizon by restricting their home life or interferences of people surrounding them. They leave to another place that is far from their origins but it is suitable for their dreams and desired vocation because a künstlerroman is possible to be about any kind of artist like a writer, dancer, painter, or etc. however, there are crises of confidence and struggle to succeed. They gain education from different sources. Two counteracting forces are usually used that one is for nurturing the artist career and the other is as a barrier to their success. Finally, they reach success at the expense of losing their comfort whether morally or physically. The central plot of the story is mostly taken from formation of a work of art, similar to creation of a novel.

1.6.3. New Realism:

It is a form of realism which was developed in the early twentieth century in opposition to idealism, that emphasizes the distinction between the object and the act of sensation. This places the objective world in a way to exist separately from the knowing mind and to be directly knowable. Developing mainly as a polemic against Idealism, this new realism was

represented prior to 1900 in England in the works of such men as John Cook Wilson, Thomas Case, H. W. B. Joseph, and H. A. Prichard. The movement took definite form when Montague and Perry were joined by four others in a statement of a New Realist program ("The Program and First Platform of Six Realists") in 1910. In England, New Realism took explicit form in the works of T. P. Nunn, Bertrand Russell, and G. E. Moore. In both America and England, New Realists asserted the independence of consciousness and its object.

1.6.4. Stream of consciousness:

Stream of consciousness is a narrative mode in literary criticism that attempts to portray the numerous thoughts and feelings that pass through the mind. It was coined by William James in 1890 in his *The Principles of Psychology*, and in 1918 the novelist May Sinclair first applied the term stream of consciousness, in a literary context. *Pointed Roofs* (1915) is the first complete stream of consciousness novel published in English. However, in 1934, Richardson comments that "Proust, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf & D.R. ... were all using 'the new method', though very differently, simultaneously" (Beach 282). Nevertheless, there were many earlier precursors and the technique is still used by contemporary writers.

1.6.5. Truth:

Truth is mostly used to mean that the subject matter is in accordance with fact or reality, or fidelity to an original or standard. The concept of truth in literature and in this study is viewed in the period before modernism, during modernism, and postmodernism. Although truth before modernism could be figured out through direct experiment, the truth of modernism could be measured, computed, and justified because it was scientific truth crafted by monitoring something. Truth of postmodernism is that there is no truth, there is multiplicity of truth.

1.7. Significance of the Study

The present research delves into third novel of Barnes, *Flaubert's Parrot*. There have been numerous studies paying close attention to different aspects of the novel, to its form, style, genre, and etc. However, to the best of my knowledge, fairly all of them have focused on postmodernist aspects that the most prominent ones have already been discussed earlier. The researcher in this study exhaustively studied modernist elements such as *kunstlerroman*, stream of consciousness, and fragmentation. It became clear that not only *Flaubert's Parrot* has modernist elements but also some of those postmodernist elements afore mentioned by critics viewing the novel as entirely postmodern, are proved to be controversial or better say mixed with modernist perspective.

1.8. Outline of the Thesis

In the rest of the present study, outline of the most important points in every chapter is as follows: in chapter two, an in-depth review of modernism and postmodernism movements is made in which the feature elements of each movement are listed and discussed. Late modernism is also discussed as a continuum of modernism and a prologue to postmodernism. In chapter three, the main focus of the thesis, the novel itself and the general reception of the novel are propounded; in 3.1. the dominant postmodernist elements are discussed; in 3.2 the modernist elements of the novel are exhaustively stated. In chapter four, a conclusion is made according to discussions in chapters two and three. Also, recommendations for future studies are made at the end in this chapter.



Chapter 2

Modernism

and

Postmodernism

2.1. Modernism

Modernism was in most countries an extraordinary mixture of the futuristic and the nihilistic, the revolutionary and the conservative, the naturalistic and the symbolistic, the romantic and the classical. It was a celebration of a technological age and a condemnation of it. The feeling of being part of a time in which great paradigm changes manifest themselves led to pride just as much as to fear in the face of an uncertain future. The rapid development in technological areas allowed a large part of society to take part in the progress but it also carried new and unknown dangers. Art reacted to the new feeling of life with the attempt to find new and shocking forms of expression.

The French philosopher and theorist Francois Lyotard equates the stability with the idea of “totality”, or a totalized system (in Derrida's sense of an idea of “totality” as the wholeness or completeness of a system). Totality, stability and order, Lyotard argues, are maintained in modern societies through the means of “grand narratives” or “master narratives”, which are stories a culture tells about its practices and beliefs, comparable to religious myths. Every belief system or ideology has its “grand narratives”; they are a kind of meta-theory, or meta-ideology, which explains the belief systems that exist. Lyotard argues that all aspects of modern societies, including science as the primary form of knowledge, depend on these grand narratives. Emancipation of humankind in the Enlightenment movement, the teleology of the human mind in idealism and the hermeneutic of sense in historicism were the grand narratives modernism had to leave behind because it lost its belief in the unity of these trains of thought. This went together with a sense of bereavement. The attempt to fill the space left by the grand narratives had already begun in classical modernism, partly with the help of art. Lyotard regards this loss of meta-narratives as the main element of modernism.

From a literary perspective, the main characteristics of modernism are a number of changes on the formal and stylistic levels of literary production. There was an emphasis on impressionism and subjectivity in writing, an emphasis on how seeing or reading, or perception itself takes place, rather than on what is perceived, as in the stream-of-consciousness technique. Consequently, writers moved away from the apparent objectivity provided by omniscient third-person narrators, fixed narrative points of view, and clear-cut moral positions. Another important element was the beginning of a blurring of distinctions between genres, so that poetry seemed more documentary, as it was applied by T.S. Eliot, and prose became more poetic, as it was applied by Woolf or Joyce. Together with the fragmenting of genre there was a general move towards an emphasis on fragmented forms, discontinuous narratives, and random-seeming collages of different materials.

Modernism saw history and human identity as fragmented and tended to present this as something negative, something lost, to be mourned as in T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922) or Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* (1927). For many modernists, art was the institution that was still able to provide the meaning, unity and coherence that had been lost in most of modern life and to which people were looking for the meaning that other institutions such as the churches were increasingly failing to provide.

During the era of classical modernism, widely held political and scientific world-views were severely shaken by the work of Darwin, Marx, Heisenberg, Freud and others, and by the Communist revolutions and the First World War. A general feeling of loss of orientation followed. As the main characteristic of the time was its inner conflict and diversity, modernism cannot be viewed as a homogenous movement but rather as much more complex.

Harmonizing rules and the mimetic approach of romanticism were felt to be inadequate and old-fashioned. Traditional norms were being discarded for new techniques which seemed more honest and appropriate in a fragmented world. This led to abstraction in painting and literature, and to a rejection of mimesis as something that was felt to be shallow. Deliberate distortion, ugliness and the lack of harmony were supposed to portray the world as it was. Picasso's paintings shocked the world because of their rejection of conventional categories of perspective and structure as did Virginia Woolf's novels or Joyce's stream of consciousness technique. However, Dadaism and surrealism were also part of the modern movement at the beginning of the twentieth century, and although the experimental and shocking character of the works is similar to other modern artists, they took themselves much less seriously. This is one of the phases of modernism from which some key postmodern traits can be traced. The art of classical modernism shared, despite all heterogeneity, a feeling of crisis, and it is to this attitude that postmodern art is usually compared – either as a break with it or as its radical continuation.

2.2. Late Modernism

The term late modernism is sometimes applied to modernist works published after 1930. However, more recently the term late modernism has been redefined and used to refer to works written after 1945. With this usage goes the idea that the ideology of modernism was remarkably shaped again by the events of World War II, particularly the Holocaust and the dropping of the atom bomb. Charles Jencks strictly marks the period with works that must be double-coded to qualify as postmodernist rather than modernist or what he names as late modernist that is actually an intermediary form of aesthetic creation positioned between modernism and postmodernism.

A list of important characteristics that are often ascribed to postmodern literature illustrates the close relationship between modernism and postmodernism. Some facets of modernism are especially important for the understanding of postmodernism, the first of which comes from classical modernism as an aesthetic movement. It helped to develop twentieth century Western ideas about art and influenced all spheres of cultural expression: the visual arts, literature, drama, and music. Literature underwent a process of redefinition especially in the period of high modernism from about 1910 to 1930, when the leading figures of the time such as Woolf, Joyce, Eliot, Pound, Rilke, Kafka, Proust and Mallarmé developed their understanding of what art was, how it should be produced, consumed and understood in opposition to the traditional values of the Victorian period.

