

Contemporary Literature

Prof. Aysha Viswamohan

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

IIT Madras

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So, good afternoon. Today's class is all about postmodernism. So, what do you understand by postmodernism? Let us have your definitions to start with. Postmodernism probably, you know, we are talking about what poststructuralism did to structuralism philosophy. Now, when we come to fiction, it is probably the same movement. So, I probably understand that the notion of centrality and wholeness that we had associated with probably structuralism and modernism to a great extent was challenged.

Structuralism and modernism. Modernism. All those avant garde movements and stuff. So, this is practically challenging all notions of centrality and wholeness.

Is that it? So, challenging first definition or interpretation of postmodernism that we get is challenging the notion of centrality. See, what comes to your mind or rather who comes to your mind when you talk about people who have challenged the centrality, in the notion of centrality in literature or in popular culture? Umberto Eco. Umberto Eco. Reno. Reno.

So, these are writers, film makers because postmodernism has influenced popular culture and cinema as well. So, who are those film makers who come to your mind? French New Wave. French New Wave. Films like The Last Tango in Paris.

Last Tango in Paris. What else? Who else? We are talking about movements, we are talking about a film. If I ask you to name some directors. Tarantino. Tarantino.

So, fine you know Tarantino is quite recent. So, but yeah one of the key names associated with the postmodernist movement at least in cinema. So, postmodernism as Vimal was talking about is when we begin with literature. So, it is a mode of narrative which challenge the established notions of centrality as Vimal was saying and also of realism. Now, realism does not mean that if it challenges realism then postmodernism is unreal, nothing like that.

What do you understand by realism? Who are the realist and how are the realist challenged? The realist of the narrative. True to life. True to life, yeah good. So, realism is now if you come to postmodernism and realism. So, realism is you know verisimilitude, yeah trueness to life, slice of life, this is a very cliched term, but slice of life.

Now, what is this slice so called slice of life? It is very true to what we see or what we read. Can you name some realist? Italian Neorealism period. Yeah exactly Italian Neorealist. But if I ask you to name some. Yeah Vittorio De Sica Bertolucci.

Yeah, but if we look at literature because postmodernism starts with literature. Thomas Hardy. Thomas Hardy. Dickens is the most important name when it comes to realism. Now, what happens in a realist novel? They give you a slice of life trying to be as close to reality as possible.

The idea is to present you know show hold up mirror to society. But and also an important feature is that there is a definite and this word you should know closure. There is a solution you know, there is a plot development, there is a plot, it develops, there are characters sketches, well developed characters, are they not? Yes and then at the end there is a satisfactory closure. So, that is the linch pin of realism that it provides a satisfactory closure. A reader is not left wondering at what happened.

However, if you think that this is life, my question is, is it really? Yeah, does life has a closure? It does not. That is what postmodernist challenge. This you know this entity called a satisfactory closure. Also, now if you look at Charles Dickens, think of a novel by Charles Dickens, Oliver Twist, Hard Times, David Copperfield. Now, what happens there? Who is the narrator in David Copperfield? Whose point of view is there in David Copperfield? David Copperfield in Oliver Twist, it is Oliver Twist in Hard Times it is the central protagonist whoever that is.

So, the entire narrative unravels through their point of view. So, narrative thus becomes and this is another word that you should know, monologic. Now, what is monologic? Monologic. Just a narrative point of view. Yes, what is logic? A logo is word, mono is single.

So, one single word that is one point of view. However, this is what has been challenged by the so called postmodernist where the narrative becomes dialogic, heteroglossic, polyphonic. You can take down these words. Actually, these terms are given by the Russian formulas Mikhail Bakhtin. So, narrative is supposed to be or should be ideally

dialogic that is there should be interaction, not just monologic, not just one point of view, one fixed point of narrative.

Heteroglossic, many tongues, Glossia tongue, hetero several. So, many tongues, it is important. You know think of a modern movie like a Babel for example. So, what happens in Babel? Multiple narratives. Multiple narratives, multiple points of view.

Yes, and polyphonic, many sounds. So, this is what postmodernism is all about as opposed to a single monologic closure. So, what they believe in, the postmodernist believe in that realism, the so called realism is basically unreliable because there cannot be, there should not be a single monologic closure because life itself does not allow, does not make space for that kind of satisfactory or satisfying closure. Therefore, most postmodernist texts, whether you take cinema or literature, they are open ended, open to several interpretations. So, relationship between postmodernist ideas and literature and art has resulted in challenging the conventions of realism and another interesting word that we all know, mimesis.

Mimesis is imitation, imitation of life. So, there cannot be any imitation of life because that itself becomes monologic. Anything that claims to be realism is a postmodernist would regard that with suspicion. So, postmodernist doubt on the truthfully descriptive relationship of language to the word. So, word itself, you know, in the beginning there was word, but now postmodernism does not believe in that.

So, that should not be any exigencies of the text. It is not one fixed text which can go unchallenged. So, word itself, language itself becomes suspect, language, word. So, that hegemony of language, hegemony of the written text goes. If it is unchallenged, then postmodernists seek to challenge it.

One of the earliest examples of this challenge was the French Nouvelle Roma, not Nouvelle Vague as the French new wave that is cinema. Nouvelle Roma, Roma is novel of course, so new novel. Now, if you think of modernism and because what is postmodernism, post hyphen modernism that means something which came after modernism. So, if we look at modernism, this entity called modernism, what is modernism? What did modernism entail? Technology changes in life style.

Changes in life style. Changes in the way we represent fiction, may be avant-garde movements and stuff like that. In fiction, you had all these, right avant-garde movements, pop culture, technology, all these signify modernism. Now, there is lot of vagueness about the commencement of this phenomenon of modernism. We can never be very sure when did this movement called modernism began, when exactly. In fiction,

many people say Henry James' novels.

You know, Henry James is one of the most important precursors of modernism. Well, but the most important names of course, are James Joyce and I am going to ask you what you know about these people, Franz Kafka. Kafka, no I think that is Nietzsche. Kafka who wrote, yes, the castle metamorphosis.

Give me more names. Modernism. Eliot. Good, T. S. Eliot. Marcel Proust, Remembrance of Things Past.

Thomas Mann, James Joyce, Franz Kafka, T. S. Eliot, Marcel Proust, Thomas Mann, all Europeans, all Europeans, not a single American here. So, modernism as a movement, at least in its initial stages was centered in Europe. Any female, any feminine name that you can remember? Virginia Woolf.

Now, what is common to these people? What is one single theme that connects all these writers? Exactly, good. They were path breaking for their time. So, stream of conscience also challenged established notion of realism. Yes, Marcel Proust, James Joyce, of course, you know Ulysses, the seminal text by James Joyce, Ulysses. Kafka, of course, we have already seen metamorphosis.

What is metamorphosis all about? It is about the change. It is about, yes, metamorphosis means change, but what happens in the novel? It is like a nightmare metamorphosis. ; a man wakes up one fine morning and finds himself to be a bug. Can it happen? Can it really happen? So, what is the metaphor here? The paranoia of modern times. Yes, the fear, the angst, the dread, the so called dread.

So, we are talking about existentialist influences on this so called movement of modernism. So, one thing that is common among the protagonists of all these writers is the theme of alienation, the alienated angst ridden hero, the hero who feels no connection with those around him, with his society. Except in Virginia Woolf, all male writers and invariably all their protagonists are male as well. So, the alienated white male and this was quite an avant-garde movement, very revolutionary movement. Now, this sort, all the heroes here sought to challenge the established conventions of society, social conventions.

Whereas, in postmodernism, it seems to capitulate to the dominant culture, it accepts it. I will read you a quote from Linda Hutchins, who is another key theorist of postmodernism. You can take it down, a postmodernism manifests itself in many fields of cultural endeavor, architecture, literature, photography, film, painting, video, dance,

music and elsewhere. In general terms, it takes the form of and these are the keywords, self-conscious, self-contradictory and self-undermining statement. Self-conscious, self-contradictory, self-undermining statement.

Since, you mentioned Umberto Eco's and his famous novel, Name of the Rose. So, I am going to read you one paragraph from the Name of the Rose by Umberto Eco. Think of the postmodernist attitude here, just listen to this paragraph carefully. So, he says, I think of the postmodern attitude and he writes as that, so postmodernist attitude is compared to a man who loves a very cultivated woman, a man who loves a very cultivated woman and knows, he cannot say to her, I love you madly, you cannot say that to a very cultured woman, I love you madly because he knows that she knows and that she knows that he knows that these words have already been written by Barbara Cartland. Now, who is Barbara Cartland? Someone, you know, thoroughly commercial kind of a romantic novelist, like we have now, Mills and Boon.

So, a generation before Mills and Boon, we had Barbara Cartland, where you would have dashing heroes and demure beautiful girls and they would fall in love invariably and this is how the man would express his love, I love you madly, but when you say that to a postmodern contemporary woman, I love you madly, you know, she will just think of those Barbara Cartland novels and she will say, this is just a lift from a novel, so he is not saying anything new to me. So, then, Eco goes on, still there is a solution, he can say as Barbara Cartland would put it, I love you madly, so that is the way I love you, that is Barbara Cartland would put it. So, now, what is self-consciousness, self-referential, so there is a consciousness, let it, so you are taking it, taking elements from several different aspects of popular culture. Barbara Cartland is not high broker, high bro or high culture, that is the difference. So, you take a postmodern work of art would borrow elements from high bro as well as very popular or the so called low bro elements of culture.