While post-modernism acts in rejection of modernism's grand narratives of artistic direction, and to eradicate the boundaries between high and low forms of art, to disrupt genre and its conventions with collision, collage and fragmentation. Post-modern art is seen as believing that all stances are unstable and insincere, and therefore irony, parody and humor are the only positions which cannot be overturned by critique or later events.

2.3. Postmodernism

For well over three decades now, debates about postmodernism have dominated the cultural and intellectual scene in many fields throughout the world. In aesthetic and cultural theory there have been heated discussions as to whether modernism in the arts is or is not 'dead' and what forms of postmodern art would succeed it. Similarly, many philosophers have debated whether or not the tradition of modern philosophy is over, and some began celebrating a new postmodern philosophy associated with Nietzsche, Heidegger, Derrida, Rorty, Lyotard, and others. Eventually the lively climate of postmodern thought began to produce new social and

political theories, as well as theoretical attempts to define the multifaceted aspects of the postmodern phenomenon itself.

There is still nothing which could be described as a unified theory or even a coherent set of positions within postmodernism, which is at least partly due to the difficulty of defining a movement or period which is alive and changing. It can fairly be said that the word currently functions as a collective term for a whole set of ideas rather than a unified theory. Although it is difficult to locate the beginning of postmodernism temporally, a number of critics, notably Linda Hutcheon, are of the opinion that it started out in the sixties and seventies of the previous century as a term for new developments in the world of architecture, where it signified a creative and playful use of cultural allusions using old and new materials; and gradually it was also adopted within the theory of art. Later, its scope broadened to cover all forms of cultural and artistic expression such as music, film, literature, fashion, and many areas of academic study such as sociology, communications, and technology; and it also became the subject of much theoretical work itself. This led to an already vague term becoming even less precise, which in turn led to controversies as to whether it was no more than a fashionable label indiscriminately applicable to any form of contemporary cultural formation. And arguably Hutcheon's comment, stated in her groundbreaking work *A Poetics of Postmodernism* (1988) over twenty years ago, is still valid: "Of all the terms bandied about in both current cultural theory and contemporary writing on the arts, postmodernism must be the most over- and under-defined." (3).

Postmodernism as a development of modernism is then the critique of grand narratives; it does not merely state or mourn their loss but instead attempts to expose their underlying structures. It tries to create the awareness that such narratives 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 creation of an equal amount of “disorder”, but a grand narrative disguises the fact that these categories are constructed by explaining that “disorder” really is chaotic and bad, and that “order” really is rational and good. According to Lyotard, the recognition of the impossibility of grand narratives has become a general experience in the course of the twentieth century, and there is an increasing sense of this as something positive. Postmodernism does not mourn the ideas of fragmentation, incoherence and provisionality any longer but rather celebrates them.

This interpretation provides an important motivation for many areas of postmodern practice, especially post-colonial literature and gender studies, and with regard to biography. It has inspired not just a proliferation of experiments with the genre but also a particular kind of writing where the story of a person is approached from a particularly narrow angle. Postmodernism is said to reject the boundaries between high and low forms of art as well as rigid genre distinctions, it emphasizes pastiche, parody, bricolage, irony, and playfulness. Postmodern art (and thought) favors reflexivity and self-consciousness, fragmentation and discontinuity (especially in narrative structures), ambiguity, simultaneity, and an emphasis on the destructured, decentered, dehumanized subject.

Early postmodernism rebelled against the canon of the modern in a similar way to that in which modernism had come into being. This is true for both the rejection of classics of modernism and the intended shock effect of much of postmodern art. However, this is a different kind of shock, brought about in a much more ironic playful way than was the case in modernism. In this sense postmodern art is much closer to the avant-garde art of artists like Rene Magritte than to the matter-of-fact thinking of modernism.

Postmodernism therefore consciously enters into a dialogue with the past, which is nevertheless contemporarily determined. While the characteristics of postmodernism are not

inventions of the twentieth century in themselves, they occur in such masses and radical ways as never before. Signs of plurality, intertextuality and self-reflexivity can be seen in many works of art of the past, but new and typically postmodern is the awareness of their own role, in which artists combine different positions from the past to give them fresh perspectives and renewed vitality.

Postmodernism no longer respects any universal values, but in contrast to modernism it does not mourn their loss. What remains is a self-confident co-existence of different but equally valid statements and techniques. Plurality is a positive expression of the mastered loss of harmonic and organic unity, and in the arts this means a semantic as well as structural multiplicity. A typical example of postmodern prose illustrates these points: Julian Barnes's *A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters* is a history of the world that does not have much in common with its historical predecessors. The use of an indefinite article in the title immediately points to the fact that what this book offers is one version of events, rather than a world history aiming at all-encompassing completeness. Similarly, the idiosyncratic use of a half chapter draws attention to the subjective choice of topics and chapters we can expect from this book. Instead of a traditional history Barnes tells stories of the world

The second component of postmodernism, intertextuality, which is often grouped together with metafiction, is not entirely new either, but it receives a new kind of attention and surfaces more often and more radically than before, so that it also warrants a separate treatment in this chapter. The general literary tendency to refer to other kinds of literature has spread in such a way that our time is regarded as one of "artistic recycling". David Lodge's novel *The British Museum Is Falling Down* (1965), one of the earliest examples of an intriguing literary experiment in this sense, refers in each chapter to different traditions of British writing, and its overall structure recalls Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922). However, texts do not

have to refer to specific precursor texts to be intertextual, they can also for example contain references to whole genres.

Postmodern intertextuality as an ironic and self-aware way of reading a pluralist world also allows another form of originality: that of communication through allusion. Umberto Eco exemplifies this situation with the story of a man who wants to confess his love to a very widely-read woman in an original way - and does not see himself able to do so because everything has been said before. Finally, he quotes a declaration of love as a solution to his problem, which works if the woman receives the quote as a borrowed expression of genuine emotion.

Both people are aware of what has been said before, both play the same game – and yet, rather than being silent, they have found a way to speak of love once again, if only in somebody else’s words. This little story draws attention to another aspect of postmodernity though– the distinction between high and low culture has been replaced by an insider-outsider dichotomy. As the example shows, the quoted declaration of love will only have the desired effect if the recipient recognizes it and knows about the background. This is true of much of postmodern art – the more allusions a recipient recognizes the greater the aesthetic pleasure is.

Linda Hutcheon says that “historiographic metafiction”, in deliberate contrast to other forms of metafiction, “attempts to de-marginalize the literary through confrontation with the historical, and it does so both thematically and formally” (289). Works are called “historiographic metafiction” because of their conscious self-reflexivity and their interest in history. The earliest histories contained openly fictional elements; in fact, they were implicit blends of fact and myth. The composition of the word “history” itself after all contains the word “story”.

Yet, as realism gained importance, history came to represent “objective” fact and the novel came to represent subjective “fiction”. In emphasizing that the “fact” presented is the author’s subjective choice and interpretation, postmodern theory challenged the authority of both history writing and biography. Historiographic metafiction is “novels that are intensely self-reflective but that also both reintroduce historical context into metafiction and problematize the entire question of historical knowledge”. They recombine the historical and the fictional genre, and make use of “a questioning stance through their common use of conventions of narrative, of reference, of the inscribing of subjectivity, of their identity as textuality, and even of their implication in ideology”. Moreover, Linda Hutcheon draws attention to the fact that “postmodern fiction suggests that to re-write or to represent the past in fiction and in history is, in both cases, to open it up to the present, to prevent it from being conclusive and teleological” (209).

2.4. Summing up

In this chapter, features of both modernism and postmodernism were studied and an emphasis was placed over the shift from modernism to postmodernism which was accompanied with lots of ups and downs. In a better word, there is a period between modernism and postmodernism that is called late modernism with a mixture of features from eras before and after. Consequently, there are some forms, styles, and techniques that are applied by both modernism and postmodernism or in fact extended to postmodernism which makes them controversial. In the next chapter, these controversial elements such as *Kunstlerroman*, stream of consciousness, and truth are studied.



Chapter 3

Flaubert's Parrot

3.1. General Overview

Julian Barnes is perchance the most versatile and idiosyncratic writer among a group of talented authors, and he is prolific in a variety of genres. Barnes, who was mentioned in the list of "Best Twenty Young British Novelists" by Book Marketing Council in 1983, has written thirteen novels, diverse pieces of journalism and reviews, three collections of essays, three collections of short stories, and a memoir in the past three decades.

Flaubert's Parrot, third novel of Barnes, utilizes an amazing range of techniques and a combination of genres in order to tell the story of its protagonist, Braithwaite. The book was shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 1984 and won Geoffrey Faber Memorial Award in 1985 and the Prix Medicis in the non-fiction category in France in 1986. In an interview, Barnes determined the "moment of ignition" for the idea of writing *Flaubert's Parrot*. It happened in 1981 in Rouen, where he visited Flaubert museum and house in Croisset. It was there that he saw the two parrots giving him the notion of a story.

This novel has perhaps been labelled most consistently as an instance of apparently postmodern work. Whereas the novel undoubtedly presents traditional narrative concepts of linearity, centralized meaning, and authoritative truths, it upholds a forceful modernist aesthetic in spite of its apparent postmodern sensibilities (Hatley 177). In a few words, it could be said that a clear and logical argument can be made in order to find *Flaubert's Parrot* as the product of a modernist corpus intruded on by an emerging postmodern culture in which Braithwaite evolves into the ultimate modern subject by accepting the problematics of postmodern subjectivity.

Flaubert's Parrot is the story of Geoffrey Braithwaite, a doctor, who is obsessed with Gustave Flaubert. Braithwaite states that he has three stories to tell: Flaubert's, his own, and his wife Ellen's. The novel is comprised partly of fiction and partly of literary criticism, as the

book traces Braithwaite's search for the "facts" about Flaubert and his work. He discovers that two museums containing items of Flaubert's claim to own the stuffed parrot that Flaubert once borrowed from the Museum of Natural History. Braithwaite discovers, in the last chapter, that the museums each choose one parrot from a collection of fifty, not knowing which parrot Flaubert had really borrowed.

In his search for Flaubert, Braithwaite discovers that the great author was involved with Juliet Herbert, although Ed Winterton destroyed the evidence of their affair. Braithwaite learns about the lives that Flaubert did not lead and the books that he did not write. Braithwaite dives into the criticisms of Flaubert and his faults. Through Flaubert's life and work, Braithwaite tries to make sense out of his own life. At the beginning of the novel, he evades talking about himself and his wife and all the time postpone talking about these things to a later time.

Braithwaite's obsession with Flaubert covers his own hurt, confusion, and pain over his wife's death and his relationship with her. Ellen, his wife, had a number of affairs during their marriage and Braithwaite has conflicted feelings about her. Braithwaite tries to decide whether they were happy or unhappy in their marriage and if his wife really loved him or not. Braithwaite is also tormented by the fact that he shut off her life support, essentially killing her, even though he knows that there was no hope for her.

In this study, the researcher aims to reexamine some elements of modernist literature in *Flaubert's Parrot*. This study is a step by step analysis on how the novel oscillates between modernism and postmodernism. Prior to a thorough analysis of the novel with respect to modernism, those extensive postmodern criticisms are briefly reviewed to set the ground for further investigation. In discussing modernist elements, the few studies such those conducted by Hately and Brook are examined.

3.2. Dominant Postmodernist Elements

Very little could be said to describe the movement or even a coherent set of positions within postmodernism at the time it started to become a fervent topic in mid twentieth century, which is at least partly due to the difficulty of defining a movement or period which is alive and changing. The impression remains that, taken as a whole, postmodernism is still a chaos, fraught by its lack of clear terminology and agreed definition. Critics do not agree on whether postmodernism is a period or an attitude, a school of thought or a much wider cultural phenomenon, whether it follows modernism or marks modernism's last phase, or even what the common factors are that make postmodern phenomena postmodern.

Stott discusses the background and advent of postmodernism and postmodern elements such as plurality, intertextuality, historiographic metafiction, and multiplicity of form in her book (*The Sound of Truth* 2010). She delves into the format of the novel as a biography by which she looks at *Flaubert's Parrot* from different angles and discusses how at the same time the novel could be considered as a biography or a fiction. She states that Barnes against his own claim¹ (Freiburg and Schnitker 52) must have studied Roland Barthes' works, particularly when significance of author and the value of biography are discussed. This reminds a line from the novel: "Why does the writing make us chase the writer?" (13) in which absence of the writer is emphasized and somehow it can be as a justification why Braithwaite ceased up looking for relics of Flaubert with the meticulous outlook he started his project at the beginning.

James B. Scott studied the "deconstruction of prose genre taxonomies" that demolishes any settled meaning. He believes that the reader is constantly stocked "between

¹ "...and the whole question of postmodernism came up, and the question of literary theory. And someone from the audience was asking the question and I said, 'well actually, you know, I haven't read any literary theory'. [...] I'm deliberately unaware of literary theory."

the poles of true and not true” in a way that the established “signification patterns ... no longer function” (65). By signification patterns, it is referred to established biography as a presentation of facts and fiction as presentation of fancy. He focuses on this facet that lack of fixed meaning. In complementation of Scott’s discussion, it is noteworthy to point to William Bell who believes that juxtaposing Braithwaite story with that of Flaubert’s confuses the reader and obliges him or her to reassess what he or she may think of as “historiography” (160). Ihab Hassan who in his study tabular differences between modernism and postmodernism places this idea as postmodernist under the label of “decreation” (146).

In analyses, such as those of Pattie White and Tania Shepherd, it is suggested that the narrator’s “fragmented” and “discontinuous” approach cannot tailor a totalized and coherent knowledge of Flaubert (Guignery 41). In this regard, Vanessa Guignery suggests that the “impossible synecdochal journey from the part to the whole is inscribed within postmodernist aesthetics, which favors fragmentation, multiplicity and the refusal of totalization” (41).

In another criticism made by Alison Lee, it is stated how “there is no single truth any more than there is a single parrot” in this novel. She clarifies that within the process of the novel, it is inculcated that since Braithwaite comes across with plurality of parrots, then there is plurality of truths and meaning. In another word, there is multiplicity of truth. This is while parrot is not the symbol of truth, it is the symbol of writer. She highlights examples such as the end of the book and plurality of meaning for the word ‘parrot’ and calls *Flaubert’s Parrot* a “historical metafiction” (87).

Issues prominently figured in postmodernist discussion are linked to “the irretrievability of the past, the inaccessibility of truth, and the indeterminacy of signs” to mention a few examples. In a poststructuralist reading of the novel, Neil Brooks places

Flaubert's Parrot in a postmodernist discourse that situates the elusiveness of truth and "indeterminacy of meaning" ("Interred Textuality" 46).

3.3. Modernist Legacy

Away from considering those commonly known standards and criteria applied on the novel through the past few decades, it would be worth mentioning Barnes own standards of judgement, expressed through implicitly discussing Ford Madox Ford's *Good Soldier* (1915):

Looked at now, the novel barges its way into the modernist club for very different reasons, its immaculate use of a ditheringly unreliable narrator, the sophisticated disguise of true narrative behind a false facade of apparent narrative, its self-reflectingness, its deep duality about human motive, intention, and experience, and its sheer boldness as a project (Barnes "O Unforgettable Elephant" 1997).

Although Barnes is talking over Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier*, this remark could also be taken as an exceptionally immaculate encapsulation of his own *Flaubert's Parrot*, raising the compelling question of the 'defining features' of any literary movement, and the extent to which the critical community reciprocally impact themselves and their labelling of text.

Flaubert's Parrot has rendered a set of criticism ranging from traditional thematic readings (Moseley) to the extreme poststructuralist (Scott). Nevertheless, to the knowledge of this study, only two critics have explored the novel as a continuation and critique of the modernist tradition. Neil Brooks, the first critic examining possible modernist elements in the novel, points out that Braithwaite adopts a modernist approach to texts as he looks for "stable hierarchies and master-narratives" that can bring "order and intelligibility" to his life and result in "the consummate modernist fulfillment, an epiphany of 'pure' understanding"

(Brooks “The Silence of the Parrots” 161). Erica Hately, the second critic trying to view the novel with possible modernist tendencies, explores the novel with respect to *kunstlerroman* and narrator authority as well as stream of consciousness.

3.3.1. *Kunstlerroman*

Kunstlerroman, a term that is simply defined in online Encyclopedia Britannica as a subtype of *Bildungsroman* or “apprenticeship novel” which is related to growth of an individual, is mostly exemplified by the somehow early modernist novel of James Joyce’s *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916). As Gary Day mentions in his commentary on Joyce, the novel is considered as a *Bildungsroman* with experimental modes of writing as the first known example of its type (103).

Kunstlerroman novel is labeled as an “artist-novel” by Online Oxford Reference in which the development is accepted to be not only depicting from childhood to adolescence but also from middle or old ages (“*Künstlerroman*”). M.H. Abrams completes this by saying this growth “signals the recognition of the protagonist’s artistic destiny and mastery of an artistic craft” (229). J. A. Cuddon relates the flourishing of *Kunstlerroman* to 19th century, the “start of romantic revival, a period when the artist was held in high esteem and the man of genius became an exalted figure” (446).