I will go on because since it is a very interesting paragraph, so I could not resist. At this point, having avoided false innocence, having said clearly that it is no longer possible to speak innocently, he will nevertheless have said what he wanted to say to the woman that he loves her, but he loves her in an age of lost innocence. In an age of innocence, you can say that to a woman that I love you madly, in an age of lost innocence, you say I love you the way Barbara Cartland hero would love this woman. If the woman goes along with this, she will have received a declaration of love all the same, neither of the two speakers will feel innocent, both will have accepted the challenge of the past of the already said. So, they go into the relationship or they play this love game totally self conscious, they come into it.

Yes, yes and this is not the first time a man has said these words to a woman. A woman

has accepted and agreed. Agreed, so it has been done several times in better ways. So, both will have accepted the challenge of the past of the already said, which cannot be eliminated, both will consciously and with pleasure play the game of irony. Then, post modernism also accepts the implicit irony in it, self contradictions, self awareness, self conscious, that is an integral part of any post modernist work of any post modernist text, Pulp Fiction you said.

Yes, and why is it post modernist? You say Pulp Fiction is a good example of post modernism, Quentin Tarantino directed Pulp Fiction and you accept him as a key director of the post modern cinema. So, why do you say Pulp Fiction is a good example of post modernism? There is no attempt to probably capitalize on the naivety of realism. Every statement that is made is probably an intelligent statement that attempts to redo all cliches. Now, have you seen Pulp Fiction? Do you remember?

I remember certain scenes. Let us talk about the scene, I am sure, very sure that you will remember the scene where John Travolta takes Uma Thurman to dance club. Do you remember that? Uma Thurman happens to be the wife of a mafia boss. John Travolta works for that boss and he has been ordered that you take, you keep my wife entertained while I am away. Now, the wife Uma Thurman who is a typical, femme fatale she wants to be entertained and she orders John Travolta to take her to a dance kambar and he does so because he would not dare to, he upsets her in any way. Now, they go there and there is a dance competition and she wants to participate in that competition and she wants to win that trophy.

It does not mean much to her, but still gives her some kind of a kick. So, she wants it. She persuades John Travolta to become her partner and she says I know you are a better dancer and I want you to win that trophy for me. We have to win that. Now, Tarantino being a postmodernist is quoting- Saturday Night Fever

Which source? Are we talking about older movie? Yes, therefore, you quote something which has already been there like a Barbara Cartland text, a pre-existing text. Saturday Night Fever. Saturday Night Fever, again blockbuster starring John Travolta. So, the movie capitalizes on the viewer's knowledge, on the audience's knowledge that they know that this actor is a fabulous dancer and there was a similar scene in Saturday Night Fever where he participates in a dance competition and wins the trophy. So, that they depend, the postmodernist writers or the authors, they depend on the success of their products upon the knowledge, the pre-existing knowledge of their readers and their audience, but if you are not aware of it, much would be lost to you.

Am I right? But then, would you call all the spoofs that come out of major movies. Spoof is not. So, the element of intertextuality plays very important. That is a very good

word, intertextuality. Intertextuality, since Vidya has mentioned it, so let me tell you a bit about it.

Now, intertextuality is an integral part of postmodernism. It is a term coined by Julia Kristeva. So, what is intertextuality? It is a term coined by Julia Kristeva where she talks about how much of a pleasure of a text depends on the reader's ability or the audience's ability to find a previous connection with other text to a prior, to a pre-existing text. No, it need not be. They can quote either from a work of literature or literature can quote something from film.

So, it need not be from the same medium. After all, that is postmodernism. So, postmodernism does not differentiate between high and low. Those references movies and stuff. Who is movie? God of small things.

This is repeated reference to the particular movie. Yes. The particular Malayalam movie, Chemeen Yes. It runs like a motif. God of small things make references to Malayalam movie. Chemeen Salman Rushdie's text, frequent references to popular culture, popular film stars, Hindi cinema.

For example, I am just reminded of Shalimar the clown. You have one character in Shalimar the clown. Salman Rushdie's 2006 or 2007 novel where the central actor, one of the key character is called Max Ophuls. Does the name ring a bell? Max Ofwills. He happens to be a very famous actor and he is actually a diplomat and an ambassador to India.

He comes from some foreign land. I cannot remember exactly from where he comes, but Max Ophuls is a real life film director. He is the author. He is considered one of the key authors of the 50s and 60s. He has made films like Lola Montes and The Earrings of Madam the Aladdin. He was also considered one of the key authors of modernism and post modernism, you know, the transition between that make a filmmaker of that transition period.

Then, Salman Rushdie quotes and makes direct reference to him, but if we are not aware of this, we lose the irony, the word play, the paradox is implicit. I would also like to draw your attention to this writer and I am sure you are aware of Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition, a 1979 text. Jean Francois Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition. Now, he says a lot. He is not exactly talking about postmodern fiction, but you need to know who Jean Francois Lyotard was and there is a key text like postmodern condition.

So, because he, basically discusses the cities, the postmodern cities, cultural spaces, the

architecture of a city and gives us postmodern spin to that. He also says, he also gives us the notion of meta narrative. Now, I would like to caution you here, kindly do not confuse it with meta fiction. Meta fiction is different, meta theatre is different, meta narrative is different. Meta narrative is a story, which individuals and societies tell in order to situate their particular time and place within the context of larger story.

Meta narrative in other words is a device for framing cultures. It has got nothing to do with a narrative, a work of art or text. It is a device. So, according to Lyotard, who are those people of who indulge in these meta narratives, you know meta narratives are grand stories about a story, a culture.

Also, an attempt is made to universalize those ideas. Marxism. Marxism, good. Marxism is a very good example of meta narrative, where it is not considered to be situated in one specific cultural context, workers of the world unite. So, you give a universal spin to something, to an ideology. So, it becomes meta narrative, framing an entire culture and making it universal. Post modernism, however, according to Lyotard, post modernist should attempt to write pettirassis. Pettis, of course, is a French word for small racit, stories, not grand narratives, but metanarrasism.

Marxism, yes. So, he makes a proposal for pettirassis and not meta narratives. So, works of Marx are grand narratives or meta narratives, works of eminent sociologists like Max Weber, they are or any scientific discoveries, writings, Charles Darwin, they become meta narratives. They try to frame culture, universal. So, post modernist, post modern social theories call for a return to the local and reject the grand theories. So, he tries to make a grand theory, which is a very important one. Now, coming to the post modern novel, so, some of the classics of post modernist fiction are, I will give you some examples just of an John. Barth , B A R T H.

Then, Georges, B O R G E S, B A R T H. So, this is a very important one. Then, you have people like William Burrough, The Naked Lunch, Carlos Fiantes, Thomas Pynchon, Don DeLillo. Then, the next one is, what is the most important one? Milan Kundera, The Unbearable Lightness of the Being, Michael Ondaatje, The English Patient. Now, give yourselves a moment, think of all these writers and tell me if they are consistent and consider to be the key authors of post modernist novel, then what is so common in their writing? Look at your notes, your notes that you have been making all these, all this time. So, what is so common in the writings of these novelists? So, the first one is, what is the most important one? The first one is, what is the most important one? So, exploration of sexuality, what else? What sexuality could that be? Hetero.

Deviant sexuality. Deviant as well. So, it is not just heterosexual. Not the regular

believed. Yes, go on.

Existing knowledge of sexuality or society's norm. Yes. Anything but heteronormative. Yes. So, challenges the established conventions of society for one and acceptance of plurality, multiplicity and that is something which is implicit in all these texts and they are not even told from one singular point of view. You have a text for example, *The Remains of the Day* by Kazuo Ishiguro, who is a Japanese settled in Britain. The novel is told entirely from his point of view.

However, at the end, we are told that this narrative is an unreliable narrative.

You cannot. Yes. Great Indian novel. That is a good example. The unreliable narrator. Yes. So, Linda Hutchins, Brian McHale, of course, Fredric Jameson. Is there a romantic narrative novel or novel? That is Kermode.

Yes. Frank Kermode. Is it or is it a critical work? I am looking at now the eminent critics or theoreticians of the postmodernist movement. So, Brian McHale, the postmodernist fiction, the postmodern fiction, then you have Fredric Jameson, then you have Baudrillard, yes, Jean Baudrillard, Linda Hutchins. And, as it happens in most theoretical works, most of them contradict each other.

You should not get unnerved by what they say. Yes. There is a contradiction. There is, they all seek to, you know, compliment as well as contradict each other. Yes. Another very important name is Ihab Hassan. So, we are talking about the major theoreticians of postmodernism. So, all these writers are concerned with images in circulation in culture, texts as well as images in circulation in a particular culture and how can one reuse, reinterpret or recode or interrogate those images.

That is implicit in the works of all these theoreticians. So, now, how, coming back to my first question, how does postmodernism, how does postmodernism differ from modernism? Yes. So, what is the, what is the, what is the, what is the, what is the, what is the, what is the, what is the, what is that, that one element is there and then, realism is questioned in postmodernism.

Then, imitation is not allowed. Absolutely. Yes, good. However, the modernist hero, the alienated hero, the angst ridden hero, you no longer have such heroic heroes anymore.