Künstlerroman is mostly selected by an artist early in his or her literary career, probably as a consequence of their struggles to prosper as writers and the great personal essence of the style which is rooted from that. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe found writing as a conduit to personal contemplation. An author writes aspiringly to get to know his own internal intentions and emotions.

a debate outlined by critic Maurice Beebe in his seminal work on the genre, *Ivory Towers and Sacred Founts* (1964). He characterized this inner turmoil as one that eventually forces its creator into one of two groups: the “Ivory Towers” and the “Sacred Founts,” terms regularly used in the criticism of *künstlerroman*. For those in the former category, they isolate themselves in so-called self-created “ivory towers,” regarding the sacrifice made to the creation of great art as worth more than a life fully lived. In direct opposite are the “Sacred Founts” who equate art with experience; personal fulfillment, and direct participation in the creation of history as the tableau from which classic literature springs. This inherent conflict is the impulse driving many *künstlerroman*, as the written protagonist is often a stand-in for their progenitor trying to sort out the conflicts that exist—whether as impediment or assistance—for them as artists in the real world. Their work becomes a reflection of their own travails that drove them to become the artists that exist to write the *künstlerroman*. This need to write and expunge is cited as both a primary cause and the source material for the books that spring forth, but also as the result of this “Divided Self.”

Brooks asserts that “*Flaubert’s Parrot* demonstrates that the relationship that modernist texts posited between themselves and their audiences can no longer be accepted innocently” (“Interred Textuality” 50). Moreover, this does not necessarily reject the values of modernist literature, challenges a wider and more comprehensive approach toward them, though. Henceforth, *Flaubert’s Parrot* could also be considered as a modernist text accompanied with strong sense of postmodern condition.

Two queries could be spotted within the novel, one seems to be simple and the other is complex. The simple attempt is to unearth and corroborate a stuffed parrot, the one rented for inspiration of Flaubert at the time of writing *Un Cœur Simple* or *A Simple Heart* (1877). This narrative story line can indeed pave the way for the complex one that is psychological

individuation and acceptance. *Flaubert's Parrot* expressly forges as well as critiquing that most modern of modernism: the *Kunstlerroman*. Barnes still places *Kunstlerroman* as another method of conveying meaning and understanding that is not viable in the postmodern time in that the current discourse of artist as epitomized in the life of fictionalized Flaubert and Braithwaite with innate intuition or truth value passes through the apparent confusion of contemporary western culture.

The protagonist of the novel, Braithwaite, forthrightly concedes on his overall faith in books and literature: "Books say: she did this because Life says: she did this. Books are where things are explained to you: life is where things aren't. I'm not surprised some people prefer books. Books make sense of life." (122).

Nevertheless, books disillusioned Braithwaite. Although the personal tragedy he suffers apparently seems to be pre-inscribed by Flaubert, it has not been expounded properly through Flaubert's books. In order to respond to the current situation, Braithwaite strives to make a coherent narrative of Flaubert's life, that is actually a project which will supposedly arrive at an orderly coalescence of narrative and reality, while at the same time achieving a sort of retrospective revenge on Flaubert. Within the procedure of constructing this reality *kunstlerroman* Braithwaite indeed achieves a *kunstlerroman*-like development of his own personality and psychology, at the same time achieving an evolution from a categorical modernist faith to a modernist faith that is notified by the pluralities of postmodernism.

Braithwaite who is not satisfied with the received wisdom about Flaubert's life and career starts a separate search of "true essence" of the artist. With respect to the results of the search, Braithwaite slowly but assuredly appropriates the authority of the artist to the point he is ultimately able to expropriate Flaubert by writing or re-writing his life. While the first half of the novel could be considered as a pictorial introduction to Flaubert in which Braithwaite

is described as a faithful apprentice, he is shortly obliged to a postmodern critical mass, after which he keeps his faith but in a more critical manner. Findings of Braithwaite or better to say the resulting novel is the reflection of the problematics and pluralities that customarily follow from this tension. When the impossibility of his program becomes vivid, style of Braithwaite in turn becomes more confessional in style, and seeks absolution from the reader for his past and present deficiencies, both as a researcher and a husband. As a whole, the novel could be considered as the cumulative self-criticism of a person trying to adopt modernism and live according to its standards, though he finds himself in the face of pluralities of postmodernism, “ultimately producing a less ‘realistic’, but perhaps, a more culturally true portrait of self in society” (Elias 27).

In the opening of the novel, Braithwaite is actively obsessed in search of any physical residual from Flaubert’s life and goes to visit statues which have been erected in honor of Flaubert. But what could be the reason of settling for decaying representations once one can experience real relics of the subject’s life? He goes to Flaubert’s museum in Rouen, where he sees a stuffed Amazonian parrot that he is assured to be the real parrot Flaubert used on his desk and the source of inspiration for the parrot, Lou Lou, in *A Simple Heart* as the symbol of transmuted faith. Similar to the heroine of that tale, Fleicite, who usurped the parrot as a symbol of faith, Geoffrey seizes on the stuffed parrot as a relieving tangible symbol of Flaubert, “Is a critic wrong to read Lou Lou as a symbol of the Word? Is a reader wrong-worse, sentimental to think of that parrot at the *Hotel-Dieu* as an emblem of the writer’s voice?” (18).

Braithwaite, buoyed because of the experience he had in visiting Flaubert’s house at Croisset, is shown another stuffed parrot that is also claimed as guaranteed authentic. In case we say the first parrot inspired him, the second one disconcerts and unsettles him, “How do

you compare two parrots, one already idealized by memory and metaphor, the other a squawking intruder?" (19). The second stuffed parrot convulses his faith not in Flaubert but in his own competence to understand the life of Flaubert. James B. Scott claims that Braithwaite's own interest in the stuffed parrot is a reflection of "the human compulsion to grasp at artifacts and to use these as signifying ends in themselves because of a reluctance or fear to see the artifact as merely one component in an endless chain of meaning" (60). This evaluation is accompanied with his openly theoretical reading of the novel, a reading that is extreme to the point of deliberately ignoring its narrative. Scott notes to a crucial point regarding human need for tangible and coherent meaning, even though he fails in considering the symbolic importance of the stuffed parrot, not merely as a relic of Flaubert's life, but as a metaphor of faith inside the writing of Flaubert.

It is believed that Braithwaite puts such great importance on the stuffed parrot as it is the apotheosis, a palpable intersection between life and work of Flaubert, a discourse that he has spent ages to develop. Braithwaite does not refuse the hardship bestowed by the second stuffed parrot, but tries to clear them up by making a trustable biography of Flaubert at first hand in his project to revitalize a sense of coherent meaning. The way he starts is similar to other biographical studies, a timeline of Flaubert's life and a meticulous listing of his works.

Finally, Braithwaite makes a bestiary of animal references in writing of Flaubert and three chronologies of Flaubert's life that not only cooperate for production of a vast reading of Flaubert, but they also work against each other to weaken their own validity. From the beginning, his project is started by plurality and contradiction, the desired modernist task is imposed by paradoxes of a postmodern culture forever.

The first chronology is a depiction of Flaubert as the archetypal influential artist in town. "1877: During these final years, his pre-eminence among French novelists is admitted

by the next generation. He is feted and revered. 1880: Full of honor, widely loved, and still working hard to the end, Gustave Flaubert dies at Croisset” (25).

The second chronology that is much more negative puts Flaubert in the context of his family and society, incorporating external commentary, ranging from the trial for obscenity to Sartre's influential criticism. Flaubert's final years are described differently as "reduced ... arid ... solitary ... impoverished, lonely and exhausted" (30-31).

The third chronology is actually Flaubert's own words and is located somewhere between these polarized images, depicted by equal self-praise and self-censure, “some fatal attraction draws me down into the abysses of thought, down into those innermost recesses which never cease to fascinate the strong” (33). Braithwaite might have begun with relics, but has soon had to withdraw into the writing.

Braithwaite makes a bestiary which is an encyclopedic listing of all the animals that Flaubert owned, identified with, or applied in his prose, and would appear to indicate that animals were central to Flaubert as an artist and individual. The chronologies have disclosed the selectivity of that sort of intentional company of facts. Even though bestiary is interesting, it looks to be a desperate attempt on the side of Braithwaite to excuse his pre-existing obsessive enthusiasm in the stuffed parrot.