Yes. So, postmodernism. Absolutely. Yes. So, we had losers even in the modernist cultures. We are not glorified in grand narratives. Yes, yes, but in postmodernism, those losers are not glorified. You do not get to know much about them. They become smaller

and smaller. So, while the modernist artist, the modernist hero, the grand hero, the heroic hero was, would work out of pure imagination, stream of consciousness techniques.

The postmodern artist works with the cultural givens. So, he uses the accesses, the social mores, the cultural accesses, the cultural mores of the society and try to become whole. So, his, his persona is influenced by several external influences, the cultural influences. And these cultural elements could be high as well as low. So, therefore, we have the notion of and the, these are another very relevant terms for you. So, the postmodern hero, if you can call him or her a hero, he is made up of, yes, parody, parody, parody, pastiche, collage, ambiguities, yes and juxtaposition.

So, that is, that takes care of your ambiguity, paradoxes. Can you name an artist, a postmodern artist who, who is noted for his use of collage? Artist, not an actor. Artist, known for his very popular collages.

Yes. The one who drew Guernica. That is Picasso, that is a modernist. Picasso is not postmodern. Salvador Dali That is surrealism, that is an offshoot of modernism. Are you familiar with this name? Andy Warhol? Yes, I would like you to know more about Andy Warhol because he is a very significant name; you know, associated with collage, the postmodernist collage. You may perhaps recall, you know, images of Marilyn Monroe in all colors, you know, those close ups of her face, in all, in colors and also, he did some work with a can of beans, you know, he made a can of beans and he did some work on it, beautiful collages on that.

Finding art in common place objects, that is the idea. I think this is still important, I will let it be here, parody pastiche. Frederick Jameson is very fond of the idea of finding of using this word pastiche. He says all modern art is a pastiche influences, cultural, external influences. Parody is not the way we understand it commonly. Yes, yes, it is not that humorous or satirical, something that is used to evoke laughter, that is not and this is a word Linda Hutcheon uses.

So, this is Linda Hutcheon this is Frederick Jameson. So, Linda Hutcheon -proposes that the work of art is to be used to evoke laughter. So, art makes use of parody and for Jameson, it is pastiche and Jameson regards parody as the way it is usually regarded as it is full of, you know, low laughter, yes, ridicule, satire, but for Linda Hutcheon, pastiche is empty and hollow. We will look at it in detail later. Now, some of the characteristic of any postmodernist text, literature or fiction or novel or even cinema, one is undecidability.

We suggest the impossibility of deciding between two interpretations. Yes, between

good and bad. No polarities, no, you know, distinctly marked categories. Can you give me an example? Anbe Sivam, for instance, Madhavan's character, one of those confused characters does not know the difference between good and bad guy. Yes, finally, you know, he calls him his brother and that kind of a thing. So, there is a change in him and with respect to believing whether he is a good or a bad guy.

Throughout the film, there is a confusion. So, he always. At the end, is it resolved? At the end, it is. Yes, but then there is a closure. But there is a closure, yes. You see, so, a postmodernism decides against closure. So, undecidability, of course, that inability to decide between multiplicity of.

The element of postmodernism, but there is a closure. So, does not fit into both, is it? Perhaps, you know, we will have to watch it again to understand which category it fits in. Then, apocryphal history, this is another feature of a postmodernist text, which apocryphal, I will write it, undecidability. So, apocryphal history, this is another feature of a postmodernist text. Well, you know, a historical work or history itself is challenged. Perhaps, something is added, something is deleted from the extremely normative prescriptive text, historical text, something is added, something is interrogated, something is challenged.

So, revisiting history and reinterpreting it, that is apocryphal history, that is one of the, could be, could be. Hiram actually falls in the category of historiography, writing the history again. So, you can look at apocryphal history. Christ.

Yes, of course. Then, you also have the science fiction framework, Gravity's Rainbow, Thomas Pynchon, Philip K. Dick's Do, Android's Dream of Electric Sheep, which was remade as a very key postmodern text called Blade Runner. Blade Runner is one of the best sci-fi films, is based on science fiction novel. So, by creating, the idea is to create new truths and not just accept the already established truths. The science fiction also interrogates the prevailing, the prevailing truths, matrix series for example.

It does not accept whatever we have been told, cloning, having androids all around, that is one example of science fiction. Then, Brian McHale also talks about the Chinese box structure of the narrative, Chinese box structure. Now, Chinese box traditionally does not have regular borders or a structure.

It has skewed and distortions. The edges are skewed and distorted. So, that kind of interpretation is there. There cannot be, again we are going back to the undecidable narrative, subject to ambiguities, abrupt shifts. Absolutely, definitely. Also, postmodern texts often subvert the established notions of space and time. All the rational categories

are subverted and interrogated.

Features of modernism, right? Yes, rationality and postmodernism is a challenge to that rationality. *Mise en beam*, *Mise en beam*, *A B Y M E*, this involves the paradoxical representation of, within the fictional world of a fictional world. So, it is like looking in a mirror and seeing the reflection.

I will give you an example. I am looking at Italo Calvino's *If on a winter's night a traveler*. Now, look at the title itself. Does it give you anything? *If on a winter's night a traveler*, it does not even make sense. So, undecidability, subject to many interpretations, no closure.

It is a sentence itself. You cannot have a sentence with a conditional and then just leave it half way. Syntax is distorted. So, challenging the established notions of language itself. Now, I was saying that *Mise en beam* occurs when a text, when there is in a text, when there is a reduplication of images or concepts referring to the textual whole. So, film within film is a good example of a *Mise en beam* and then fiction within fiction.

Now, look at this example. *If on a winter's night a traveler*, this is how it begins. I am reading it out to you. You are about to begin reading Italo Calvino's new novel, *If on a winter's night a travel*. Relax, concentrate, dispel every other thought.

Let the world around you fade. Best to close the door. The TV is always on in the next room. Tell the others right away, no, I do not want to watch TV. Raise your voice, they would not hear you otherwise.

I am reading, I do not want to be disturbed. May be they have not heard you with all that racket. Speak louder, yell. I am beginning to read Italo Calvino's new novel or if you prefer, do not say anything. Just hope they leave you alone. So, referring to oneself, can you think of a movie like this, movie within movie structure? Actually, there was a movie in Malayalam. That was, it is a movie of Mohanlal, but it is not really post modern, but it had a, it was remade in Tamil as well.

It is that *Kadapareyambol*, not *Kadapareyambol*? Even that had a, but that is like just for, you know, that still had a very linear narrative, so. But it still had a movie, you know, working inside a movie. There is another Malayalam movie where there is a writer writing a novel.

So, there is, you know, reference to. So, the process of writing is interpreted, is challenged or reflected on perhaps. So, this is a very good example. So, a post modern

fiction, I mean, in cinema, especially in western cinema, you will find several such examples, movie within movie, any number of funny games.

Funny games, very much. Yes, but the. But not self referential. See, here he is totally self referential. It still had a very linear narrative. You know, a good example could be 8 and half, 8 and half by Fellini, where Fellini himself was going through midlife crisis and he had a director's block. He could not make, so he did not know what plot he is going to handle next and that is what the movie is about, a film director who is at a loss, who is stuck halfway.

Yes. Bergman, it is a recent movie. Bergman, I think he was, that is based on his life. I would like to give example of funny games where there is a couple along with their child and they are holidaying in their country house. Two seemingly harmless young men, they knock at the door and they ask for eggs and the house wife just thinking that, you know, just, you know, we have to be good neighbors.

She does not know them. She lets them enter and once they enter, all hell breaks loose. They shoot the husband. He is somewhat, you know, just left somewhere wounded and they do bad things to his wife. They kill the child, all for pleasure. Now, what happens? At one point, the woman says I cannot take it, cannot take this anymore. She takes, she finds a gun somewhere and she shoots one of the guys. Now, the friend says, how did you kill my friend? This is not the way it is supposed to happen and now he rewinds, takes, you know, a remote control and he says, I am going to rewind the entire scene.

Now, and then the dead guy, he comes back to life. Self referential, he is actually commenting on the kind of media we are saturate., we are infused with the kind of violence we are, we see on media around us. He escapes and he goes, meets his wife etcetera and then finally, all these things are his imagination and finally, he is hung. So, the movie that we see is only his imagination. So, he is still there at the gallows when we come back again and then finally, he is killed.

So, we will also look at the use of pastiche as a category of post modernism and again, we go back to the name of the rose. So, what is the name of the rose here? What is it? Do you have any idea about the novel? I just happened to see the movie. It was made on the novel and I had read up something on it. The entire story unfolds in a medieval monastery and then there is a murder of a monk and then another monk is called to solve the mystery. So, it is extremely like Sherlock Holmes, a detective story, but detective stories which quotes alludes to Aristotle, to scientific theories, to political theories and even to the popular cultural theories.

A novel which is written during the 80s, so it alludes to, it refers to high as well as low culture and it becomes a pastiche, but it is not a comedy. It is a serious work of art. It is a detective story, it is a murder story, but Umberto Eco very cleverly borrows from all elements, all the elements which, all the cultural elements, the popular cultural elements which influences. So, it is a detective genre, it is medieval history, it is a gothic and it is also treatise on science, technology, politics.

So, hybridity is the key word here, pastiche, hybridity. So, what is the name of the movie? It is called the carnival. Yes, and carnival was the time it is used because that was a period when official life comes to a temporary halt and there is an inversion of high and low. So, this provides for a subversion. So, this provides for a subversion of sensibility and interrogation of authority.