With the progress of the novel, the bestiary is plagued by gaps, the destiny of numerous pets and acquaintances are unknown, and Braithwaite is finally obliged to agree on “What happened to the truth is not recorded” (55). The bestiary and chronologies conspire to simultaneously make a different portrait of Flaubert’s life and to exemplify the impossibility of such a portrait being complete. The chapters call into question the most basic assumptions and techniques of academic, historical, and biographical study, instantly subverting project of Braithwaite and the chance of an accurate portrait of the artist.

Later, Braithwaite makes a minimalist chronology of his wife, “She was born in 1920, married in 1940, gave birth in 1942 and 1946, died in 1975” (118). This thread of facts that is basically without “narrativism” is without any real meaning either. Michael Lackey in his review of the book, *Modernism, Narrative and Humanism* (2003), claims that what empowers “humans to define and to ‘consolidate their humanness’ is narrative” (869). The comparison between this chronology and the one for Flaubert clarify that while any narrative meaning is necessarily a product of the author rather than the subject, such narrative is crucial for the production of meaning.

By the time Braithwaite admits and achieves this necessary narrativising, he accepts and enacts the role of an artist, the main creator of meaning in his universe. By doing so, he makes his own subjectivity complicated, the simple investigation is dissolved into the complex one. It is certainly known that Flaubert is not the only pluralized persona in this novel, the presence of Braithwaite himself in the text is contradictory throughout *Flaubert’s Parrot*. Once he is a doctor, the other time a widower or detective, reader, biographer, critic, defender, or a writer. Before the novel even opens, Barnes tells us that “the translations in this book are by Geoffrey Braithwaite”;

Although Braithwaite appears to disappear entirely, but it is temporary:

I could go on at great length on all these topics: it would *be* very pleasant for *me* to say what I think and relieve Monsieur Braithwaite's feelings by means of such utterances. But what is the importance of the said gentleman? (75).

Even a little bit later the reader is provided with a list of ten kinds of literature which must be exercised, this altered outlook is still preserved. These opinions, extending the focus of the text from the literature of Flaubert to literature in general are probably extremely broad

for Braithwaite. In that list is the ironic ban of reworking and appropriations, but there is also 20 years ban on God:

“There shall be a twenty-year ban on God; or rather, on the allegorical, metaphorical, allusive, offstage, imprecise and ambiguous uses of God. The bearded head gardener who is always tending the apple tree; the wise old sea-captain who never rushes to judgment; the character you’re not quite introduced to, but who is giving you a creepy feeling by Chapter Four ... pack them off into storage, all of them. God is permitted only as a verifiable divinity who gets extremely cross at man’s transgressions.” (77).

John Updike finds these opinions as “surely a London culturist’s, not a provincial physician’s” (87). This means that we might not be too much adrift in case we wonder whether this is not Barnes’ voice meddling at the heart of the text. If so, Barnes have greatly described the form of postmodern god-like writer who has no presence by distancing himself from the text, but “the assumed divinity of the nineteenth-century novelist was only ever a technical device ... let's not deceive ourselves about the artifice involved” (*Flaubert’s Parrot* 89).

In chapter seven, “Cross Channel”, a literal and metaphorical movement or transition is represented that takes us further into his fictional reality along with Braithwaite. By the time Flaubert gets more clouded and contested, retreating to elusiveness similar to Ellen, and the time we find Braithwaite in a frameless position stocked between France and England, incapable to focus on the landscape, or the physical relics of Flaubert’s life, his own careful appropriation of Flaubert becomes destabilized and he is obliged to accept that “we are too impertinent with the past, counting on it in this way for a reliable *frisson*. Why should it play our game?” (85).

On the condition that the first half of the novel depicts a focused Braithwaite, the second half shows us a man who has recognized the downfall of his personal philosophies. Now he is on withdrawal, obliged to go backward to face the event that started the discourse and thereby that faith has protected him through displacement and deferment. It is from this part that Braithwaite develops from devout modernist traveler to assertive rationalist, illustrating a conscious mix of his faith with a rising postmodern sensibility. It is made clear that to what extent this investigation is a deferral. Whenever we get close to Braithwaite himself, he goes farther, evades, and retreats into the abstract like when he abruptly leaves the reader while standing at the bar on the ferry.

It is through these breaks within the narrative that we are reminded of three existing author or creator at work in *Flaubert's Parrot*. The creators are Flaubert, Barnes, and Braithwaite. The current central section of the story that involves a more explicit engagement by Braithwaite signs the growth from Flaubert as the pivotal visionary character within the text to Braithwaite appropriating the pen. Likely intrusions by Barnes could be considered as marks of this evolution. From now on, Braithwaite stops artistry creed of Flaubert; "The author in his book must be like God in his universe, everywhere present and nowhere visible" (70). He starts to go on a journey of creating his own artistic creation. The present procedure represents and authorize the classic conceit at the center of *Kunstlerroman*: "the procedure of creative individuation" (Hately 179).

As a sign of evolution, Barnes' possible intrusions can be taken. From this point on, Braithwaite abandons Flaubert's creed of artistry-"The author in his book must be like God in his universe, everywhere present and nowhere visible" (70)-and sets off the journey toward creation of his own artistic expression. This process represents and enacts the classic trope at the heart of the *Kunstlerroman*: the process of creative individuation. Nonetheless,

Braithwaite remains silent for the moment “My wife Not now, not now” (80) for all the clearance made on artifice in this chapter. He keeps being deep inside the life and work of Flaubert, though this absorption is continuously more marginal and demeaning. It is from this part that he is a lot more absorbed in the “unspoken” and “potential” factors of Flaubert than the ones known or being familiar. This reconsideration predicts acknowledgement and revelation of the unknown in Braithwaite’s life.

After narrating the “official” absences and ellipses in the life of Flaubert in “The Flaubert Apocrypha”, Braithwaite makes a decision that his own “writing can begin” (94). Then, it is there we hear the details of his marriage to Ellen. The current narration is accompanied with a systematic discussion of “The Case Against” Flaubert; the basic denunciation made against him. “I loved Ellen, and I wanted to know the worst this search is a sign of love I maintain” (95). We get to know that he was already imposed to haunting investigation ahead of determining the duplicated parrots. After all, at this stage, Braithwaite believes that wherever despair in a loved one relieves, the negative truth regarding a beloved author merely inspires defense and more inspection.

Throughout the defenses Braithwaite makes of Flaubert, he maintains his love of the work whereas exorcising his dedication to the man. Braithwaite becomes empowered by reading of the past to make his own fiction that is comprised of history. It is in “Louise Colet's Version” (chapter 11) that he reverts position of authority for Flaubert. Braithwaite can take a sort of revenge through rewriting of Flaubert’s most remarkable romantic relationships. He writes life of Flaubert similar to the method Flaubert sounds to have prewritten marriage of Braithwaite. This attribution of authority is also regarded such that

Braithwaite does not need to face despair of erasure similar to what he had done to letters of Juliet Herbert².

Juliet comes into sight in a doubly-deferred position, a secondary report of letters written by her. This suits with the first part of the novel where Braithwaite is a bit more than an apathetic absorber of “Flaubertiana” (180). The first person narrative of Louise Colet that was made by Braithwaite directly involves the reader and the lack of meddling sets illusion of reality withstanding the point that we are aware of its creation by him. In Colet’s version of history that neither slaps nor asks any favors, she illustrates herself as an intelligent woman who is in love with a man who is not able to get along with love other than in abstract. She says “I was the only woman to whom he was sufficiently drawn, and he chose, out of fear, to humiliate me. I think we should feel sorry for Gustave” (104).

Declaration of Colet appears to be fair, she is not following posterity or replacing Flaubert but only speaking for herself. Despite the evil-tempered trait that we have already perceived, Colet tries to balance historical reporting again and to raise the possibility that Flaubert might not be faultless in their relationship made dramatic. “I am a woman, and also a writer who has used up her allotment of renown during her own lifetime: and on these two grounds I do not expect much pity, or much understanding, from posterity” (111).

The narrative humanizes Flaubert for both Braithwaite and reader through projecting the commentary to a companion of Flaubert who allows himself to criticize him: “the days of

² It is noteworthy to mention that letters of Herbert are in fact burnt in the story:

‘So when can I see them [letters]? You did bring them with you?’

‘Oh no.’

‘You didn’t?’ Well, no doubt it was sensible to keep them all in a safe place. Travel has its dangers. Unless ... unless there was something I hadn’t understood.

Perhaps ... did he want money? I suddenly realized I knew absolutely nothing about Ed Winton, except that he was the owner of my copy of Turgenev’s *Literary Reminiscences*. ‘You didn’t even bring a single one with you?’