So, it is a kind of a, it is a kind of a another example is or another feature of a postmodern novel is the, is a concept. *Le retour des personnages*. And, Alain Rob Grillet is the key author, the French author. The term, *retour des personnages* is return of the characters. So, the same characters you are talking about inter-textuality, right.

So, this is another good example of inter-textuality. Characters from one novel find their way into another. Yes, characters shift, you know, move from one novel to another, from one film to another. It is also a very postmodernist feature. However, they may not retain their characteristics. So, they may be something, someone totally different in one film or in one novel and they may change their colors in another. In the writer's way, I would like to say that Rajinikanth movie *Baba*, in that the Neel Ambray character of his previous film *Padepa*, as Neel Ambray goes and the, his friends will say Neel Ambray, *Padepa*, Neel Ambray is going there.

Is it so? Yes. So, he says, you know, he has this power to, you know, if he thinks it will happen. So, he, she will come and ask me for the time. So, this is a later sign. Interesting. So, a very interesting example of postmodern novel is the French *Lieutenant's Woman* by John Fowles, 1969 novel, which is set in the Victorian era. So, the hero is a Darwinian and very interestingly, his name is also Charles, not Charles Darwin, but he is, he is a believer in the theories and the scientific theories of Charles Darwin.

He has a fiancé, a very well brought up British, proper British lady and there is a mysterious young woman in his life. Now, it is a love triangle and it is set in Victorian period, but at the same time, you have a film production, which is making a film set in Victorian era. So, you know, the narrative, the alternates between the two periods, Victorian period, thereby making a pastiche, a parody of the Victorian era. So, there is a

movie, you know, production going on, a movie shoot going on. They are making a film in, on Victorian morals, on Victorian settings and all.

At the same time, you have this other story going on, which is actually based in the Victorian era. So, while doing so, they take elements from the typical Victorian novels and comments on the Victorian prudery, you know, the morals, the hypocrisies of the time. So, again it is a good example of self-consciousness, self-reflexivity and relativism and it is. The novel is also noted for using three different endings. If you remember, there are three different endings to the French lieutenant's woman.

The narrator says, so you do not like this, dear reader, let us give you this, let us have this. You are given a choice of three separate endings. Does it have three different? It does not have, but the story is runs in two parallels. What if in case she has caught the train and gone? And what if she is quite, yes, yes, so Girish Karnad in Nagamandala gives us three alternative endings. It is a story about a woman who takes a lover, the serpent lover.

But Paheli does not use that ghost, but it does not take the multiple ending approach. She gets back to the ghost. In Nagamandala, Girish Karnad resorts to three different endings. So, she takes a snake lover oblivious to the fact that he is actually not her husband. She thinks because he assumes the form of her husband and so there is one ending where the woman goes back to her husband. Second ending, the naga lover, the cobra commits suicide because he cannot bear to stay away from the woman he has loved.

Third ending, she keeps the lover as well as her husband. It is entirely up to the audience what they want to go with. So, same structure in John Fowles, the French lieutenant's woman. What is it about? It is about barbaric situation years back, hundreds of years back where the princess falls in love with the commoner. The king finds out she is in love.

So, he wants to execute or prosecute him for the crime of falling in love with the prince. So, it is like the gladiator kind of atmosphere where he has got two doors. He has to choose between either of the doors. One has a lion or a tiger which is going to, hungry tiger go and pounce on him.

Another one is a pretty lady. So, if the lady comes out, you can marry and settle with her. If the tiger comes out, he has to die. So, he asks the princess, she would know inside the story, please tell me I want to live. So, now her thought goes on if they say which door the lady is, I cannot bear to see him marry that girl and stay with him. At the same

time, I cannot see him die in front of my eyes.

So, all these thought process, we as the reader, we read it and then finally, she points out to the door, the story ends there. We do not know which door. We do not know which one she is actually pointed out. So, we have to take ourselves in the issue and decide whether.

So, it is open to interpretation. So, there is no definite closure. Now, coming to a Fredric Jameson, he also uses a term called an author becoming a bricoleur. This is a term. Postmodernist or artist cannot invent new perspectives that is Jameson's position. Instead, they operate as bricoleurs recycling previous works and styles. Are you with me on this? Again, we are talking about intertextuality.

Again, we are talking about pastiche. We are also talking and that is again Fredric Jameson erosion of distinctions between high and low cultures. Now, Fredric Jameson gives a very good example of this movie called *Body Heat* which was made sometime during the 80s. Yes. Now, *Body Heat* also draws from, it is a film noir. It has a standard form for tall and a besotted lover and a husband, but *Body Heat* also draws from an earlier text *Double Indemnity* which is a Billy Wilder movie and *Postman Always Rings Twice*.