‘No. You see, I burnt them.’

‘You what?’ (43)

loyally believing false things about Gustave are over” (109). Moreover, Braithwaite is able to encounter the story of his wife by using the voice of a woman who was crossed by her lover and muted by history. Basically, the story of Colet redeems both herself and Flaubert whereas metafictionally redeems Geoffrey and Ellen Braithwaite. Afterwards, Colet’s voice shows plurality of meaning similar to the stuffed parrot, even though the meaning remains arbitrarily Braithwaite’s.

Now that Braithwaite has individuated himself and is brave enough to label his name on a narrative, he assertively produces his own writing. Of course, it must be noted that it is vivid imitation of Flaubert as “Braithwaite's Dictionary of Accepted Ideas” (112). With the opportunity provided, he puts a Flaubertian irony on Flaubert’s life, allotting different titles for him which are “all-encompassing and ultimately uninformative” (Hately 180). In spite of all his investigation and deferrals, Geoffrey Braithwaite comes up where he started, attempting to define Flaubert in the most simple feasible terms in the form of conduit to understanding despite the fact that he has cultivated an understanding of the risk of such fabrication. Now the paradox is vivid, he does not have anywhere to turn to except his own wife. Thus, we ultimately go to “Pure Story”, chapter 13. The current chapter is the height of clues and hints which Braithwaite has been giving to the reader regarding his wife, Ellen.

We get to know that similar to Emma Bovary, Ellen was repeatedly adulterous and also finally committed suicide. In addition, we become aware that similar to Charles Bovary, Geoffrey obsessed himself with his occupation and remained inert in the face of her abnormal behavior. Braithwaite avoids moral judgement in the process of redeeming Ellen historically, to have her death “described” (121).

Similar to the narrative of Colet, this lets a redemptory reading of the absent woman. Later on, he discloses that “she chose the exact dosage: the only occasion when being a

doctor's wife seemed to help her” (131). Hence, her last act—the attempt to suicide—interfered with the professional career of Geoffrey. It must be noted that Ellen actually obliged him to participate in her death by consciously putting herself into a coma which terminated her life once Braithwaite released her from life support; “so you could say, in answer to that earlier question, that I killed her. You could just. I switched her off. I stopped her living. Yes” (122). Nevertheless, Braithwaite does not know accurately what Ellen’s motivations were, “I have to hypothesize a little. I have to fictionalize” (120).

It is clear that the main irony of the text is that by fictionalizing the life of a dead French writer, Braithwaite is in a better position compared to his bereaved wife. Nevertheless, it is this irony that Geoffrey needs to conform with the purpose of moving on with his wife; “truths about writing can be framed before you've published a word; truths about life can be framed only when it's too late to make any difference” (122).

Braithwaite that is now obliged to disclose his full face requires the reader to become directly involved with Flaubert in “Examination Paper”, chapter 14; he also warns us that “marks will be deducted for facetious or conceitedly brief answers” (124). In the rest, a mixture of quotes, opinions, themes, and questions regarding Flaubert are found.

Now, the role of the parrot is given to the reader to make language, in the form of imagination, in order to qualify the challenges of Braithwaite and Flaubert. The method and ideology impacting our reading of Flaubert must now be considered. As a result, we are at the same place with Braithwaite for the conclusion of the parrot’s mystery. He goes back to France to finish the circuit of quest and to become certain which stuffed parrot actually sat on Flaubert’s desk. He perceives that museum kept 50 stuffed Amazonian parrots when “*A Simple Heart*” was written and out of those 50 parrots only 3 remain. “I stared at them for a minute or two, and then dodged away. Perhaps it was one of them” (137). Genuineness of the

stuffed parrot is ultimately irrelevant, in that they are basically symbolic except for a period when they are the focus of investigation by Braithwaite from chapter two to chapter fourteen. Then, it is through the acknowledgement and narration that he could find absolution of and from himself.

In *Flaubert's Parrot*, we thereby have an exemplar, not just the spread of the modernist faith in the writer as an artist, but its critical arrangement. Braithwaite's struggles to write the artistic truth of and about Flaubert are doomed by the pluralism of history and literature. Nevertheless, this does not imply necessarily a failure of any such project; Braithwaite's Flaubert project has provided a framework for his world view, even though beset by limitations. Therefore, both obligates and empowers him to deal with the death of his wife and in turn enact his own artistic development. He believed that "Flaubert teaches you to gaze upon the truth and not blink from its consequences" (99). Braithwaite's deep involvement in Flaubert's life and work achieved this. As Scott argues, "the reader is left with no capacity to discern the 'true' perspective and thus is forced into an acceptance of irreconcilable contraries" (62).

However, it must be noted that the reader is not left without a capacity for comprehending truth, but probably a new outlook on the ways in which we as individuals and societies construct "truths" is provided. The meaning or true meaning can be located somewhere between the contradiction and paradox in this novel and the lives being represented.

Consequently, modernism is not dismissed out of hand as a possible discourse of meaning, but as a discourse of absolute meaning. The resulting pluralized conjunction of modern and postmodern sensibilities is an argument for the assertion-if not unquestionably the employment-of alternate discourses of meaning for the individual. The narrative model of

the *Kunsterroman* that is borrowed from prominent modernists generally fails. It has become clear here to be a practical impossibility in the postmodern era, but does not fail Geoffrey Braithwaite. In coming to terms with the necessary deficiencies of his project, Braithwaite is able to reconcile the deficiencies of his own past, and therefore move forward, confident in his own consciousness, if nothing else.

3.3.2. Stream of Consciousness

A deceptive term that writers and critics use is stream of consciousness to describe the progression of impressions and thoughts in the mind of human being. The term is found deceptive because it appears concrete but is used diversely and vaguely similar to “romanticism”, “symbolism”, and “surrealism”. We cannot figure out whether is applied at the service of technique or genre, but we sometimes see it as a mixture. William James coined the word stream of consciousness, but to refer psychological dimension of a character in fiction. It was first introduced in its literary sense by May Sinclair in 1918. Apparent in the usage most famously by Joyce, the style of stream of consciousness shows the flow of “impressions, memories, and sense-impressions through the mind by abandoning accepted forms of syntax, punctuation, and logical connection” (899). The novel that is labeled as the ‘the stream-of-consciousness novel’ is spotted quite fast by “its subject matter” instead of the technique it has, the purpose it serves, or the themes found in it (Humphrey 1-3).

Stream of consciousness is placed by Peter Childs as a modernist technique that “denotes the flow and mixture in the mind of all past and present experience.” (211). Narratives can pose stream of consciousness through a series of changes, though the central goal is consistent: “an associate evocation of a character’s thought patterns without the usual transitions found in conventional narratives” (Gillespie 388). It is illustrated more at the end of this section but to make the above quote more vivid, it is invaluable to note that the

demand for stream of consciousness is not necessarily the same as it was at its start. For instance, in *Ulysses*, Calypso chapter, the reader comes across Leopold Bloom for the first time and the novel immediately falls in his thoughts while he is contemplating a pet.

To the best of my knowledge, there is no study on stream of consciousness in *Flaubert's Parrot* except the one conducted by Hatley. She refers to the idea of stream of consciousness in the novel only in one paragraph in the last page of her article. Accordingly, she claims that the structure of *Flaubert's Parrot* is fragmented particularly due to the fact that the novel is comprised of a variety of genres and approaches which is mostly considered as a postmodernist obsession to most critics and reviewers. Nevertheless, Hatley declares that: "I believe we can make an argument for this structure being a re-imagining of the modern 'Stream-of-consciousness' form, in that it visually and structurally apprehends and represents Braithwaite's state of mind." (181).

Tania Shepherd did a computerized analysis of *Flaubert's Parrot* which made identification of simple and complex lexical repetitions possible. Through this analysis, it becomes clear that neither "temporal sequence nor causality can justify the succession of chapters" (Guignery 41). Shepherd ratifies that the first and last chapters could be viewed as the "initiating and closing kernels" within the novel regarding the search for a stuffed parrot that is not entirely propounded in the chapters between (41). Chapter two, 'chronology', serves as an axis that is revived in a variety of forms in other chapters.