Now, this movie which was made during the 80s and this is a movie which was made sometime during the 50s. I am talking about the first *Postman Always Rings Twice*, not the Jack Nicholson movie. Now, the first movie is set in a small town, mid western America and so is *Body Heat*. Now, in *Body Heat*, although it is set in contemporary times, but much effort goes into recreating the small town environment, the ambience of *Postman Always Rings Twice*. Now, this according to Jameson is a very good example of an artist becoming a bricoleur, setting a movie in the 80s, but still trying to recreate the ambience, the atmosphere of the 50s, a small town of the 50s in America.

And he draws on the audience's desire to return to their past, to evoke nostalgia through cinema. He also gives example of the *Star Wars*, the success of the *Star Wars* series, the franchise. He says because there was a time when *Star Wars* was a TV series and it would be played, it would be on air, on television every Sunday. And perhaps there is a generation of audience who remember this and it brings back all the nostalgic memories. So, when the success of these *Star Wars* franchise, the films is largely because its ability, their ability to evoke the nostalgia, the nostalgic memories of the bygone period. But then, Jameson has also been criticized here, especially by the feminist critics who say that this desire to recreate the past is not just because people want to look at the small town America all over again, but because it also, it was also the period where the gender

distinctions were very clearly marked.

Women are supposed to be like this and men are supposed to be like this. Jameson has been questioned or interrogated or criticized because it is not necessarily the small time rural ambience, but also because there is a definite, there is well defined stable gender roles there which appeal to this audience. Now, I would also like you to, I am sure you have, both of you are familiar with a movie called Face Off, John Woo's Face Off. Now, can you recall how Face Off begins? Face Off itself is a very good example of a Hollywood commodity. We were talking about market forces and art as commodity.

So, John Woo, a very successful Chinese auteur, how he is welcome in a very standard Hollywood studio system and he makes a film with two big Hollywood stars. Now, Face Off, what happens in it? The title is also very interesting, Face Off. The very opening sequence, can you tell me? Does anyone remember? What happens? The opening scene. Travolta is having a tiff with his daughter or something? You have John Travolta, Sean Archer, if I remember correctly, that is his name in the movie. You have his antagonist, Nicolas Cage, Caster Troy, an unmitigated evil person and Sean Archer is a typical good, do good hero, you know goody two shoes kind of a hero and he, you know that distinction, the binaries are also brought about by the way they live, where they live. Caster's abode is a virtual hell, you know, plenty of red, gold and rock music playing in the background, whereas Sean Archer lives in a typical, yes, suburbs, yeah, very conformance, very standardized kind of a neat, clean and ideal idyllic kind of a peppermint houses.

So, he has a devoted, beautiful wife and he has two children, a boy and a teenage girl. The boy is 5 or 6. Now, the opening shot is very interesting and that is what critics like Jameson and other film theoreticians have tried to draw attention to. It begins with a scene where Travolta is sitting on a merry-go-round along with his son and the entire scene is shot in those sepia tones, you know what are sepia tones and also slow motion and this is the scene where Caster Troy, who is the antagonist, he comes and tries to kill Sean Archer, but ends up killing the child. And if people who are familiar with this opening shot, they are reminded of a Hitchcock movie, Strangers on a Train. So, it is a total, you know, not exactly a lift, but a homage to Hitchcock. So, it is a good example of the artist being a bricoleur, staking some part from a known, very known work of art, a known text by a great master like Hitchcock, because Strangers on a Train, the climax takes place between the hero and the villain.

Is there any scene referred to or quoted in such a way? That is the question. Well, he has taken the narrative, the structure, the structure is, but then if you, here we are talking about artist being a bricoleur when they quote or refer to scenes directly. Now, there is

also very good example of pastiche, we were talking about pastiche, you know, blend of high and low culture. When Nicolas Cage is first introduced, he, we, you know, we hear the strains of very popular rock music. Rock is definitely not high bro, but at the same time, somewhere during the movie, Nicolas character is in a church and where you hear Hallelujah and that too by, you know, in a, done in a very classical style.

So, you know, the standard classical western music, so a blend of high and low and a very consciously done work. So, as we were talking about in Pulp Fiction, how John Travolta's character is referred to, quoted from his persona in Saturday Night Fever. This is likewise here, very consciously referring to, you know, to the elements of pop as well as high culture. Any questions at this point? I am just giving you this example, so that you know, you can use it when you apply your theories to a, to an actual work of art. So, in literature or in film, so these are the things to look at, these are the things to locate. So, some more apart from Tarantino, you have good examples of filmmakers like David Fincher, director of films like Zodiac and Fight Club, that Seven, Seven is a very good example of a postmodern text.

David Lynch and Catherine Bigelow, the director of Hurt Locker, David Lynch for Blue Velvet. So, these are some of the, where you know, Sam Mendes, American Beauty is a good example of a. Alright then, thank you very much. Thank you.