Considering Shepherd's analysis, the researcher figures out what shakes Hatley is the idea that the chapters between the first and the last could not be read randomly due to three types of materials: firstly, the story of Braithwaite and his wife, Ellen, is in fact gradually disclosed as fragmented with gaps that are not filled all of a sudden but gradually in the flow of novel. Secondly, there are numerous repeated allusions to Flaubert and particularly his

Dictionary of Accepted Ideas (1911), which actually serves as a preparation for perceiving chapter twelve, 'Braithwaite's Dictionary of Accepted Ideas'. Finally, last but not least, the verbatim repetitions of Flaubert's quotations functions as a link among the chapters of the novel. Based on the nature of stream of consciousness and what have previously been mentioned for this technique, it is hard to accept the chapters of the novel separately without any sequences and only as flows of minds and ideas governing *Flaubert's Parrot*.

Although it might not directly become relevant to this subtopic, but it brings more support to the apparent fragmentation that was aforementioned for chapters of the novel as a sign of discontinuity and fragmentation, elements of postmodernism. The conclusion for both the above discussion regarding the fragmented chapters and the study conducted by White regarding fragmented lists is the same: "the work functions as an integrated whole" (123).

3.3.3. Truth

Truth is mostly considered to be in accordance to fact or reality, or fidelity to an original or standard. Truth is usually thought to be opposite to falsehood that can also take on a logical, factual, or ethical meaning. With respect to the present study, it would be valuable to briefly discuss truth before modernism, in modernist era, and in postmodernism period. Before the emergence of modern science, apparently the easiest way to figure out truth of something had been direct experiment of that. Another way could be to trust another person even though you yourself are not certain. The higher the authority of the person was, the more truth was accepted from. From Socrates to almost all pre-modernist, philosophers were seeking truth by means of thought and reason. Afterwards, truth of modernism is the product of the age of enlightenment as well as the industrial revolution. It is the truth that could be measured, computed, and justified. Scientific truth was crafted by monitoring something, then propounding a hypothesis, and finally arranging for an experiment to see whether the

hypothesis is a truth or not. Science gained universal importance as the mode of knowing produced by the objective rational self, which could provide universal truths about the world, regardless of the individual status of the knower. The knowledge produced by science was seen as 'truth' and held to be eternal.

The application of this scientific truth, produced by the rational, objective, and knowing self was thought to always lead toward progress and perfection. When it comes to truth in postmodernism, we come across to the plight of science that science merely creates theories and not absolute truth. In natural sciences, experiments are repeated to confirm hypotheses and arrive at a distinct law. In psychology that is a pseudo-science, because of possible changes in the behavior of individuals, there are possible psychological laws. Anyway, postmodernism puts all truths into challenge and concludes that the more closely scientific and other truths are investigated, the less unequivocal truth is found. Henceforth, truth in postmodernism is that there is no truth; it is convenience and illusion. In another word, the dispute of truth could be inward, to question the truth of postmodernism itself.

There are a number of criticisms paying close attention to *Flaubert's Parrot* with respect to truth, notably all of which are in accordance with postmodernist view. Braithwaite who trusts on books as truth, loves Flaubert and is fond of his relics becomes excited when he sees the first parrot in Rouen and shaken when he sees the second; and then strives to write a biography of Flaubert to handle the issue of real stuffed parrot. Discussing reality and power, Lee sees authentication of truth as difficult as to authenticate the different stuffed parrot. She goes on to the point that she sees literariness of the text dependent on the veracity of the facts, facts that do not lead to truth. She believes that realist convention of historical documentation is applied to bring an illusion of reality into the novel. She propounds that metafictional texts like this contain their own criticism. She considers some of realist manifestations such as the

idea that art is a means to truth still credited in *Flaubert's Parrot*. As expressed in the novel, "the artist has a privileged insight into a common sense of what constitutes 'reality'" (4). In her poststructuralist and deconstructionist arguments she refers to the idea how narrative presents that "there is no single truth any more than there is a single parrot" at which she refers to the end of the book and plurality of meanings of the word 'parrot'.

Scott who studies Barnes and particularly *Flaubert's Parrot* believes that retrieving and knowing the past becomes impossible upon uncertainty. He thinks that having no closure and endless deferral of any fixed meaning epitomized by the novel is in fact the reflection of human consciousness condition and empirical reality. As it has previously been mentioned, Scott also elsewhere argues that in the novel the reader has no capacity to determine the 'true' perspective.

Nevertheless, firstly, it is worth considering that the reader does not lack the ability to realize truth, but perhaps a new insight is provided on the ways truth is constructed by individuals and societies. Also, as a reply to Scott's opinions to past and truth, it must be noted although Braithwaite is doubtful regarding the likelihood of knowing the past, he never denies its reality and is only questioning the ways in which we arrive at knowing the past.

The ground the researcher is basing his view is mostly the novel itself, because of which referring to some parts of the novel would be invaluable. In chapter 7, Cross Channel, Braithwaite does not believe lines at the back of magazines not because they are lying but because they are trying to be sincere, they are not telling the truth. In chapter 4, The Flaubert Bestiary, Braithwaite elaborately and intentionally repeats some phrases several times: "What happened to the dog is not recorded" (over and over on pages 52, 53, and 54); "What happened to the dragoman is not recorded" (on page 55); and "What happened to the truth is not recorded" (on page 55). With this level of repetition, the second motif is clear: the part of

past we do not access is not false or wrong, only it is not recorded. It does not mean that what we know of Flaubert is wrong, it is only a part of truth. Those chronologies we previously discussed are all parts of truth about Flaubert. Through the pages of the novel, Braithwaite does not reject any of them, all are sides of Flaubert's life and he says:

Well, you know I've got brown eyes; make of that what you will. Six foot one; grey hair; good health. But what matters about me? Only what I know, what I believe, what I can tell you. Nothing much about my character matters. No, that's not true. I'm honest, I'd better tell you that. I'm aiming to tell the truth; though mistakes are, I suppose, inevitable. And if I make them, at least I'm in good company. (75).

Here, Braithwaite is in fact trying to say that there could be some discussions even over physical properties of a person withstanding this point that they might be fixed for a group while connoting something else for others. Therefore, similar to modernist or realist method, Braithwaite encourages us to trust on him while he is narrating as someone honest. He finds the doubts that readers of novel might have of him regarding his wife suicide equal to mystery of Flaubert's death, whether Flaubert's death was a suicide or not. He concludes that readers must trust him.

Elsewhere, Braithwaite is so sensitive to that in order to feel confident about the color of jam Flaubert was comparing the sun to: "in 1853, at Trouville, he watched the sun go down over the sea, and declared that it resembled a large disc of redcurrant jam" (72). To figure out what color the jam of 1853 was like, Braithwaite writes to the company for the matter. However, it is crucial to say that this reaction of Braithwaite is not scrutinizing past to find truth. Indeed, at the moment Flaubert compared the sun to jam, he did not tell a lie. Then, no investigation is required to spot the truth of something. The idea throughout the novel is confirmed as the novel starts and ends with the stuffed Amazonian parrots but it does

not matter which parrot Flaubert actually used in writing his novel; what matters is the symbolic usage of that by Flaubert.

Barnes' career, trying his hand in different forms, helps him to produce a text that has a more universal demand and a better ability to reverberate the truths underlying Flaubert's life. "I didn't fictionalize Flaubert", Barnes claims. 'I tried to be as truthful about him as I could' (Guppy 69). Barnes frees himself to employ and subvert traditional texts and narrative forms by remaining truthful to Flaubert. He believes that journalism is rooted more in reality, and it is because of this that despite his choice of fiction, there are essays indeed in the novel. Withstanding the preference of Barnes to convey truths about Flaubert's life and work, he is drawn to catalogue his version of Flaubert's life and work as a work of fiction, namely novel. Barnes himself expresses the reason as:

Well, to be honest I think I tell less truth when I write journalism than when I write fiction. I practice both those media, and I enjoy both, but, to put it crudely, when you are writing journalism your task is to simplify the world and render it comprehensible in one reading; whereas when you are writing fiction your task is to reflect the fullest complications of the world, to say things that are not as straight-forward as might be understood from reading my journalism and to produce something that you hope will reveal further layers of truth on a second reading. (Guppy 58)

Last but not least, it is noteworthy that what Barnes mentions above as "further layers of truth" does not refer to multiplicity of truth, as a necessarily postmodernist element. The best example of multiplicity of truth by Julian Barnes could be his Pulitzer Prize winner, *The Sense of an Ending* (2011), it is through the stages of this novel that the main character, Tony Webster, becomes aware of his mistakes in perceiving truth or better to say that truth for suicide of Adrian is different in view of each character. What Webster knows as the reason

for suicide of Adrian is neither the truth nor a part of that. The point is here that in *Flaubert's parrot*, Braithwaite has perceived truth of Flaubert's life and work from a perspective that although it is not the entire truth but it is not false either.

3.4. Summing up

In this chapter, modernist and postmodernist features of *Flaubert's Parrot* are studied. As a consequence of the studies particularly on *Kunsterroman*, stream of consciousness, and truth, it is evident that though some elements such *kunsterroman* are apparently modernist but it is with postmodernist tendencies. In short, the explanation is that it is only Braithwaite who progresses within the novel and the project for Flaubert fails. In addition, stream of consciousness was studied that against the presupposition toward stream of consciousness, there is a mixture of both modernism and postmodernism. The reason is that chapters are integrated and must be read in order; *Flaubert's Parrot* is not like conventional works with stream of consciousness but has some traits of works such as *Atonement* that there are sudden thoughts that come up at intervals but all that appear is by the linear pass of events. Finally, truth is not multiple for Braithwaite in the novel, the disappointment that he has is of those irretrievability of past, not lack of trust on truth. Therefore, as the title of study explains, *Flaubert's Parrot* oscillated between modernism and postmodernism.



Chapter 4

Conclusion

4.1. Conclusion

History has proved that no clear-cut distinction could be made or a specific date mentioned for the start or end of a period. Barnes was born and grown up in the era of late modernism with the love of France and French writers, particularly Flaubert. Barnes tried his hand first in two conventional modernist novels, *Metroland* (1980) and *Before She Met Me* (1982) and then *Flaubert's Parrot*. Afterwards, his style of writing and use of technique evolved beyond clear-cut categorization to a maturity embracing the concurrent variety of *genre mixte* (mixed genre).

As I went through Barnes' biography and those criticisms written for *Flaubert's Parrot*, I figured out that a large number of critics scrutinized the novel from postmodernist dimensions. The more I searched about the novel, the more evident it became that the novel must only be read through a postmodernist lens. Once I listened to an interview of Barnes regarding *Flaubert's Parrot*, I became more interested in the research on the novel because Barnes himself declared that after two conventional modernist novels, he attempted to write an unconventional postmodernist novel. This put me into thinking of the novel as a modernist one as well. To this end, I surfed for any primary or secondary sources.

The ensuing literature was compatible with the early assumption that most scholarly papers and books delved into postmodernist elements and only two critics, to the best of my knowledge, attempted to examine the novel considering modernist elements and concepts, Hatley and Brooks. Hatley propounds the idea of *kunstlerroman*, fragmented chapters, and the female voice within *Flaubert's Parrot*. Brooks notes that Braithwaite applies a modernist approach to the part he enters into the writing of the narrative which as he expresses an attitude to *Flaubert's Parrot* as the master narrative and fixed hierarchies bring order to his life.

Hately mentions that, due to fragmented structure of *Flaubert's Parrot*, the fragmented chapters could be considered as stream of consciousness. A computerized linguistic analysis on fragmented chapters, by Shepherd concludes that chapters cannot be read randomly; there is an integrated whole. Therefore, there would be a challenge to what Hately based her idea. The chapters might look fragmented but there is a crucial order for reading them then even if consider this fragmented chapters as an excusable reason for stream of consciousness, but it cannot be easily placed on the modernist side, an entirely modernist stream of consciousness similar to that William Faulkner's novel, *The Sound and the Fury*. This stream of consciousness is similar to what was applied in postmodernist novel of Ian McEwan, *Atonement* (2001). In *Atonement*, there are sudden thoughts that come up at intervals but all that appear is by the linear pass of events.

Kunstlerroman was studied throughout the novel as a conduit of meaning. Barnes applied Kunstlerroman in the novel to benefit from it for the story of Flaubert but it becomes evident that this technique is not any more a practical possibility in the postmodern era. The reason is that though Braithwaite strives to narrate Flaubert's story in this style but he fails. Nevertheless, Kunstlerroman helps Braithwaite to reconcile the deficiencies of his own past. Throughout the novel all the time he evades to tell his own story but moves forward and becomes confident in his own consciousness to the extent that he is thinking of writing a parody to Flaubert's *Dictionary of Received Ideas*.

I also focused on the concept of truth. As I have already mentioned some critics such as Scott emphasized on truth with its postmodernist meaning that past is not retrievable. In my view, it is not necessarily important to retrieve past. What is required to be elaborated further is that whatever is mentioned as a fact or truth in *Flaubert's Parrot*, is a modernist attitude to truth, implying that the truth is not multiplied as far as the main character involved.

Braithwaite gathers some information in the novel about Flaubert and he intends to gain more information for example about Carolina's letters, letters of Flaubert's beloved. The point here is that Braithwaite is not doubtful about what he has collected but he is disappointed of the missing information he does not have any access to. Therefore, compared to other works of Barnes himself, the nature of truth in this novel is modernist.

By focusing on the aforementioned elements, even though I tried to highlight that *Flaubert's Parrot* does have any modernist elements. Truth appears to be entirely a modernist one at least from the point of the main character despite some studies viewing truth in *Flaubert's Parrot* with its postmodernist definition but in practice. Furthermore, Stream of consciousness in this novel is in an in-between state, dangling with regard to modernism and postmodernism. With regard to the discussion on *Kunstlerroman*, this type of writing is mainly discussed as a modernist feature which evolves to embrace a postmodernist feature. Based on such an understanding of these three aspects, neither I completely confirm postmodernism nor reject it. To that end, *Flaubert's Parrot* oscillates between modernism and postmodernism.

4.2. Recommendations for Further Studies

It is suggested to study other techniques and elements of modernism or postmodernism not discussed in this study. Also, a complete survey of the evolution of modernism and postmodernism in works of Barnes would be invaluable. Mario Vargas Llosa has a work similar to Barnes titles as *The Perpetual Orgy* (1975). It is noteworthy to conduct a comparison and contrast between these two works with respect to elements of modernism and postmodernism.

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نوسان بین مدرنیسم و پسا مدرنیسم در رمان *طوطی فلوربت* اثر جولین بارنز

چکیده

همزمان با گردش قرن نوزده به بیست، تغییرات بسیاری در نگارش بویژه رمان صورت پذیرفته است. دقیقا پیش از جنگ جهانی اول، جذابیت مدرنیسم پیشگامان را از ارزش های طبقه متوسط با تمرین سبک ها و شکل های جدید و پیچیده جدا ساخت. نویسندگان از عینیت گرائی ظاهری که از طریق موقعیت اخلاقیات روشن و صریح، گوینده سوم شخص دانای کل، و نقطه نظر داستانی ثابت میسر گشته بود، تغیر جهت دادند. همراه با از هم گسیخته کردن نوع ادبی، جنبش عمومی نسبت به تاکید بر شکل های از هم گسیخته، روایت های ناپیوسته، و بخش های ظاهرا تصادفی منابع گوناگون بود.

در حالیکه تحت تاثیر مدرنیسم بودند، هنرمندان نیمه قرن بیست هم بخاطر جنگ جهانی دوم سرخورده شده بودند و هم از بحبوحه مدرنیسم مستاصل بودند. بسیاری از نویسندگان پسا-مدرنیسم تلاش داشتند تا از پیچیدگی مدرنیسم و از هم گسیختگی سبک فاصله بگیرند که خیلی زود خود با محتوای از هم گسیخته و نسبتا پیچیده مواجه شدند. پسامدرنیسم اکنون با مشخصه هایی چون تکثر، بینامتنیت، خودبازتابی، و فرا داستان شناخته می شود.

جولین بارنز، نویسنده هردو جنبش، رمان *غیرمعمول طوطی فلوربت* (۱۹۸۴) را بعد از دو رمان معمول مدرنیست خود نوشت. علیرغم انتقادهای بیشمار پیرامون تحلیل ابعاد *طوطی فلوربت*، رمان به ندرت بخاطر ترجیحات مدرنیستی خود مورد مطالعه قرار گرفته است. مطالعه حاضر بر مباحث پیرامون تکنیک های بکار گرفته شده در رمان تمرکز دارد و بدنبال هم عناصر مدرنیست و هم پسامدرنیست می باشد. با مطالعه نوسان میان مدرنیسم و پسامدرنیسم، این مطالعه تاکید بر این دارد که چگونه رمان *طوطی فلوربت* فراتر از عنوان گذاری مدرنیسم یا پسامدرنیسم در اوایل ۱۹۸۴ می رود.

واژگان کلیدی:

مدرنیسم، پسا مدرنیسم، جولین بارنز، ادبیات داستانی قرن ۲۰، طوطی فلور، رمان کانستلر، فراداستان، جریان سیال ذهن،

حقیقت، گوستاو فلور



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عنوان

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پژوهشگر

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